



DECEPTION

with Phil Hayes & Jen Rosenblit

A First Cut Productions co-production with
Gessnerallee Zurich
in association with Kaserne Basel,
The Chocolate Factory New York
and La Batie Festival Geneva (tbc).

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STARTING POINT

Emerging through mannerisms and characteristics of «characters», Phil Hayes & Jen Rosenblit play Grifters, Hustlers and Tricksters in search of the promised land ...

Following on from the success of *INVITED GHOSTS* – co-produced with the Fabriktheater Rote Fabrik, Le Grütli Geneva and Südpol Luzern in Autumn/Winter 2022 – *DECEPTION* will be the second installment of our four year arrangement to produce work alternatively between the Fabriktheater and the Gessnerallee until 2025.

Invited Ghosts found us stranded in the snow at the edge of a forest, putting our thoughts to paper as poetry while someone discovered the sounds and depth of a piano. *DECEPTION* places us in a different place and time, in an urban transit zone on the way to the promised land where all is not quite as it seems. These two very different collaborative projects have quite separate sources and objectives, but certain elements are already beginning to seep and bleed from one to the other.. Survivors... New Beginnings... Crime... Renegotiation... together with a rediscovered physicality and new approaches and tactics to writing and creating performance text.

DECEPTION will be created by means of a snaking, mischievous research and rehearsal process moving towards the idea of a promised land, beginning already with research in the Spring of 2023 and continuing through the year. A co-production with the Gessnerallee, the premiere is scheduled for 19th January 2024 in Zurich with performances at Kaserne Basel in March 2024. We are currently in advanced discussions with La Batie festival in Geneva who are proposing to present *DECEPTION* in tandem with a reworked french-language version of our 2013 project *LEGENDS & RUMOURS* produced by Old Masters. Negotiations with la Batie will reconvene following the completion of their programming for this years Festival. We are currently planning a residency and workshop for *DECEPTION* this autumn together with The Chocolate Factory performance space in Long Island City, New York. Phil met Brian Rogers the artistic director of The Chocolate Factory while on two separate pro helvetia supported trips to New York and they have remained in contact since. The Chocolate Factory has previously co-produced Jen Rosenblit's work and so the idea of a residency and workshop based around this collaboration seems to be make sense to all concerned.

INGREDIENTS

Two figures – At times partners and otherwise competitors,
traitors even

A range of characteristics (characters?) and quick-change artists

Wigs, mustaches, fingers nails and eyelashes

A Payphone

People passing through

Luggage (or baggage?)

Phone calls

Body language

Conversations composed of footsteps

Illusions and tricks

Sleight of hand

The power of distraction

A sun-kissed, faded palette; 1970's browns, yellows,
beige and pinks

A promised land

A chance to begin again

The myth of California

Purple mountains and majestic fields

Myths are for the hustlers too

Thieves disguised, blending in, unnoticeable enough and
yet in plain sight

Compulsive liars and cheats

Boasters, charmers and even bullshitters

Like stealing candy from a baby



STAGE & ACTION

Sitting close to the action, the audience is confronted by an almost empty stage.

We hear 1970s Californian soft rock, a kind of playlist for a golden era to be greeted by the tricks and turns of these social climbers, sticky salesmen, drifters and shape-shifters.

If only the composers of these songs had known the kind of actions they would become a soundtrack for.

Lights on stands are wheeled in, and as the film-set fog clears, we see a person crouching by a pay phone.

This stage has dark corners, an off-stage that's on-stage alongside a well lit arena, a fictional public space.

It feels like a film set, but we know it's a stage. It seems to promise action with lights and sound, but how will our two tricksters feel if they stand in the bright light for too long? Do they know they are being watched or are they just rehearsing for the real thing?

The payphone seems like a place to hang out, to wait for messages, as if it's just stood there at the edge of a parking lot where a pair of compulsive, name-dropping liars are begging to be trusted.

So try to hold on to your wallets, wits and lovers around these two. *DECEPTION* reveals a series of necessary manipulations, excuse us... transformations as we drive, windows down, squinting toward that unattainable place out there in the distance.

PROCESS

For *DECEPTION*, we will create characters born of characteristics. We will investigate a series of reflexes and actions to occupy time and space without incriminating ourselves. These «daily habits» magnify a certain attention to details when we feel we are being observed. How we hold ourselves, when we pause, leave or arrive, act as evidence of who these characters want us to think they are. Fiddling with a watch, swapping jewelry or dealing with a physical dilemma (like a comb-over which doesn't stay in place or a broken heel) risk failing to maintain the deception despite a continued effort to convince and remain in disguise.

Criminally aware of the difference between Public and Private, Timid and Confident, Off-stage and On-stage, Phil and Jen charm and trick us, unaware of the fact that we've already witnessed them getting into character.

Like a magician's illusion, a favourite card trick of the gambler or the disorienting seduction manipulated by the salesman, a methodology of organization coupled with more spontaneous observations will reveal a multi-faceted world of deception. If theatre and performance is born of a deception, then what is a theatre that talks of deception, within a society that actively promotes and encourages it?

Isn't it funny? The truth just sounds different.

How you doin'?

Oh I'm fine...

Yes you are...

We are currently researching mythologies around the concept of a promised land.

Not only as a place to start again but also as a lifestyle, a condition or as a feeling...

If the promised land is a place or way to begin again, then isn't it the perpetually traveling ones, the tricky ones who refuse to be held down, or look back, or take stock of the damage around them who will get there first and start to shape and mould the possibilities of the future?

REFERENCES AND INFLUENCES

THE WHITE ALBUM – Joan Didion

LOOKOUT MOUNTAIN, LOOKOUT SEA – The Silver Jews

LAST MEADOW – Miguel Gutierrez

VENTURA HIGHWAY – America

SWAG – Elmore Leonard

PLAY MISTY FOR ME – Clint Eastwood

THE KILLING OF A CHINESE BOOKIE – John Cassavetes

AMERICAN HUSTLE – David O. Russell

REHEARSALS AND PERFORMANCE DATES

DECEPTION is a First Cut Productions co-production with Gessnerallee Zurich in association with Kaserne Basel, The Chocolate Factory New York and La Batie Festival Geneva (tbc).

Premiere Gessnerallee Zürich: 19 January 2024

Research: June 2023

Rehearsals: October, November, December 2023

Residency: Chocolate Factory New York, November 2023

End Rehearsals and 8 Performances in Zurich:

4 – 31 January 2024

Kaserne Basel: 15 & 16 March 2024

La Batie Festival: 4 Performances in September 2024 (tbc)

TEAM

In our work, the collaborative process is generally the basis for generating content and form. Jen Rosenblit recently worked with us on *INVITED GHOSTS*. Sina Knecht worked with us on *REVENGE* and *INVITED GHOSTS*. Tina Bleuler rejoins us, working previously with us on *WHERE WERE WE*, *AWKWARD HUMAN*, *LEGENDS & RUMOURS*, *LOVE & HAPPINESS* and *THESE ARE MY PRINCIPLES...* and Susanne Affolter is regularly part of our Team.

Phil Hayes – Direction, Concept, Music, Performance –
Stationsstrasse 32, 8003 Zürich

Jen Rosenblit – Artistic Advisor –
Gropiusstr. 2, D-13357 Berlin

Sina Knecht – Stage/Costume –
Imfeldsteig 2, 8037 Zürich

Tina Bleuler – Light/Costume –
Birmensdorferstrasse 433, 8055 Zürich

Susanne Affolter – Sound –
Langstrasse 8, 8004 Zürich

Lukas Piccolin – Production –
Schreinerstrasse 61, 8004 Zürich

DIFFUSION

First Cut Productions work has been represented for diffusion and touring by Lise Leclerc at Tutu Production in Geneva since 2017.

www.tutuproduction.ch

Collaboration with Jen Rosenblit

The following is an edited extract from a piece of writing Jen Rosenblit wrote as a response to working on *INVITED GHOSTS* with Phil Hayes in 2022:

I have bumped into Phil regularly over the last seven years working and visiting Zurich. At shows he sits alone but likes a beer or two at the bar afterwards. I know stories about his family and his religious upbringing turned punk musician. Phil and I appear as we might not have anything in common. We have good banter. I find him charming and self-deprecating, it must be that British-New Yorker Jewish-humor connection. Phil always turns up when I perform in Zurich, even as some of my shows rest more in the dance and performance-art genres driven by the likes of Queer desire and academic texts on the multiplicity of the self. There was something about Phil's invitation to advise on the making of *Invited Ghosts* that reminded me that I am a complex figure. I am not only bound to situations which explain or narrate me based on my aesthetics.

Phil has a lot of reservations, a lot of questions and dilemmas. What Phil didn't know is that I had a decade long history in New York City of working with and alongside friends who constantly wanted to quit or do something with more impact than live performance. To finally depart from the fading necessity for live art and chasing after an impossible income. I am not personally conflicted with this but am drawn to certain hesitations.

At an early residency for *Invited Ghosts* at Grütli in Geneva, Phil was busy writing what seemed to be a long poem and he was clear he would simply read it from the page onstage. For some time early on the reading of the text held a drastic difference from the music proposals of Gessica at the Piano and both of their physical presence onstage. This is where I started to sink in. I am deeply invested in the complexities and problems of togetherness. Who are these people, who are we, watching them, what are they doing and what am I supposed to care about? Is it possible that there is an other kind of meaning making at play that quiets these basic relational questions? I was quickly learning that Phil isn't as busy with the same kind of methods for meaning making that I am and so I had to pivot quickly to offer support and feedback about the work in front of me rather than the work I was trying to mold. There was a glorious afternoon asking Gessica to upstage Phil and Phil in half English and half Swiss German explained the theatre science of what it means to upstage! Gessica, not coming from theatre or stage performance of course would not quickly know exactly what I meant but it was more the few moments watching this person, this actor, this body familiar with the stage and his audience guide

someone else through the complexities and contradictions of upstaging someone, how subtle and unassuming the performance of it has to be in order for it to register.

I don't think Phil is invested in certain world-making practices of the last decade like many of my more profitable and popular performance comrades booking one festival to the next, but he is a straight white older theatre artist who wanted a younger queer lesbian performance maker from America to rub up against his work at this moment. Phil took my direction at moments and shifted the content into deep perversion, he responded with tears when I pathetically thanked him for thinking of me and including me in the process and stuck to what he does, has done, trusts and imagines the work to be. I wasn't there to offer painted fingernails or neon lights to a thing which is not asking for that. *INVITED GHOSTS* is a kind of coming-of-age story.

Whether one left the theatre loving what they saw or feeling like it is not an adequate reflection of the 'Phil Hayes oeuvre', I admire and hold dear an artist who continues, not despite, but holding hands with their questions of irrelevance. To make friends with our insecurities and go out on a date with our shame seems to me to be the most personal of approaches. Phil Hayes keeps it small and close. I have worked with others who blow up the room and still try to invite more people in. Neither better, but what a lucky life I have, to encounter those who trust their process without eliminating the important, contemporary and unending concern of irrelevance.

Jen Rosenblit
2022

BIOGRAPHIES

Phil Hayes (1966) is a performance-maker, theatre artist, actor and musician.

He has also worked in kitchens, restaurants, pubs, factories, on the radio, on tv and on building sites. He was born on the south coast of England and studied Creative Arts in Newcastle upon Tyne many many years ago. Based in Zurich since 1998, Phil has spent most of this time creating some fifteen performance and theatre projects, with First Cut Productions, including: *WAITING FOR ROD* (2005), *THE FIRST CUT* (2007), *WHERE WERE WE* (2008), *AWKWARD HUMAN* (2011), *LEGENDS & RUMOURS* (2013), *LOVE & HAPPINESS* (2014), *PLACES OF INTEREST* (2016), *THESE ARE MY PRINCIPLES...* (2016), *WORK* (2017), *UNDER THE INFLUENCE I – III* (2018/19), *HEAVY HITTERS* (2020) and *INVITED GHOSTS* (2022).

His work has regularly toured internationally.

Phil also works as a freelance performer, director, artistic advisor or musician.

He has been a regular collaborator with British performance group Forced Entertainment (2009 – 2016) and worked on several projects with choreographer and performance-maker Simone Aughterlony.

Phil Hayes has been long-standing presence on the Swiss and European independent theatre and performance scene, working with Theater HORA, CAMPO, Maria Jerez, Thomas Kasebacher, Chris Kondek & Christiane Kuehl, watzdameyer, Sachs & Suhner, Salome Schneebeli, Stadttheater Bern, Regina Wenig, Cocoloco Performance, Urbanauts, Mass & Fieber, Natural Theatre Company, Bruvvers, Thom Luz, Low Flying Theatre and Live Theatre Company.

In 2011 Phil was a member of the Jury for the ZKB-Förderpreis at the Zürcher Theater Spektakel festival.

In 2013 Phil was awarded a Werkstipendium prize by the city of Zurich for his work to date.

2016 – 17 Phil was Artist In Residence at the ZHdK – Zurich University of the Arts

In 2019 Phil Hayes received a Freiraum research bursary from Kanton Zurich and spent time with Rude Mechs theatre collective in Austin Texas.

In 2020, Phil Hayes – First Cut Productions were awarded a «kulturelle Auszeichnung» award from the City of Zurich, for the *UNDER THE INFLUENCE I-III* series of performances.

Phil has taught, lead workshops and mentored students at the Zhdk in Zurich and La Manufacture in Lausanne.

In 2021, Phil was one of the theatre mentors for double – a mentoring and coaching programme from Migros-Kulturprozent and is currently a mentor for the *SO-LOW* performance project initiated by Hewart Theater Company in Alexandria Egypt.

www.philhayes.ch

Jen Rosenblit (1983, USA) makes performances based in Berlin after many years in New York City, surrounding architectures, bodies, text, and ideas concerned with problems that arise inside of agendas for togetherness. Rosenblit's works lean toward the uncanny, locating ways of being together amidst (un)familiar and impossible contradictions. The methodology supports an expanse of meaning as it emerges between things and moves toward an unwinding and a possible collapse. Desire and sexuality linger as reoccurring points of departure without demanding a singular aesthetic or representation. Rosenblit has collaborated regularly since 2015 with Simone Aughterlony, looking ahead to a new creation in 2025 titled *THE DUMPS*. Rosenblit's works have been invited by zurichmoves! and Jen has taught BA and Master's workshops at la Manufacture in Lausanne as well as HKB in Bern. Rosenblit is a 2018 Guggenheim Fellow, a recipient of a 2014 New York Dance and Performance *BESSIE* Award, a 2023 La Becque (Vevey, CH) artist in residence and has collaborated with artists such as Miguel Gutierrez, A.K.Burns, Phil Hayes and Philipp Gehmacher. Rosenblit's newest work, *ELSEWHERE RHAPSODY* is a 2024 co-production with Tanzfabrik Berlin, TanzQuartier Wien, BUDA KunstenCentrum (BE), Theatre St. Gervais (CH) and Arsenic – Centre d'art scénique contemporain (CH), offering distraction as a guide to speak toward the illegibility of desire and forgetfulness as a way to shift toward something else, away from the damaging repetition.

www.jenrosenblit.net

Sina Knecht (1986) completed her studies in scenography at the ZHdK in 2016. In addition to her work as a scenographer, where she designs stages for music and theatre (Faber, Phil Hayes, Felix Rothenhäusler...), Sina also works as a lighting designer including for the productions *DO YOU BELIEVE IN ELVES?* (2016) and *SALZIGE TRÄNEN* (2021) directed by Leonie Graf as well as *FUTURE CLINIC FOR CRITICAL CARE PRESENTS: HOME* at the Gessnerallee Zurich and Criptonite's *SLOW ANIMALS* at the Kaserne Basel.

Since August 2018, she has been deepening her technical knowledge as a lighting technician at Theater Neumarkt and touring with the musicians Sophie Hunger/Dino Brandao/Faber.

Tina Bleuler (1979)

Tina Bleuler lives in Zurich and has studied fashion, visual arts and lighting design.

Since 2005, Bleuler has worked as a freelance lighting and costume designer for Phil Hayes, Alexandra Bachzetsis, Thom Luz and Dimitri de Perrot, among others. She has worked at theatres and opera houses such as Schauspielhaus Hamburg Theater Basel, Residenz Theater München, Oper unter den Linden Berlin, Opernhaus Zürich but also at many independent touring theatre venues in Europe

Susanne Affolter (1970)

Sound Technician Theatre/Touring

2010 – 2021

Nicolas Stehmann, Zino Wey, Zimmermann & Deperrot, Christoph Marthaler, Phil Hayes, Tim Zulauf, Christoph Frick KLARA, Marcel Schwald, Laura de Weck, Les Mémoires d'Hélène, Les Reines Prochaines, Anna Papst, Theater Neumarkt, Kaserne Basel, Theater Spektakel Zürich, Schauspielhaus ZH, Kampnagel HH

Sound Technician Dance /Touring

2010 – 2021

Antje Schupp, Dagmar Bock, Lucie Tuma, Simone Aughterlony, Eugenie Rébétez, Marisa Godoi, Christine Gaigg, Tanzhaus ZH

Sound Technician Music / Touring

1997–2021

Baby Jail, Pussy Warmers, Die Aeronauten, Die Brauthaut ins Auge, KANTE, die goldenen Zitronen, Torococorot, Stella, Knut & Sylvi, Pale Nutes, Admiral James T., GUZ, Bernadette la Hengst, SFUM

Concepts/ Recordings / Mixing Audiobooks and Radio Plays

2016 – 2021

- zurich & basel stills audiowalks
- 7 Audiobooks of the Grimm tales
- Radio Play with School classes from Seefeld im JULL;
Author Suzanne Zahnd
- Annual Radio Plays with Schreibstorm in Baden;
Author Svenja Hermann
- Various recordings made with children in JULL, Junges Literaturlabor ZH

Lukas Piccolin, Zurich (1967), has been working as a production manager for various film productions since the 1990s.

Since 2002 he has also worked as a production manager for independent theatre projects, including First Cut Productions/ Phil Hayes, kraut_produktion/Michel Schröder, KMUProduktionen/Tim Zulauf, Denise Wintsch, Raum und Zeit/ Bernhard Mikeska, and others.

Since 2021 he has been working as a consultant at artFAQ and jobsharing as production manager at the music festival *SONIC MATTER*.

Since the beginning of 2023 he has also been working part-time as production manager at Fabriktheater Rote Fabrik Zurich.

FIRST CUT PRODUCTIONS

Registered as an association (Verein) in Zurich Switzerland in 2010, First Cut Productions is the name we have used for various projects since 2005, including:

INVITED GHOSTS (2022), *HEAVY HITTERS* (2020), *UNDER THE INFLUENCE I-III* (2018-19), *WORK* (2018), *THESE ARE MY PRINCIPLES...* (2016), *PLACES OF INTEREST* (2016), *LOVE & HAPPINESS* (2014), *LEGENDS & RUMOURS* (2013), *AWKWARD HUMAN* (2011), *WHERE WERE WE* (2008) and *THE FIRST CUT* (2007).

In 2010 it was registered as an Association (Verein) in Zurich, Switzerland.

In Switzerland we have co-produced with or performed at: Gessnerallee Zurich, Fabriktheater Zurich, Zürcher Theater Spektakel, Roxy Birsfelden, Kaserne Basel, Schlachthaus Bern, Dampfzentrale Bern, AUA Wir Leben Bern, Théâtre de l'Usine Geneva, Le Grütli Geneva, St Gervais Geneva, Arsenic Lausanne, Programme Commun Lausanne, Theatre Vidy Lausanne, Südpol Luzern, Kurtheater Baden and Journées de Théâtre Suisse Contemporain and Zeughaus Brig.

Our projects have regularly toured internationally and have been invited to a number of Festivals including; Actoral Festival, Marseille (France), Extra Ball at CCS Paris (France), Terni Festival (Italy), Wuhzen Theatre Festival (China), 100% Festival at La Villette, Paris (France), AUA Wir Leben, Bern (Switzerland), Selection Swiss at Avignon Festival (France), Festival Latitudes Contemporaines, Lille/Roubaix (France), Danae Festival, Milan (Italy), Festival Bonus, Hédé-Bazouges (France).

In 2020, Phil Hayes and First Cut Productions were awarded a «kulturelle Auszeichnung» award from the City of Zurich, for the *UNDER THE INFLUENCE I-III* series of performances.

In our work, the collaborative process is generally the basis for generating content and form together with a rolling series of new and regular collaborative partners.

Regular Collaborators include:

Phil Hayes: Direction, Performance

Lukas Piccolin: Production

Julia Hintermüller: Dramaturg

Susanne Hofer/Flimmern: Video

Tina Bleuler/Patrik Rimann, Electric Gold: Lighting Design

Other Collaborators include:

Simone Aughterlony: Artistic advisor

Anita Affentranger: Photography

Marcel Blatti: Music

Alain Borek: Performer

Ursula Degen: Light

Adrian Elsener: Graphic Design/Photography

Mark Etchells: Performer

Nada Gambier: Performer/Artistic advisor

Luc Georgi: Photography

Christian Gibbs: Performer/Music

Ewelina Guzik: Performer

Dominic Huber/blendwerk: Stage

Christophe Jaquet: Concept/Music/Performer

Nele Jahnke: Performer

Maria Jerez: Performer

Thomas Kasebacher: Performer

Sina Knecht: Stage

David Langhard: Music

Olifr Maurmann: Music

Dominic Oppliger: Artistic Advisor

Sarah Palin: Performer / Music

Viviane Pavillon: Performer

Thomas Peter: Musik/Sounds

Gregory Putnam: Sports Coach

Janina Offner: Interviews und Coordination

Jen Rosenblit: Artistic Advisor

Marius Schaffter: Performer

Niklaus Spoerri: Photography

Nic Tillein: Stage/Costume

Nadine Tobler: Production Assistance

Herwig Ursin: Performer

Nora Vonder Mühl: Performer

www.thefirstcut.ch

PRESS REACTIONS

PHIL HAYES / FIRST CUT PRODUCTIONS

INVITED GHOSTS

The uncertainty is colossal, the drive for resocialisation large...
A sensually intense balancing act.

Thierry Froschoux P.S. Zeitung, Zurich

ASSIGNMENTS #1 & #2

Each of these songs has a tune that you won't forget in a hurry, that confidently whispers to us that the sun will rise again tomorrow. The songs instantly loosen you up and belong under everyone's headphones, especially when you're still blinking a little sceptically into the sun. In any case, rock'n'roll doesn't come anymore more relaxed.

Frank Heer, NZZ

Simple and small cues have led to stirring music, the song-writing ignited with fresh sparks... Complicated or not, the world is always easier to bear when Phil Hayes plays us a song.

Michael Bohli, Artnoir

WORK

It really is a pleasure to watch these six performers. They are wide awake, they are super precise, you catch every look out of the out of the corner of your eye... and as I said before, what also makes the evening is what it doesn't do, that it doesn't turn into a psychological, commentary into a psychological, commenting, ironic play, but rather, in Phil Hayes' own dry way, points out something that, which, if executed consistently, actually points beyond itself.

Dagmar Walser, Radio SRF2 Kultur

It could be a division of a corporation that was forgotten during a complicated merger and reorganisation, without anyone noticing the employees present or the payroll department being informed. Phil Hayes sketches the world of work in *WORK* as a repository for time-wasting, for time-served wage earners, whose professional competence as well as empathetic interest in each other is just mimed.

Thierry Froschoux, P.S. Zeitung

THESE ARE MY PRINCIPLES...

As funny as this questionnaire always is, it is also clever. Through their answers, the two stage characters gradually become multi-layered characters. They show us that decision does not equal opinion, that opinions do not equal principles, and that principles are worth little without deeds.

Isabel Hemmel, Tages-Anzeiger, Zurich

LOVE & HAPPINESS

What is interesting about this totally unpretentious stage performance is the complete absence of bitterness, sarcasm or mockery...

Thierry Frochoux, P.S. Zeitung

LEGENDS & RUMOURS

A grandiose theatrical trinity of situational comedy, misdirections and hopelessness trained on Samuel Beckett.

Tages-Anzeiger, Zurich

In *Legends & Rumours*, three people spend a lot of time reenacting a moment they have experienced together. Gesture by gesture, sentence by sentence they try to reconstruct the experience. It is also a question of how lively memory can be when it comes to pranks. But above all, the woman and the two men try to give unbelievable meaning to a rather banal occurrence... Hayes, Jerez and Kasebacher deliver a delightfully well-acted performance.

Helmut Ploebst, Der Standard, Vienna

AWKWARD HUMAN

Despite snappy training songs and spurring guitar riffs, concentrated, impatient and tense gymnast Phil Hayes shows us that performance is a struggle. Regularly pausing and discussing a life, in which things often don't go as one would like them to, Hayes does all this with a sure sense of timing, with understatement and a lot of humour.

A smart, entertaining, well-paced evening. In any case, the critic gives it maximum points.

Corina Freudiger, Tagesanzeiger Zurich

A man in search of grace and elegance, which is never given to him. Phil Hayes' new play *AWKWARD HUMAN* is a dazzlingly comic essay on the eternal striving of earthlings for completely different spheres.

Lilo Weber, Neue Zürcher Zeitung

He is panting, the effort is written all over his face, but the laughter sticks in the throats of the audience, because at last it becomes clear: it is we ourselves who are struggling so hard to achieve and never reaching the heights of our ambitious goals.

Ursula Haas, Basellandschaftliche Zeitung

WHERE WERE WE

WHERE WERE WE shifts perspectives continuously into the surreal, only to start again abruptly at a completely new image.

Where were we?

The question is temporal, but of course thematic, like that of the teacher or interrupted speaker. But where this ends, however, can only be determined by the next question or the stage performance, this first episode is absolutely worth seeing...

Annette Mahro, Badische Zeitung