

East of Berlin

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THEATRE REVIEW | This powerful production by Bakehouse Theatre poses some thought-provoking and often confronting questions.

Is it possible to change history through conscious acts of redemption? What measures would you take in order to secure a new future?

At the outset, we meet Rudi (Adam Carter) – carrying an overnight bag, he appears strong and decisive as he takes the necessary steps to change his future. Rudi creates strong visual images and transports us back in time to when he was 17 years old, coming to terms with his manhood and long-held family secrets that take their toll and change the course of his life.

Seven years later, Rudi has returned home to confront his father, and this is where the tale begins.

Much of Rudi's story is delivered straight to the audience, which establishes an assumed relationship and provides a platform for us to consider tough questions of morality, responsibility and the subsequent impact on future generations.

Trying to reconcile his inherited guilt and come to terms with a legacy over which he had no control, Rudi confides in school friend Hermann (Tom Cornwall), who reveals far more to Rudi than his father ever told him. He also meets Sarah (Claire Mansfield), who offers a change of pace and new life. A relationship forms and as history repeats itself and family secrets are blown open, a powerful conclusion is revealed.

Director Peter Green delivers seamless transitions from past to present, bringing the many layers of human complexity to light and defining the finer details that prompt us to take action.

With an exceptionally strong cast and a riveting script by Canadian playwright Hannah Moscovitch, the play drives home a message that no single act defines our character.

East of Berlin was nominated for the Dora Mavor Moore Award for best New Play in 2008 and is being performed at The Bakehouse in Angas Street until September 21.