

## **A frenzy for the senses**

**DIONYSOS' CITY**, direction: Christopher Rüping, host and environment: Felix Lübke, live music: Matze Pröllochs, video: Susanne Steinmassl, stage design: Jonathan Mertz, lighting: Stephan Mariani, Christian Schweig, music: Jonas Holle, Matze Pröllochs, costumes: Lene Schwind, dramaturgy: Valerie Göhring, Matthias Pecs. With: Maja Beckmann, Majd Feddah, Nils Kahnwald, Gro Swantje Kohlhof, Wiebke Mollenhauer, Jochen Noch, Benjamin Radjaipour. Prod. Münchner Kammerspiele, MUNICH.

In a nearly ten-hour marathon, Christopher Rüping tells the story of mankind who receives the gift of fire from Prometheus and uses it only to pillage and plunder. *Dionysos' City* is not a staging of any of the classic Greek tragedies, but a form study interested in experiencing theatre as a frenzy. Diverse texts, old and new, are mixed into a thematic triad. The journey takes us from the myth of Prometheus via the Trojan War to the family tragedy of the "Oresteia". In the final satyr play we encounter a modern hero: the football-god Zinédine Zidane and his fall during the World Cup finals of 2006 (for this fourth part Rüping uses Jean-Philippe Toussaint's wonderfully poetic essay "The Melancholy of Zidane").

The mammoth work is a genre remix of slapstick, improvisation, stagediving, tragedy and a lot of (live) music. *Dionysos' City* captivates through the constancy with which Rüping brings together the theme about mankind, its self-empowerment, its sovereignty, its outrageousness, declaimed in a variety of theatrical forms and in several languages (German, English, Arabic). Eight awesome actors convey the characters and political situation of Greek drama to the present. Not only do they tell old stories in a contemporary manner, they also revive the tradition of ancient theatre as a celebration and gathering of the people. The stylistic devices range from monologues to sitcom, whereby Rüping is always focusing on theatre as a shared experience. At this Dionysian event, the actors invite the audience to join them at times on the stage, to be part of Pylades' and Electra's wedding celebration. From the very beginning there is onstage even a bench reserved for smoking spectators and there were quite a few who used it during the performance I witnessed. Furthermore, the individual parts of the production are separated by three extensive intermissions of catering and entertainment – all in all, a unique collective experience. **Irina Wolf**