

# Zürcher Theater Spektakel

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## Zürcher Theater Spektakel 2010: Interim final report

On Sunday 5 September 2010 the 31<sup>st</sup> Zürcher Theater Spektakel ended with eight well-attended performances. For the third time in succession, the festival directors – Werner Hegglin, Cornelia Howald and Sandro Lunin – are able to deliver a positive summary, artistically as well as financially. The varied and in part demanding program featuring young urban productions from Asia, Latin America and Africa, six world and two European premieres was met by the audiences and the critics with great openness, interest and positive resonance. The program consisted of a total of 107 performances (2009: 100). Two thirds of the performances were fully booked or reached the budgeted audience rate of 75%. With 77%, the average overall audience rate is even slightly higher. With 27 500 tickets sold, the turnover is slightly lower than last year (2009: 29 000): The reason being on the one hand the performances with a restricted audience capacity (Niwagekidan Penino: 70 people per performance, Studio Orka & Kopergietyery: 60, 400asa: 50). On the other hand, the cold weather and some rainy days have had their effect on the evening box office sales. In 2009, every sixth ticket was bought spontaneously at the evening box office, whereas this year only every seventh ticket.

### Program

The great interest in this year's program is again reflected in the advance booking: Two out of three tickets were purchased before the beginning of the festival. The Swiss favorites (Ueli Bichsel & Silvana Gargiulo, Mass & Fieber and Zimmermann & de Perrot) and the dance productions by Jecko Siompo from Indonesia and Pichet Klunchun from Thailand as well as the New York tap dance star Savion Glover were amongst the fastest selling performances. The program directors are especially pleased that the rather unique and demanding productions from Asia enjoyed great popularity: The young and vivacious dance production «Terima Kos» by Jecko Simpo as well as the almost meditative, dreamlike dance solo «Nijinsky Siam» by the Thai Khon master Pichet Klunchun were received with great enthusiasm. The Chinese director and video artist Wang Jianwei captivated the audiences with the critical, cool and perfectly choreographed video performance «Welcome to the desert of the real» which focuses on the relationship between the real and the virtual world.

Three Japanese productions – the bizarrely cryptic «Frustrating Picture Book For Adults» by Niwagekidan Penino, the unique and expressive dance theatre «Hotpepper, Airconditioner and the Farewell Speech» by Toshiki Okada, the shrill, trendy and comic-like «My name is I love you» by Faifai – showed the buzzing vitality of Tokyo's avant-garde theatre scene. The Zurich audiences grasped the opportunity to get to know strange yet strangely familiar theatrical worlds: Almost all of the 23 performances from Asia were sold out or reached the budgeted audience rate. The jury of the ZKB

Patronage Prize was equally taken with the innovative productions from Tokyo: This year's Patronage Prize (30 000 Swiss Francs) went to Faifai for their expressive love story «My name is I love you». The Acknowledgement Prize (5000 Swiss Francs) was awarded to the Brazilian performers Marcela Levi and Flavia Meireles for «around the hole everything is edge», an impressively poetic choreography on war and violence. Marcela Levi, together with Enrique Diaz and Cristina Moura who showed their turbulent multi-media production «otro», represented the lively performance scene of Brazil. The Mapa Teatro from Columbia convinced with «Los santos inocentes», a collage made of documentary and fiction, which reflects the political and social reality of their country.

The influx of spectators did not quite meet the expectations for the performances of the provocative South African choreographer Robyn Orlin, who presented a witty and intelligent analysis of the current situation in South Africa at the Werft venue. Together with Boyzie Cekwana, who showed «On the 12th night of never I will not be held black», and the young spoken word artist Ntando Cele with her solo «Cypher Session», the work of Robyn Orlin gives evidence of the artistic and innovative power of the South African performance scene.

Yet again, the dance and theatre productions from Belgium provided further highlights this year: The actor Bruno Vanden Broecke captivated the audiences with a monologue on the life of a missionary in Congo. «Mission» produced by the Koninklijke Vlaamse Schouwburg proves that also «classical» straight theatre has its place at the Theater Spektakel. The Flemish collective Kopergieterij had boys and young men boisterously compete for their masculinity on stage, whereas the latest work of the great Flemish director Alain Platel focused on getting older: «Gardenia», a melancholic choreography on the life of six transsexuals coming of age, showed a new facet of his work and enthused and touched the audiences as well as the critics.

Equally, the Swiss companies, all represented with a premiere, claimed critical and public success. Two days after the start of box office sales, «Record» by the clown duo Bichsel & Gargiulo was sold out. But also the seasoned companies such as Zimmermann & de Perrot, Mass & Fieber, 400asa and Kolypan as well as the newcomers Tabea Martin & Matthias Mooij were able to present their latest shows to a full house. This is a great success for the local theatre scene and proof that Swiss companies can compete within an international theatre festival. The new festival venue, Haus am See, turned out to be a real crowd puller. Offering young performance art (David Subal & Michikazu Matsune), improvisation and surprise (Kiosk à gogo), reflection (various talks and video screenings) and indulgence (wine bar), the venue consolidated the central elements of the festival in a perfect way.

### **Ticket sales**

We are still awaiting definitive numbers, but can state the following:

- The program consisted of 45 productions (2009: 46). Each day, up to five productions free of charge were presented on the festival site or at the Haus am See. The supporting program «Theater im Gespräch» consisted of 11 talks with artists, three panel talks with experts and various video screenings on theatre.
- Around 27 500 spectators attended one of the 107 performances (2009: 29 000 spectators).

- Two thirds of the 107 performances (2009: 100) were fully booked or reached the budgeted audience rate of 75%.
- With 77%, this year's average audience rate is over budget (2008: 80%, 2009: 85%).
- Two thirds of all tickets were purchased through advance booking.

### **Bars & Restaurants**

Due to colder weather and some severe rainy days, the bars and restaurants were not as strongly frequented as they were in 2009. Sales realized this year are accordingly lower. Nevertheless, we expect to be on target with the budgeted figure.

### **Theater Spektakel CO2 neutral**

The efforts undertaken for the project «Theater Spektakel CO2 neutral», supported by the ZKB and Swiss Re, are showing their impact. The use of reusable and/or compostable tableware and containers have led to a significant reduction of the overall amount of waste. The new waste separation system was eagerly used by the public and the restaurants and bars making it possible to separate usable and recyclable waste. The amount of combustible waste could therefore be reduced significantly. We are still awaiting a detailed evaluation of all measures taken to reduce the CO2 emission (energy saving lamps, green power, waste separation, sustainable building materials, environmentally compatible gastronomy, promotion of public transport, bicycle parking).

### **Partners**

The Theater Spektakel is an event organized by the Stadt Zürich Kultur and is generously funded by its long-standing main partners Zürcher Kantonalbank and Swiss Re and – as of this year – the Canton of Zurich. The Tages-Anzeiger is our media partner as of 2010. Apart from the Patrons of the Festival (Gönnerverein für das Zürcher Theater Spektakel) the following institutions have substantially contributed to the financing of the festival (budget 3,7 million Swiss Francs): SDC – Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation, Avina Stiftung, Ernst Göhner Stiftung, Migros-Kulturprozent, Japan Foundation and Secrétariat d'organisation de XIIIe Sommet de la Francophonie – Montreux 2010. Contributors of substantial in-kind sponsoring are KIBAG AG, Mercedes-Benz-Schweiz AG, e-advertising, starticket and the Zürichsee Schifffahrtsgesellschaft.

### **Zürcher Theater Spektakel 2011**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Zürcher Theater Spektakel takes place from Thu 18 August to Sun 4 September 2011.