

Die Tageszeitung

International New Drama Festival

### **Watching the people**

Anxiety in the chamber play: The Festival of International New Drama at the Schaubühne Berlin began with plays in which the world is limited.

(...about other groups/works...)

### **They must be fans of Quentin Tarantino**

There are still more projects that sound exciting to come at this year's festival, including a play from Tehran that is set in a private girls' school. A review is dedicated to the New York Wooster Group.

But the pieces of the first days of the festival were rather strange. Like "Burnt Toast" by Susie Wang, a theatre group from Oslo, presumably fans of Quentin Tarantino, splatter and horror films, but also well-read in the myths of antiquity, whose gods and heroes occasionally eat their own children.

### **Suspense with minimal means**

Yes. Now you might be getting a hunch that at some point, things will get pretty gory and pretty scary in "Burnt Toast". But everything is staged with an exquisite slowness, and how the first dialogues between a hotel guest and the receptionist are celebrated, their professional friendliness in a commercial wellness world, is also very funny.

The guest who has trouble pronouncing his name clearly has to spell it out, "I W A S," which also translates as "I was." That's when it dawns on you that you might be dealing with a zombie or vampire.

In any case, this production has the viewer under control, creates suspense with minimal means, uses the sound of slurping to create a growing horror. The roles of mother and son are turned inside out – Norman Bates from "Psycho" sends his regards.

### **Trigger conflicting emotions**

The insidious – or also the refined nature of the narrative style is that it triggers contradictory emotions, that the cruel actions can also be seen as the initiation of a love story. Occasionally the dialogue touches on conspiracy theories or discourses such as the one about toxic masculinity, but that remains marginal.

Want more theatre? The first days of the festival, which runs until April 30, did not really succeed in igniting it. In its good editions, FIND is a festival that opens a window into unfamiliar scenes, likes to tell many stories, but also invites strange aesthetics. And it also attracts a diverse audience. It helps broaden your perspective. Even if the settings, as in the first plays, play within very narrow limits.