

BIOGRAPHY:

From birth to Sao Paulo.

Soren Hellerup was born in Copenhagen Denmark in April 1954. His parents got divorced when he was about age 3, where after he stayed with his mother together with her sister, her sisters husband and their children. At age 6, Soren moved to Jutland, to near the city of Viborg where his mother became house keeper on a farm. Later she would marry the owner of the farm and Soren got a new wonderful father, whom, at time for Soren's confirmation made the paperwork to legally adopt Soren and from there on he took the last name Hellerup.

As long as Soren can remember, he always wanted to be working with film, television but especially the theatre.

On the farm there was a lot of space to play and being creative and Soren quickly began to use the barn and other areas building theatres and presenting plays for whomever friends and family members he could get to make it to the barn...

At age 8, in second grade, Soren did his first performance in public doing a sketch and singing a duet with a fellow class member at a UNICEF benefit and it stopped the show. Later, when Soren was in 8th grade, he also created a small drama club at his school, training some of the younger school members and producing and directing plays and naturally always appeared in the annual school comedies.

As the dream always had been to be a working professional Soren wrote to a major regional theatre company in the city of Aarhus, which also housed one of the 3 major drama schools in Denmark. Edwin Tiemroth was the general director for the theatre and send a very nice note back to Soren, which was never forgotten. Mr. Tiemroth praised Soren for having such a desire and conviction for the theatre at such a young age, but strongly suggested that another education was taken first and then, if the passion was still the same, taking lessons with an actor and preparing for the audition for one of the drama schools.

Soren then started to work at a big beach hotel north of Copenhagen and from received an official education as a waiter. Doing the graduation Soren was introduced to an older actress, Karina Bell, whom in her younger years was a major star, first in the silent movie area in Denmark and in Germany but also did a few 'speakers' before she retired to take care of her family. Karina Bell gave another good advice to Soren: "Always have a good family to come home to. Showbiz is such a hard and complex business and have a true love and a solid relationship to come home to makes a huge difference in your life".

In 1974 Soren Hellerup moved to Copenhagen and rented two nice rooms in a huge apartment at Gammel Kongevej and quickly began to work toward a life in the theater scene in Copenhagen.

On a television program he saw an interview with the very famous actress, entertainer, singer and director Lulu Ziegler. In the program she sang a very famous Danish song by Ludvig Brandstrup "Pige traed varsomt" ("Girl, step careful") from 1926, which Lulu Ziegler made famous again using it in 1958. It was one of her signature songs and something in her attitude made Soren think that 'here is my teacher'! (Funny enough was the song originally written to no one else but Karina Bell in "Co-optimistrevyen" 1926). Taking a deep breath Soren took the courage and phoned her. Lulu Ziegler was very nice on the phone but had to reject taking students as she was just too busy directing and acting, however, something in Soren's voice must have stopped her because after a brief pause she suggested that they met for a cup of tea and then they could talk about things. At the first meeting with Lulu Ziegler Soren learned two valuable lessons: Clearly very nervous about this meeting, and Mrs. Ziegler noticing this she just sent him out in the kitchen so they together could make the tea. This sound like nothing special, but Soren learned how important it is to make people feel relaxed and at ease to be able to open up, and to do good work! After they sat down with the tea Lulu Ziegler looked straight and very serious at Soren and asked: "Is there anything.... ANYTHING AT ALL you would like to do in your life? ANYTHING?" This was the second important lesson...IS there anything as important as being working in the theatre...? IS THERE? In her song "Girl, step careful", which is a wonderful bittersweet song about how difficult the world of showbiz can be, the general idea is "at teksten er en

generel advarsel til håbefulde unge om ikke at lade sig forblænde af teaterets magi, for den findes kun, mens projektørlysene er tændt.”, freely translated as “the text is a general warning to hopeful young people about not to be blinded by the magic of the theatre, as it really only exist when the stage light is on”.

How wonderful is it of a teacher to tell the TRUTH about what to expect from the life on stage, that it is not all applause and good reviews or and beautiful dressing rooms, but hard work, sacrifices, disappointments and loneliness as well.

Ok, do you STILL want it OR is there ANYTHING ELSE in your life you can see yourself doing?

“No, Lulu Ziegler, there is NOT!”

They ended up being wonderful friends and she took Soren to many theatres, introduced him to backstage areas and was a wonderful mentor, even they never really got to study together. However, she introduced Soren to one of that times most prominent theatre teachers Tove Bang, a no-nonsense acting coach, with great respect in theatre community.

Soren Hellerup was fighting an insecurity as an actor and even Tove Bang was an amazing teacher, and also ended up being a very good friend, Soren was not at that time able to really open up for what it would say to be an actor.

However, Soren made another choice at that time, a choice which later should be of more help to his carrier then he had imagined.

Soren started to work as a stage-hand, prop-person, lighting assistant and more at various theatres in Copenhagen. Working 4 years at “Ungdommes Teater”, which under the outstanding management of Bent Mejding for years was one of the most progressive and inventive theatres in Copenhagen. “Det Ny Scala”, working mostly with musicals, “Det Danske Teater” and at The Royal Opera House getting to know huge operas and ballets and not to forget 9 season at The Tivoli Garden, working the 3 theatres there. The tribune in the Concert Hall in the Tivoli Garden could be transformed to a ‘regular stage’ and Soren was there so lucky to be working first hands with big guests visitors as Komische Oper from Berlin, American Ballet Theater with Mikhail Baryshnikov, Gelsey Kirkland and Natalia Makarova. London Festival Ballet, Dance Theatre of Harlem, Martha Graham Dance Theatre when Mrs. Graham herself ran the show, getting friends with the amazing Alvin Ailey and The Alvin Ailey Dance Theatre and not at least New York City Ballet, with a first hand look at how the master George Balanchine and Jerome Robbins worked together with people like Suzanne Farrell and Peter Martins.

Seeing these ground breaking world artists working first hand, seeing their dedication and hard work, their passion, discipline and commitment to create great art, sat an forever imprint in the life of Soren.

In the meantime, smaller roles in the theatre and on television began to appear for Soren and it was time to start looking for a new acting coach and to audition for the theatre schools in Denmark. The Danish actress Judith Rothenborg had begun to get the reputation of being the 'next major acting coach' and she accepted Soren as her student. It was a wonderful time preparing for the audition for schools and at his first try at The National Danish Drama School (Statens Teaterskole) Soren got accepted and started in August of 1979 the 3 years program there.

Even it was a huge opportunity to study at this school it was not necessarily the best time in Soren life. He was still struggling with his insecurity and lack of confidence which naturally showed in his work. However, he graduated in 1982 and had already the first 2 seasons filled with work. Even so, he was not happy and when an opportunity arose to go to New York City to do an continuing education he jumped on it, and a choice he never ever regretted.

In the first class, the teacher Aaron Frankel, was wearing a t-shirt saying "GO FOR IT. LIFE IS NOT A DRESS REHEARSAL", and somehow those word made a chance for Soren. Even nervous as ever, Soren went up on stage for the first time, doing what HE wanted to do and not thinking about what people might think about him and THAT changed everything! Another important lesson: FOLLOW YOUR HEART !!

At the school Soren received amazing training from other great artists like William Hickey, Carmen de Lavallade and Helen Gallagher to mention a few.

From there on Soren Hellerup started to work with many plays in New York City, on television and in films. However, the life of an working actor at that time in USA one really has to be in Hollywood, and in 1998 Soren took the step and moved to 'the coast' .

It was a very difficult and tough first year, even he already after 3 months landed a wonderful agent, Kristine Wallis of The Wallis Agency, a person he to this day still is associated with and also has become a great friend. However, life in Los Angeles is quite different then in NYC and a lot of attitude changes and compromises had to happen before Soren ended up landing roles on a number of television shows from Pamela Andersons "VIP" to "ALIAS", "THE GILMORE GIRLS", "SCRUBS" and "BOSTON LEGAL" among others. Soren also worked a lot of theatre in Los Angeles and was nominated for a theatre award as 'best supporting actor in a comedy'.

In Los Angeles Soren also completed an education as a 'healing art' therapist and worked closely together with James Koenig for 12 years on "The Scandinavian Film Festival in Los Angeles"

In 2009 Soren began to visit Sao Paulo in Brazil and quickly felled in love with the productive and inventive theatre scene there. After working his last job on a feature film on a Monday morning in 2013

Soren had packed up and closed his apartment in Hollywood and on Wednesday that same week flew to Sao Paulo to live and work there.

Life had become too comfortable in on North Beachwood Drive in Hollywood. Getting nice residuals from past television shows and other work, living in a nice apartment with wonderful neighbors, a beautiful street and all the greens and great wines and ecological stuff California could offer, Soren realized that his life and carrier really was going nowhere. He needed to get out of his comfort zone and start to be creative again.

As the saying goes: "Be careful what you wish for..." cause the next couple of years got VERY uncomfortable. With only little money in savings, having to stretch for long time and starting all over in a new country with a new language and another mentality was a huge challenge. However, the inspiration from the new friends on the theatre scene and more, suddenly opened up for a whole new creativity, activity and cultural development Soren never even thought had been possible.