LAB'ORATOIRE

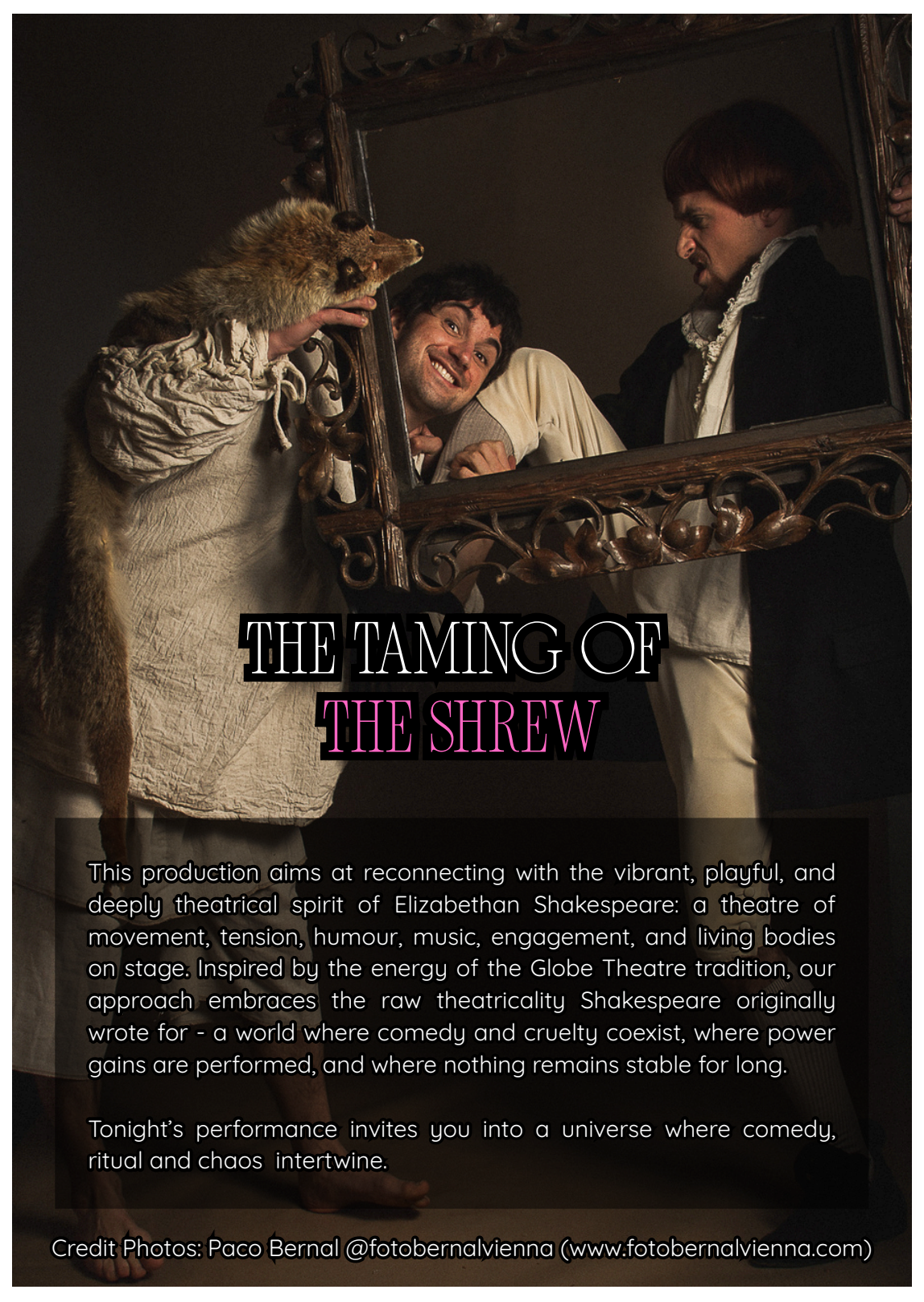
ACTING LAB

In Padua: we love, we cheat, we play. May the best liar win.



12-13-14 & 16-17-18 JUNE 2026

THEATERARCHE



THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

This production aims at reconnecting with the vibrant, playful, and deeply theatrical spirit of Elizabethan Shakespeare: a theatre of movement, tension, humour, music, engagement, and living bodies on stage. Inspired by the energy of the Globe Theatre tradition, our approach embraces the raw theatricality Shakespeare originally wrote for - a world where comedy and cruelty coexist, where power gains are performed, and where nothing remains stable for long.

Tonight's performance invites you into a universe where comedy, ritual and chaos intertwine.

Credit Photos: Paco Bernal @fotobernalvienna (www.fotobernalvienna.com)

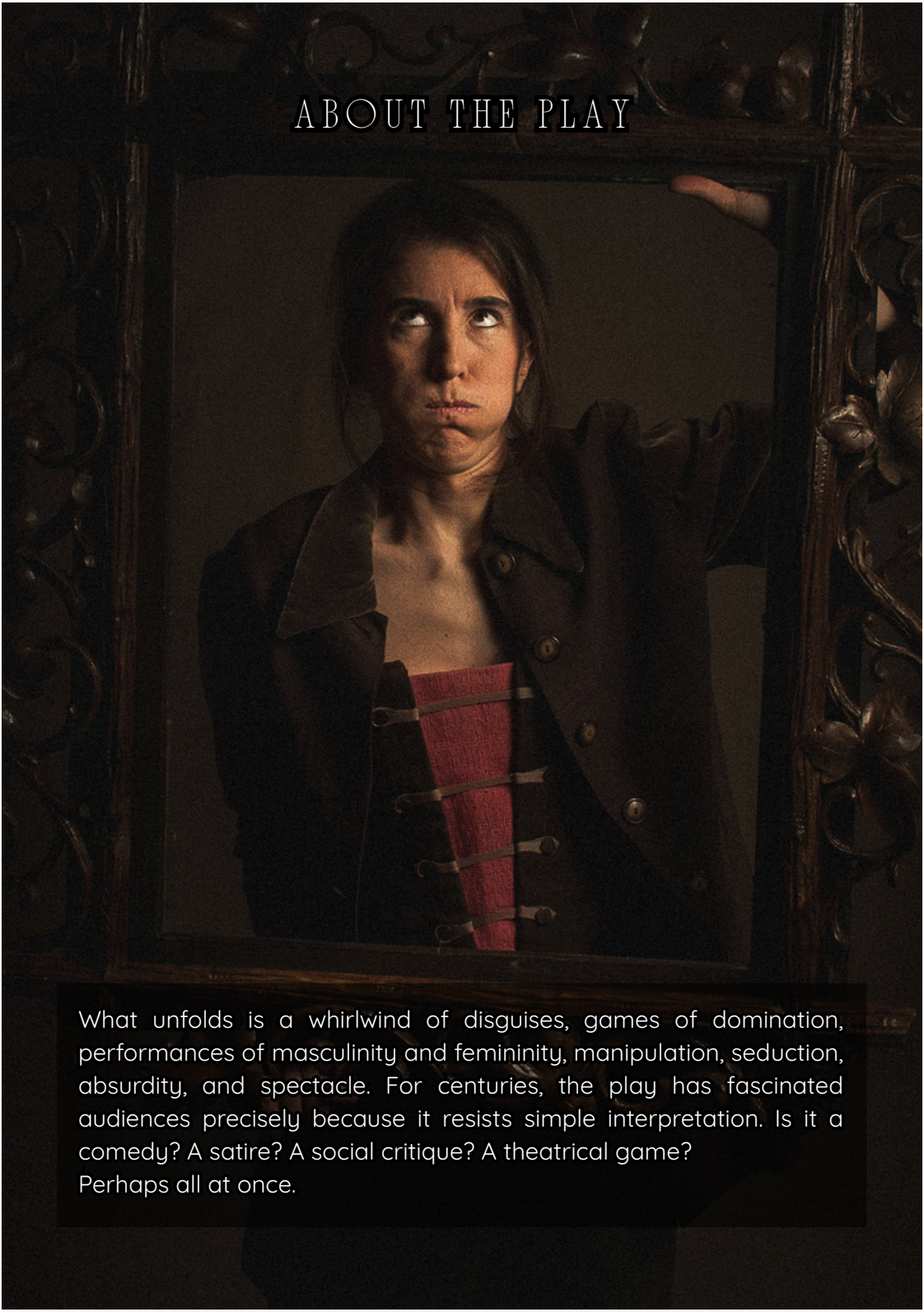


ABOUT THE PLAY

Written around 1590–1592, The Taming of the Shrew remains one of Shakespeare's most provocative and debated comedies.

Set in Padua, the play follows the fierce and outspoken Katherina and her younger sister Bianca who cannot marry until the former herself is wed. Enters Petruchio; ambitious, theatrical, and determined to marry Katherina by any means necessary.

ABOUT THE PLAY



What unfolds is a whirlwind of disguises, games of domination, performances of masculinity and femininity, manipulation, seduction, absurdity, and spectacle. For centuries, the play has fascinated audiences precisely because it resists simple interpretation. Is it a comedy? A satire? A social critique? A theatrical game?
Perhaps all at once.

SHAKESPEARE & PERFORMANCE



The Globe Theatre was not a place of silence.

Audiences reacted loudly, interrupted, laughed, shouted, drank, and interacted directly with performers. Shakespeare wrote for an audience that was active, unpredictable, and physically present.

Elizabethan theatre relied on language, rhythm, imagination, and the actor's ability to hold the audience's attention through sheer presence rather than technical illusion. Our production draws inspiration from this theatrical tradition while placing it into dialogue with a contemporary visual language.

DIRECTORS' NOTE



Shakespeare was never meant to be polite.

Too often, classical theatre is approached as something distant, frozen, or untouchable. Yet The Taming of the Shrew remains one of Shakespeare's most explosive, unsettling, and contradictory plays; a comedy where seduction, domination, performance, and spectacle constantly collide.

With this production, we did not seek to soften these tensions, but to expose them.

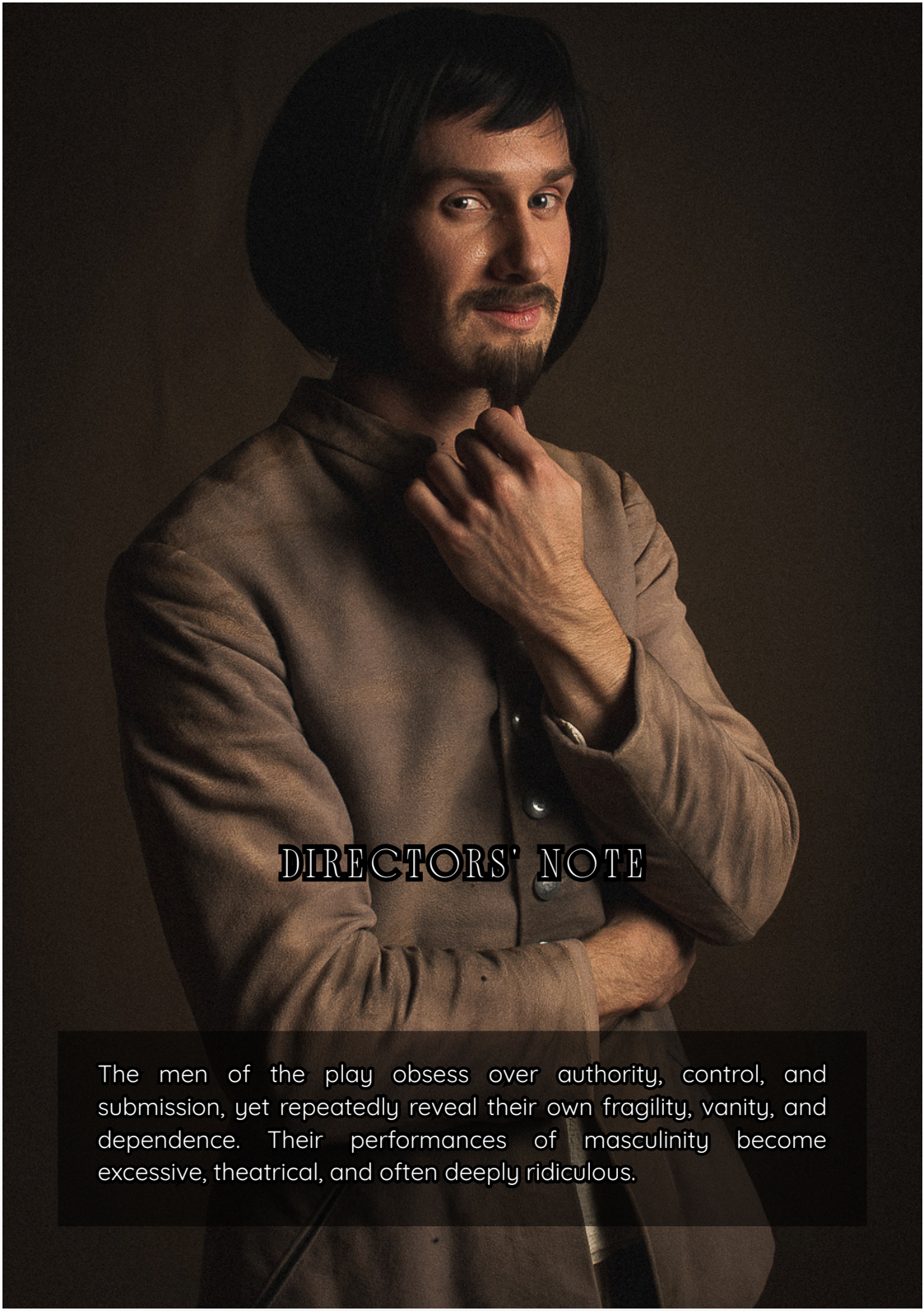
DIRECTORS' NOTE



At the centre of our interpretation lies a simple question:

who is truly taming whom?

Rather than presenting Katherina as a woman broken into obedience, we explore the possibility that she learns to navigate, and ultimately manipulate, the absurd structures imposed upon her. In this world, obedience itself becomes performance, which was the most rebellious act at the time.



DIRECTORS' NOTE

The men of the play obsess over authority, control, and submission, yet repeatedly reveal their own fragility, vanity, and dependence. Their performances of masculinity become excessive, theatrical, and often deeply ridiculous.



DIRECTORS' NOTE

In our production, Sly dreams the entire story after collapsing drunk in the streets. The fantasy of “taming” a woman emerges precisely because he himself feels powerless in his real life. Yet even within his dream, feminine power continues to haunt him.

The Widow appears throughout the production as a reflection of the woman Sly cannot escape: his own wife. Through her presence, the production explores the contradiction at the heart of patriarchal structures: men may publicly claim authority over women, yet remain emotionally, socially, and psychologically dependent on them.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



PERFORMANCE & IDENTITY

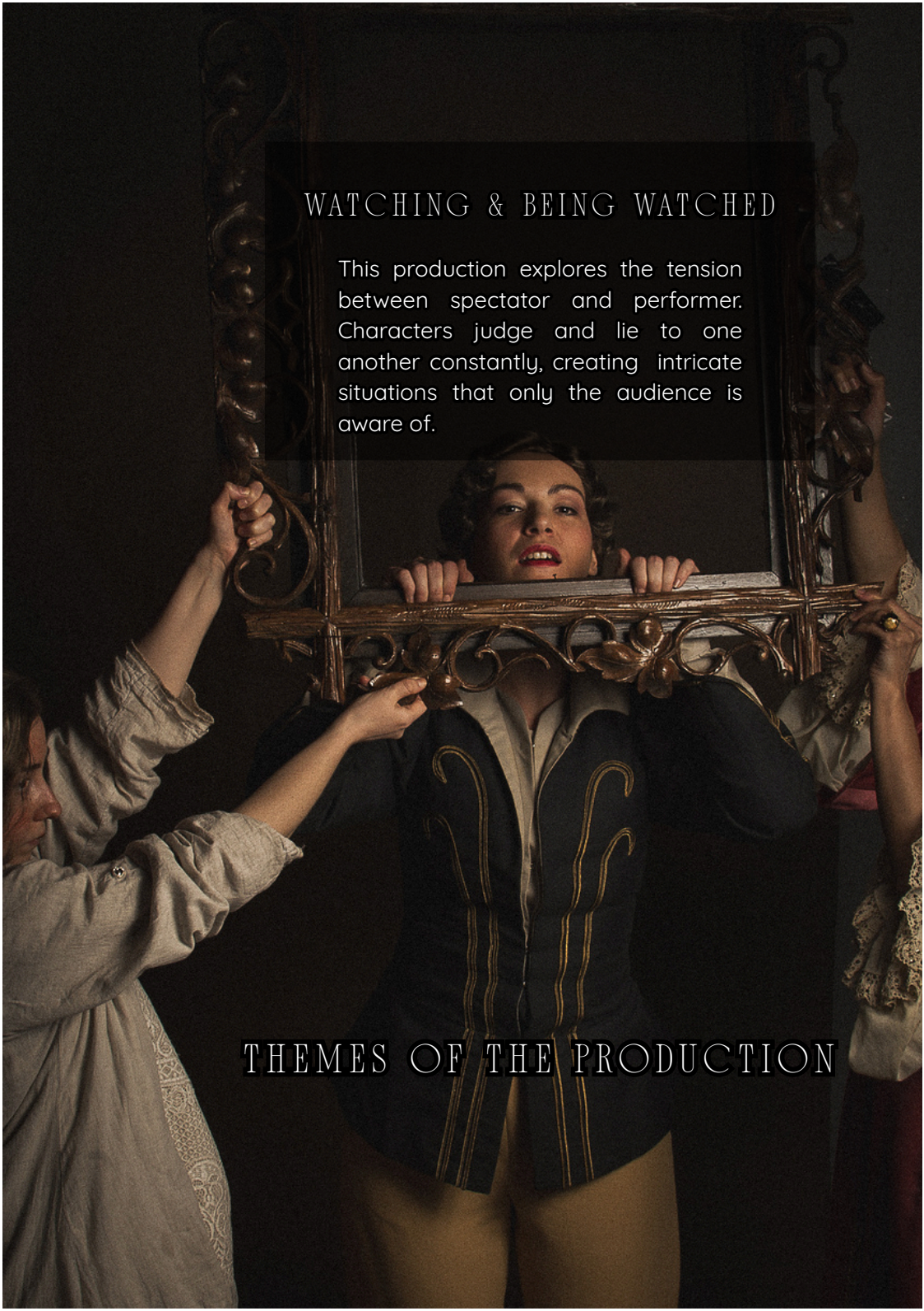
Throughout the play, characters disguise themselves, reinvent themselves, manipulate appearances, and perform social roles. Identity becomes unstable, theatrical, and strategic.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



POWER & CONTROL

Who controls whom? Through humour, seduction, language, money, and violence, power dynamics constantly evolve throughout the play.



WATCHING & BEING WATCHED

This production explores the tension between spectator and performer. Characters judge and lie to one another constantly, creating intricate situations that only the audience is aware of.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION

COMEDY & DISCOMFORT

The play shifts continuously between laughter and unease. Comedy becomes both a weapon and a mask.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



FAMILY, MARRIAGE, & SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

In The Taming of the Shrew, marriage is never presented as a purely romantic ideal. It is a social structure through which wealth, reputation, inheritance, power, and family alliances are negotiated.

Throughout the play, daughters are discussed, evaluated, and exchanged according to social expectations largely dictated by male authority. Baptista decides who may marry, under what conditions, and at what moment. Marriage becomes less an intimate union than a transaction shaped by status, economic interest, and patriarchal order.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



FAMILY, MARRIAGE, & SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

Women are constantly observed through the lens of appearance and value: beauty, obedience, reputation, dowry, and desirability become forms of social currency. Behind the comedy lies a world where femininity itself is carefully staged, judged, and controlled.

At the same time, the play reveals how fragile these structures truly are. Beneath the performances of authority and social order, characters manipulate appearances, negotiate power, deceive one another, and reinvent themselves in order to survive.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



FAMILY, MARRIAGE, & SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

Our production explores this tension between social convention and private desire. Family structures become theatrical systems in which everyone is expected to perform a role: the obedient daughter, the authoritative father, the desirable bride, the dominant husband.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



FAMILY, MARRIAGE, & SOCIAL PERFORMANCE

Yet as these performances intensify, their artificiality begins to show. The comedy of the play emerges precisely from this instability — from the gap between the rigid image society attempts to impose and the far more chaotic human reality underneath.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



FEMININE STRATEGY & MASCULINE PERFORMANCE

Who is truly taming whom?

Rather than presenting Katherina as a woman broken into obedience, our interpretation explores the possibility that she learns to navigate (and ultimately manipulate) the absurd structures imposed upon her. In a world where men obsess over controlling women, appearances become strategic. Compliance itself becomes performance.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



FEMININE STRATEGY & MASCULINE PERFORMANCE

As the play unfolds, masculine authority increasingly reveals itself as theatrical, fragile, and often ridiculous. The men of the play desperately attempt to assert control, construct dominance, and impose order, yet constantly expose their own vanity, insecurity, and contradictions.

Katherina's apparent transformation therefore becomes deliberately ambiguous. Is she truly submitting, or is she discovering how to survive, negotiate, and ultimately gain power within the rules of the game itself?
In this reading, obedience becomes performance, and performance becomes strategy.

THEMES OF THE PRODUCTION



FEMININE STRATEGY & MASCULINE PERFORMANCE

This perspective also resonates deeply with Shakespeare's original theatrical context. In Elizabethan England, female roles were performed by male actors. The play already contained an inherent layer of theatrical irony: men constructing exaggerated versions of femininity, masculinity, domination, and submission before a public audience. Our production embraces this tension fully. By pushing masculine performance toward excess, spectacle, and ridicule, we seek not to celebrate domination, but to expose its theatricality.

CHRISTOPHER SLY & THE DREAM

Our interpretation places renewed emphasis on Christopher Sly, the drunken wanderer who frames the play through Shakespeare's original induction. In our production, Sly becomes more than a comic observer: he becomes the unconscious architect of the story itself. Falling asleep after wandering through the cold streets, Sly dreams a world in which a man succeeds in "taming" a woman.



Yet beneath this fantasy lies a far more fragile reality. In his everyday life, it is Sly who experiences dependence, instability, and emotional submission. The dream therefore becomes an attempt to reclaim control through fiction. But the dream resists him.

CHRISTOPHER SLY & THE DREAM



The figure of the Widow emerges throughout the production as the haunting reflection of Sly's real wife; a presence he cannot escape even within his fantasy. She embodies a form of feminine authority that unsettles him deeply: intelligent, watchful, emotionally powerful, and impossible to fully dominate.

Through her presence, the production explores a contradiction at the heart of patriarchal structures. Men may publicly claim authority over women, legally or socially, yet remain profoundly dependent on them: for affection, care, validation, domestic stability, emotional survival, and love. In this sense, the masculine obsession with domination reveals not strength, but vulnerability.

The Widow therefore becomes both a haunting figure and a symbolic embodiment of feminine resilience. Her presence threatens the fantasy of male control that Sly attempts to construct.

CHRISTOPHER SLY & THE DREAM



Katherina's final speech results from this tension. In our reading, Sly pushes her to speak the words he longs to hear; words of obedience and submission, precisely because he himself cannot silence the fear of female autonomy haunting his dream.

Yet while Katherina speaks, the question remains unresolved: who truly holds power? The men speak endlessly of control, yet the women continue to shape the emotional, social, and psychological reality around them.

The dream therefore becomes less a fantasy of domination than a revelation of masculine anxiety itself.



ABOUT LAB'ORATOIRE

LAB'ORATOIRE is a Vienna-based performance arts association dedicated to theatre and film production. The company seeks to create visually striking and intellectually engaged productions that bridge classical theatre and contemporary performance.

The Lab's work focuses on theatrical experimentation, actor training, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the exploration of performance as both ritual and collective experience.

Website: www.lab-oratoire.org
Email: laboratoire.acting@gmail.com
Follow-us on Instagram @Laboratoire_acting

ACKNOWLEDGMENT



We would like to warmly thank everyone who contributed to the creation of this production: our actors, collaborators, technicians, photographer, supporters, partners, and audience. Live theatre only exists through collective presence. Thank you for being here tonight.

If you would like to support The Lab' and help us continue creating independent theatre projects, you can make a contribution via our website at www.lab-oratoire.org/donate or by donating to the following IBAN: AT49 2011 1856 2915 4300 (LAB'ORATOIRE, LE LAB' - VEREIN)

Every contribution, no matter the size, helps us bring future productions to life. Thank you for your support!









THE LAB'S FANTASTIC ARTISTIC TEAM

CAST

Ilias Aguenaou • Lucentio / Curtis
Adriano Barbieri Lautenschlager • Philippe
Marwan De Midar • The Lord / Batista
Laïla Dine • Katherina
Marc Javin • Grumio
Hawa Kebe • Vincentia
Marcin Kranz • Lute Player
Geoffrey Lanau • Hortensio
Charlotte Lebrun • Gremia
Julija Pitzek • Bianca
Maëlys Prompsy • Biondella
Ludwig Psenner • Concierge / Cartenier
Laura Sánchez Lara • The Pedant
Alba Sanz de Lara Gil • Nataniel
Anna-Sanziana Beschia • The Tailor / The Widow
Enzo Visca • Sly / Petruchio
Thibo Wannebroucq • Tranio






PRODUCTION

Directors
Laïla Dine & Enzo Visca
Scenography
Laïla Dine & Enzo Visca
Costumes
Laïla Dine & Enzo Visca
Hair & Makeup
Martina Margaretha Reitinger
Original Score
Leonardo Dessi
Sound Design
Etienne Decreuse
Sound Management
Safaa Smidi & Marie Chave
Translation & Surtitles
Maëlys Prompsy
Surtitle Operator
Rose Bruhnes
Lighting Operator
Anastasia Gromova-Schneider
Stage Assistant
Laura Sánchez Lara
Photography
Paco Bernal





THANK YOU!



AMOPA AUTRICHE

Association des professeurs de français en Autriche

le cercle Vienne

club vie