
AUTHORS

Mika Myllyaho (Finland)

Becoming a writer was a natural step for Mika Myllyaho (né 1966), who is one of the leading directors in Finland. Myllyaho has always been an innovative theatre practitioner, whose vision and artistry have produced a number of memorable productions. As the director of the Group Theatre in Helsinki, he has worked to develop new scripts and performance practices. Myllyaho's productions are quite accessible and often also funny, but at the same time they provide powerful, complex theatrical experiences. From the autumn of 2010, Myllyaho acts as a general director of the Finnish National Theatre. In his first play, "Panic" (2005), Myllyaho returns to a theme he has often dealt with when directing, the problems of being a man. This comedy, describing the neuroses of three young men approaching middle-age, was a great success, and firmly established Myllyaho as an up-and-coming playwright. "Chaos" (2008) is a darker comedy which humorously takes a stance on women's life in today's world whereas the closing part of the trilogy, "Harmony" (2009), is a rough comedy about work and passion.

Titles

CHAOS

Sofia is a teacher whose school is being closed. Julia, a therapist, is having an affair with a patient. Emmi is a reporter in the middle of a custody battle, prone to sudden fits of fury. Over the course of one winter and spring, their lives are completely shaken up, making them feel like they're losing control. They have

to do something. Myllyaho's previous hit play, *Panic*, examined the problems of being a man, while *Chaos* is a dark comedy about women in today's world. The characters battle their own problems, as well as those created by an unfeeling society, all the while trying to hold onto their own values. They draw strength from their strong friendships, and take care of each other. And even in the bleakest of situations, there is always room for rambunctious humour.

PANIC

Max's friend Leo is frantically knocking at Max's door. Leo's wife has told him that he needs to think about things and put his life in order. Leo, who has no idea what could possibly be wrong with his life, asks Max to give him therapy. Max and his brother, Joni, a talk-show host, compete to see whose methods will help Leo the most, but they mainly end up revealing how messed up they are themselves. Max is neurotic and withdrawn, while Joni is self-centred and unable to commit to anything. Little by little, the trio realizes that they all need each other's help. This intelligent and contemporary comedy examines the crises, both real and imagined, of being a man. What does society expect of men? Is a man even capable of knowing his feelings? Can he be sensitive and successful at the same time? And what is that Almodovar movie all about anyway?

HARMONY

Olavi had planned to take a break from his job as a stage director. His last production had almost pushed him over the edge so it was high time for a holiday. But now he's been offered the most tempting project of all: directing Goethe's *Faust*. Once he sees his girlfriend Sanna's miniature design – a glass structure which would be just perfect for the set – Olavi is irresistibly drawn back to the world of theatre. While Sanna can't bear to watch Olavi heading for a heart attack, producer Alex struggles to keep the director's extravagant vision in line with the theatre management's strict budget. Olavi is soon forced to look himself in the eye and weigh his career, his life and his relationship in the balance. Mika Myllyaho completes his successful trilogy with this bristling comedy about work, love and exhaustion. What do you do when work is the most important thing in your life but it's killing you? Like Myllyaho's *Panic* and *Chaos*, *Harmony* is a sharply humorous, gruffly tender study of modern times.