



# BACK TO THE FUTURE

## How a new stage play evolved at Schauspiel Frankfurt

By Anke Sauter

It is the year 2114. The young democratic Republic of Greenland is on the brink of a bright and hopeful future. The climate wars are over, fossil fuels have been replaced by alternative energy sources, and humanity has put aside its ethnic and social conflicts. But then dreadful news reaches Greenlandic society from Europe, the former centre of power: »Planetary consciousness«, which enables a life in harmony with nature and fellow creatures, is evidently in the process of being displaced by individualism once again. A Greenlandic research team is getting to the bottom of these anachronistic stirrings.

In his play »Eternal Peace« at Schauspiel Frankfurt, the city's largest theatre, Alexander Eisenach devotes himself to the topic of climate change in an unusual way. From the not-too-distant future, he directs our attention to a past that is not dissimilar to our present and leaves us at a loss. What is also exciting about the production is that the play only evolved in the course of rehearsals. »Alexander Eisenach came to

the first rehearsal holding a draft of just a few pages. The play developed little by little out of this within the five weeks of rehearsals – as a result of working together with the actors and actresses,« says playwright Katrin Spira, describing the development process. The play, commissioned especially for Schauspiel Frankfurt, plays with the »science fiction« genre and exhibits an ambiguous sense of humour: Some of the things we take for granted today seem quite bizarre when viewed from the distance of the future world. Concepts such as growth and productivity, apparently so elementary for our coexistence today, no longer – supposedly – have a place in this world of eternal peace. Yet at the same time the question arises of how such a world was ultimately able to dominate. In any event, the journey into a foundering Europe illuminates the crisis we are steering towards and holds up a mirror to us contemporaries.

Science fiction is a genre particularly suitable for making the leap into the utopian possible and tangible, says playwright Spira.

Through its hypothetical nature, elements that today seem impossible to us can be overridden, allowing us to think things further in an extreme way. In the course of the rehearsal process, the actors and actresses discussed and introduced their own different experiences and viewpoints, which the author and director then transposed into the future setting when writing and producing the play.

The premiere, which was scheduled for 20 November, had to be postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. It is not yet certain when the play will be presented on stage for the first time in front of an audience.

[www.schauspielfrankfurt.de](http://www.schauspielfrankfurt.de)