

My Prehistoric Brain

(Text, Director) Theater Freiburg, October 2010

Review by Jürgen Reuss on www.nachtkritik.de (October 9, 2010)

(...)

Planet of the Demented

Saturday was dedicated to the life sciences. The productions included profited noticeably from the fact that the Theater has directed its research for two years already towards the technological optimization of human beings. The most intense form of research was chosen by author and stage director Andreas Liebmann. For one year, he accompanied the neurologist Professor Benedikt Volk Orlowski, who suffered from Parkinson's disease. During the time they spent together, the state of BVO – as he is known for short – deteriorated so drastically that he bid life and Liebmann farewell before going into hospital. He survived, had a chip implanted into his brain, regained partial physical mobility, but also saw his skeptical view confirmed that this technical intervention robbed him of the creativity the illness had given him. On the other hand, he was able to continue working with the stage director.

The resulting text is a powerful piece of literature about the relationship between humans and their brain. Isn't it interesting that Hannibal Lecter could spoon out the center of our emotions while his victim, wide awake, felt nothing? The artificial figure Meier, based on Orlowski, often handled brains during the course of his career. Meier gives an impression of the feeling of power this conveys when he imagines himself the source of happiness for the entire world – in boundless overestimation of his own capabilities. The distance covered here is marked by the statement that evolution has overtaxed the human being and his brain, and that the brain was not constructed to live as long as technology-enhanced medicine allows us to. The consequence is a planet of demented beings.

The Logic of Evolution

Appropriately, the production takes place at a university auditorium. It is a nice materialistic idea to make the viewers occupy three different spatial perspectives on the action. "Move your ass and your mind will follow," as the pop philosopher Knarf Rellöm would have said. Considering that the real Orlowski chose to commit suicide shortly before the premiere, this kind of whistling in the dark takes on an aspect of an appropriate funeral march for a disturbing insight into the optimized brain. (...)