

Swiss Play In London

A Pratteln teacher has been writing English-language plays for twenty years

Charles Martin

Peter R. Füg's plays are performed by his students. Now he has sent a play to London.

It has been exactly 20 years since Pratteln secondary school teacher Peter R. Füg staged his first self-written play. It was performed, as it still is today, by the current students in his secondary school class. – In English, of course.

'That was almost even more of a challenge,' says Füg with mock seriousness. 'Well, after all, at the time of the performance, my students had only had one year of English lessons and two full weeks of rehearsals behind them.' Peter R. Füg, a father of three daughters, some of whom are already adults, is proud of his students and obviously has a penchant for the English language. 'It all started very early,' he confirms.

OXFORD ENGLISH. As a 17-year-old, Füg first visited London when he stayed on the River Thames for a visit to his aunt. 'My uncle,' he recalls, 'spoke the most wonderful Oxford English you can ever imagine. The visit was a key experience for me.' After graduating from high school with a business diploma, Füg studied English, German and history at the University of Basel. His goal was to become a secondary school teacher. A second stay in London in 1977 introduced the young English studies student to the figurehead of English theatre, William Shakespeare.

'When I finally wrote my first play for my teenage students, a dream came true for me,' admits Füg. In 1993, he adapted the student play "Murder At The Asylum" into a full-length play, followed in 2003 by "Murder Induded", another full-length play. Finally, Füg, who was now writing under the pseudonym Peter De Geesewell, plucked up his courage and took part in the internationally renowned Playwriting Festival in London.

'With 600 authors in attendance, some of them quite famous, my chances were never that great,' Füg admits. 'But just being able to take part was fantastic.' But Füg was not satisfied with this one-time participation. He sent the play to several theatres. A response from the Hampstead Theatre is still pending, but the chances are good, he thinks. 'I'd love to see my play on stage under someone else's the direction.'

ANNIVERSARY. For the 20th anniversary, Peter R. Füg dusted off the play Murder At The Fancy-Dress Ball from 1989 and had it restaged in a tragically current version. 'Just as I started to revise the play, terrorists brutally struck London, the city of my heart. I couldn't believe it, I was so shocked.' When he had recovered, he rewrote the play again, adapting it to current events. 'Including current affairs in my plays has always been important to me. Hopefully, I won't have to include another tragic event in the next play.'

Translated from German

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