

mikeska:plus:blendwerk

OPENING NIGHT :: ORPHÉE

script by Lothar Kittstein

based on the films by John Cassavetes and Jean Cocteau

In their latest production mikeska:plus:blendwerk lead their audience into the theatre's interspace, a world between illusion and reality. For their entrances actors disappear again and again through a door to a further stage on the other side. But what is being staged there? A playwright is working on an adaptation of Cocteau's movie ORPHÉE which relocates the Greek myth to 1950s France. His girlfriend Eurydice is also acting in the play. Is she Gena Rowlands in an adaptation of Cassavetes OPENING NIGHT, a story of a woman who experiences a crisis of identity? And who is that mysterious stranger the playwright is so attracted to? A woman disappears. An accident occurs on stage. Is the playwright not more than an actor in his own piece? Is the audience playing the role of a fictitious spectator? Can one recover one's sense of truth and fiction by switching stages? Maybe only an eye on both stages can help to perceive it as a whole – but it might also lead even deeper into a labyrinth of realities. The plot spins through space and time like a Möbius strip connecting stage and backstage, this world and the next in an enigmatic and inextricable way.

"mikeska:plus:blendwerk astonish their audience with ingenuity and perfection in shaping time and space" (NZZ)

Bernhard Mikeska (director) and Dominic Huber (stage design) are the nucleus of the German Swiss group mikeska:plus:blendwerk. Bernhard Mikeska creates (after completing his doctoral thesis in theoretical physics about complex systems), theatrical evenings that re-evaluate and re-adjust the watching habits, attitudes and relation between actors and spectators. Mikeska creates with the duo blendwerk (Dominic Huber, stage design and Christa Wenger, lighting design) spatial systems at the borderline between hyperrealism and extreme artificiality making a subtle use of light and sound. The audience is individually equipped with headphones and shares the collective experience together with the other spectators and, at the same time, enjoys the subjective view of every individual spectator: the movie in his own head, imagined by himself. The sound designer Knut Jensen provides both subtle and straight soundscapes between fiction and reality. Together with actors from Zurich mikeska:plus:blendwerk develop new varieties in dealing with theatrical conventions and observation habits. After a series of productions as »Rashomon :: TRUTH LIES NEXT DOOR« (2006) or »MARIENBAD :: coming soon (2009)« that were invited to festivals around the world mikeska:plus:blendwerk present their new project »OPENING NIGHT :: ORPHÉE« which is set in the heart of the theatre. The multilayered and iridescent text for this premiere is written by Lothar Kittstein who already worked successfully with Bernhard Mikeska at Schauspiel Frankfurt (»REMAKE :: ROSEMARIE«, 2009).

Theaterhaus Gessnerallee Zürich, Gessnerallee 8, CH-8001 Zürich

Premiere November 22, 2010

Further shows November 22 / 23 / 25 / 26 / 27 / 29 and December 2, 2010.

Preview November 19, 2010

Cast Mareike Sedl, Maria Spanring, Sascha Geršak, Wowo Habdank, Jesse Inman **director**

Bernhard Mikeska **stage design** Dominic Huber (blendwerk) **costumes** Judith Steinmann **script**

Lothar Kittstein **dramaturge** Andreas Regelsberger, Nikolai Steinhart **sound design** Knut Jensen

lighting design Christa Wenger (blendwerk) **video** Marie-Catherine Theiler **assistant director**

Nikolai Steinhart **technical director** Götz Dihlmann **production manager** Lukas Piccolin

production mikeska:plus:blendwerk **coproduction** Theaterhaus Gessnerallee, Migros

Kulturprozent, Kaserne Basel **sponsored by** Stadt Zürich Kultur, Fachstelle Kultur Kanton Zürich, Schweizer Kulturstiftung Pro Helvetia, Migros Zürich, Ernst Göhner Stiftung, Georges und Jenny Bloch Stiftung, Fonds Darstellende Künste e.V.

www.bernharmikeska.de www.blendwerk.ch