

## CPHCULTURE

**A NUMBER \* \* \* \***

21.02.2018

It was 14 years ago the last time Caryl Churchill's *A NUMBER* played at Husets Teater with Jesper Langberg and Anders W. Berthelsen. At that time under the Danish title "Kopier" (Copies) it was part of a frenzied media debate about Dolly the sheep. Since then cloning has become a real possibility, as we learnt during a debate prior to premiere of this new production of the play in its original English language in Krudttønden. (Powder Keg)

Germany has very strict laws forbidding human cloning while Denmark has a more relaxed attitude within controlled scientific research that could one day be of benefit to people's health. In the U.S. there is actually no legal prohibition of cloning and with equipment costing only 100.000 dollars and hundreds of willing foster-mothers it is now possible to clone.

So, it makes sense to perform this play again since *human* cloning could now become a reality within the next 14 years. *A NUMBER* is brilliantly directed by Helen Parry who keeps the dialogue razor-sharp without losing its' humour.

Few actors can like Ian Burns give themselves body and soul to men that never achieved the life they dreamt of having despite having the potential. We saw that with his portrayal of Frank in *Educating Rita* earlier this season and now we see it again in *A NUMBER*.

This time he gives an eminent study of Salter, a well-meaning father, with a habit of terrible decision-making. Salter's wife dies and his then young son doesn't develop as he maybe should have under his care. When the new possibility of cloning presents itself he sends the unfortunate boy away and starts afresh. During this 1- hour play it becomes apparent that this was not his only bad decision.

Rasmus Emil Mortensen – shows us with his portrayal of the original son and the clones that he is among the best young English-speaking actors in the country. He finds a perfect balance between differences and similarities in the 3 characters he plays. On the surface these traits are enjoyable and fun to watch, but ultimately they are disturbing.

*A NUMBER* emphasizes Caryl Churchill's relevance and skill as a dramatist and is yet another victory for That Theatre Company.