



A Quarter to Night

Theater with objects, figures and music • without spoken language • 40 minutes

Is the colourful carpet dancing? Is there something silently floating around the room ... what is scurrying about ... wondrous, shy, confused, strange, funny and high-spirited? In the twilight, imagination brings everything to life. Even a piece of fabric is enough ... and something comes to life. Melanie Forschütz and Michael Döhnert are creating absurd and wondrous fantasies. Live music, sound and lighting create a magical in-between space: between day and night, between that which is real and that which is but a dream.

13th April 2024 premiere at SCHAUBUDE Berlin (DE)

10–12 April 2024 previews

14 April 2024 SCHAUBUDE Berlin

21–23 April 2024 T-Werk, Potsdam (DE)

5–8 Mai 2024 Fundus Theater Hamburg (DE)

18–22 September 2024 SCHAUBUDE Berlin (DE)

26–29 September 2024 FELD – Theater für junges Publikum (DE)

27–28 October TAK Theater Liechtenstein (LI)

30 October – 4 November 2024 gz buchegg, Zürich (CH)

6–11 November 2024 FITZ Stuttgart (DE)

19–24 November 2024 Escher Theater (LU)



We explore the following subjects

Dream mixing with reality

Appearance and disappearance

The fleetingness of an imagination

The transformation of a material into a being

The development of our show

Our new theatre piece is set between day and night. We are searching for a special space wherein reality mixes with dreams. Between day and night, our perception changes. I see things differently than in the light of day. I remember well lying in bed as a child not being able to fall asleep straight away. Fantasy creatures appeared to me in the folds of the drapery. Everyone has felt this, when fantasy unfolds from the banal. The fabric that the drape is made from turns into the material of a phantasy, feasible and fleeting at once. Perception finds itself between a waking and dreaming state, where unreality, logic and nonsense mingle altogether. A fantastic in-between realm opens between day and night.

We look for the moment when and how something inconspicuous triggers fantasies and comes to live. This is a balancing act. On the one hand, the viewer needs enough concrete triggers for a fantasy and, on the other, a certain openness to give space to associations. We want the audience to mobilise their own imagination and complete the traces of our narratives with their own imagination. This is a wonderful form of "participation".

Here are some first short video clips from our rehearsals:

<https://vimeo.com/886416089/353e0998a9?share=copy>

<https://vimeo.com/886415769/3f566c9657?share=copy>

<https://vimeo.com/886415914/be686c6c87?share=copy>



Work in progress

It begins with an empty room. There is only a black backdrop (3x5m) which offers entrances and exits, a black-ness with front-ness and back-ness. The stage goes dusky blue and we hear a snore – but from where? Is the whole room snoring? Musician Michael Döhnert uses a loop recorder to play back the actual sounds of the theatre picked up by his microphone, like creaky floorboards. He adds new sounds to the room, like the song of a bird. A live sound collage gives rise to an evening-turning-to-night atmosphere. Sounds that we do not hear during the day come to the foreground.

The musician's red jacket becomes black in the twilight blue. He takes off the jacket and fumbles with it, kneading it between his hands to bring back flashes of its red colour. But once back on his shoulders, it's again black.

Light, sound and music create imaginative spaces that can appear and vanish all of the sudden. Light shifts our perception, creates atmospheres and, magician-like, changes the colours of things.

We work with the ability of various fabrics to transform. Gossamer tulle, furry shag carpet, semi-transparent painter's fleece, opaque black curtain: all our fabrics have a certain softness, but are very different in their feel, shape and colour.

A 2 m-long, 50 cm-wide piece of multicoloured carpet comes alive in a flash: walking upright, tip-toeing to find a place to lie down, the carpet has its own character. The body language of the carpet is what speaks to us. We are compelled by the ease of its transformation. That a piece of fabric can trigger such emotion with its idiosyncratic personality. We stuff a white painter's overalls with tulle and only put on the top half. Seen from the front, the player could be wearing pyjamas or a white tailcoat. A human-like figure seems to loom behind the player's back. One's eye wanders back and forth between the double figure: sometimes it's a piece of clothing, sometimes the white suit becomes a figure of its own accord. Depending on the light, the white figures begin briefly to float.

The stage is populated more and more with fantasy beings: a flowing white tulle creature resembling a jellyfish and acting like a diva. A bewildered little yellow ghost. Beings that arise from a painter's overalls to frolic exuberantly on the shoulders of the two players. They are like neighbours who come for a short visit. Each and every fantasy being is unique and brings its individual character, its own theme into play. Be it shyly seeking a spot to lie down and spread out, not wanting to leave again. Something sneaks in and arises before our eyes. Something unexpectedly appears. Something is caught or startled, doesn't want to go, but dissolves in an instant. Live music, sound and lighting bring the twilight alive: between day and night, between that which is real and that which is but a dream.



About the artists

florschütz & döhnert are pioneers of theatre for children in Germany. Since 2004, the duo has been researching their visual and action-oriented language of images, without the need for the spoken word. Associative telling of stories is a main theme for them. They create pieces that work via setting and decoding signs and that live from rhythm and choreography – the result of interlocking music, sound and play. The duo develops its pieces in long periods of preparation and process-oriented creation. Beyond dramatic conflicts or narrative stringency, they dedicate themselves, among other things, to the performative questioning of natural laws and (perceptual) phenomena that characterize everyday life. They open up a poetic space of experience for their audience. In other words, a space that arises from observation and its echo and continuation in inner experience.

Since 2012, the duo has been conceiving and developing theatre productions with light artist and director Joachim Fleischer. Joachim Fleischer works with the medium of light, studied at the State Academy of Fine Arts Stuttgart (1982-89) and has since developed works about light, light installations, art in architecture projects, light in space, works about light and robotics as well as works for theatre and performance. He has been awarded several prizes and scholarships.

Our ongoing artistic collaboration combines knowledge from the fields of object and puppet theatre, music and the art of lighting.



Production team

Collective creation: Michael Döhnert, Joachim Fleischer, Melanie Florschütz

Artistic collaboration and light: Joachim Fleischer

Scenography, objects, play: Michael Döhnert, Melanie Florschütz

Live music and composition: Michael Döhnert

Costume designer: Adelheid Wieser

Production: florschütz & döhnert

Coproduction: Escher Theater, internationales figuren.theater.festival Erlangen, TAK Theater Liechtenstein, Nordland Visual Theatre.

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