

PRESSEMELDING

"Germania Tod in Berlin"; Heiner Müllers drama fra 1956/71 bearbeidet av BAK-TRUPPEN, ble første gang oppført på Henie-Onstad Kunstsenter, Høvikodden 15. april 1989. Forestillingen ble også vist ved åpningen av International Video & Performance Festival i Odense og på Hotell Norge under Bergen Internasjonale Teaterfestival.

Nå i oktober ble BAK-TRUPPEN invitert av Stichting Mickery Workshop til å delta med "Germania Tod in Berlin" på festivalen Back 2 Back som ble arrangert på Frascati teater i Amsterdam, Holland.

Gjestespillet ble fremført på engelsk: Teksten som er en omskrivning av Heiner Müllers drama, var blitt oversatt av den engelske poeten Anthony Barnett.

BAK-TRUPPENs forestilling ble tatt som et tegn på at noe er i ferd med å skje i norsk teater; kritikeren Marian Buijs i de Volkskrant roser den lette og upretensiøse formen: "Woede ontbreekt. En juist dat maakt indruck."

Müllers tekst, som nå blir spilt i begge de tyske statene, har motatt dommen "Zu Spät ? Zu Spät !" i det tyske teatertidsskriftet Theater Heute Heute. I BAK-TRUPPENs versjon gir den uttrykk for "unge menneskers livsfølelse", "et symbol på nåtida",- "ustyrtelig morsomt". (Utdrag fra Marian Buijs kritikk)

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HISTORY OF GERMANY AS A REVUE

What is more important on stage? Technical virtuosity or the certainty that a performer is perfectly on the right place? In the last case hardly anything can go wrong. A clumsily performed song is touching, an act that is apparently about nothing, is suddenly funny. With this casualness the Norwegian group Bak Truppen performs *Germania Tod* in Berlin by Heiner Muller as number three in the Mickery series *Back 2 Back*. One can hardly think of a bigger contrast than with the Spanish group *la Tartana Teatro*, performing earlier that night. Where the Spaniards expand Muller's *Medeamaterial* to a gloomy, elongated event, here in 45 minutes a light-hearted extract of Heiner Muller is presented. With *Germania Tod* in Berlin Heiner Muller wrote the history of Germany in revue-like scenes. He harassed his compatriots with allusions rushing criss-cross through history. From Friedrich and the Nibelungen to the Hitlerbunker and Stalin. It is a sensitive play for Germans, but there is no Berlin-Wall in Norway. That's why Baktruppen reduced the material considerably. Little is left from the text. Muller's essence, the despair because of the human existence, his scepticism and yet the hope for something better, was however kept and translated into the feel for life of these young people.

With contagious ease the absurdities of the present live are shown. The escapism, the indifference for former ideals. A picture of a square full of people, in Norway, after the war. 'Absurd', the speaker says. A woman on a bed, with a hand caressing her breasts: 'this is his hand' is the comment. In a captivating manner the attention is lead away from what's important, just as in everyday life.

The performance was made on the occasion of a picture exhibition and after every fragment the light flashes as if to stop time. But the time passes with creaky noise, the ideals have disappeared and gave up their place to self-satisfaction. The observation happens light-heartedly and loose, without any attempt to impress. There's no anger. And that's what impresses.

The table would not be misplaced in a court of justice where the spirit of the age is weighed. A man drops nails in a scale. Amplified by a microphone they crack rock-hard on the scale. Later the act is repeated with hairlocks that only rustle. It looks like a symbol for the present time: evrything isn't that heavy, but that's what's treacherous about it.

Not for nothing the sobre final word is: 'opportunism grows'. The looseness of their performave is in flagrant opposition with their furiously bold shaven heads. One by one they do a small Muller. The king is only just visible with his head above the table and he reaches as a Sisyphus for the microphone. Hitler licks his own boots: I am a man and I am perfect.

Norwegians speaking English, that promises abacadabra. But no, half of them are very understandable. Images, music and monologues as a personal statemant, take over the task of Muller's elaborate text. The saxophone whines, Bach is accompanied by the mooing of a moose. Slides are commented in an extremely funny way. All of this is not really inescapable, but something is brewing in Norway.