

Arnhem, 22-3-2016

Hereby I nominate the production PLAY MAIDS, directed by our student Mart van Berckel, for Körber Studio Junge Regie 2016.

For the past few years in our school, I got to know Mart as a special, talented directing student. He knows how to form material to his own hands in an intelligent manner. His unique adaptations of repertoire remind of the work of Marthaler. Under his direction, pieces become musical, quirky collages. Besides, his strong visual signature stands out. This is influenced by his partner, designer Joris Suk of fashion label Maison the Faux. The young, musically gifted director Mart van Berckel knows how to bring art disciplines together naturally. He sees texts as musical scores, and musical scores as theatrical material. Although his work sometimes tends toward a campy style, it is never cynical. Mart is especially interested in the world close to him: honest themes and questions that concern the personal life of him and his surroundings. The content of his work often deals with malleable reality, phantasy and hyperreality. In this, his observations are sharp and extreme. In the making process, Mart knows how to motivate and bring together his actors and creative partners. His enthusiasm is contagious and his inspiring ideas make it a pleasure to work with him.

His final production PLAY MAIDS is made in cooperation with graduating performers Anne Freriks and Robin Kuiper. In their working process, the traditional hierarchical borders between director, performer and maker are very fluid. They look for unexpected and unusual collaborations. For this production they invited Margreet Blanken, a renowned actress who graduated from our theatre school in 1963, to perform in the piece. Besides, they work with Maison the Faux, a young Dutch fashion label focussing on hybridity in design and visual art. *The Maids* by Jean Genet forms the starting point for this production. However, the material is used very freely to research the relevant themes that concern them personally. The two sisters become the portrayal of a young generation that is struggling with their search for authenticity and identity, through constant role-play and exhibitionism. The maids are characters that have to face the borders of their own artificial world.

PLAY MAIDS is an unique, interdisciplinary encounter between different art forms. A visual, poetic, dark music theatre peepshow that questions and investigates the modern hyperreality.

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