

HIT INTERNATIONAL THEATRE ARTS presents new contemporary award-winning international playwrighting with the Danish & Scandinavian premiere of

The Thin Place



by Lucas Hnath

Multi award-winning and Tony nominated Hnath is a rising star in contemporary American playwrighting. His work is a regular feature on Broadway, now coming to Denmark.

“a haunting ... cunning new ghost story ... compelling and delicious” (New York Times)

“One of the most adventurous American playwrights working today.” (Los Angeles Times)

Directed by Christoffer Berdal

GENERAL INFORMATION

THE THIN PLACE never performed in Denmark or Scandinavia, premiered in 2019 in New York. It is a political ghost story drama about the power of the mind, the power of suggestion and the thin line that separates this life from what - if anything? - comes after.

Highly acclaimed American playwright Lucas Hnath is largely performed all over the US and Europe but in comparison unknown in Denmark. Most famous for *A Doll's House Part 2*, or *Hillary and Clinton*, THE THIN PLACE is one of his newest, most experimental and most daring works yet.

Danish theatre brand HIT International Theatre Arts stages THE THIN PLACE at Teatret ved Sorte Hest in May/June 2025, directed by Christoffer Bedal. With over 20 years of work experience and more than 80 directed plays performing in some of the most prestigious theatres in Denmark, he is a fabulous choice to lead the Copenhagen-based international team of artists including a four character cast, original composed music, a real magic trick and an extraordinary lighting design.

THE PLAY

Everyone who ever dies is still here, just in a different part of here. The medium Linda can communicate with them. And if you believe, she can make you hear them too, in *the thin place*, the fragile boundary between our world and the other one. Linda has built a career out of her psychic gift and recently received a green card after coaching an up-and-coming political candidate with influence. Young

American Hilda is grappling with loss, her mother mysteriously vanished one year ago, leaving an empty house -a house where mysterious things happen. Hilda is looking for answers and befriends the medium. At a séance and sophisticated cocktail party of four, the cards are being tossed and turned. Is Linda with her brand-new visa in the US, just a fraud who can play spin doctor to politicians?? Or does she really have the power to communicate with the dead? Phones ring and shadows move. With a growing sense of dread the veil between this world and the eternal world becomes thin. So thin that when you reach up you can touch the fingers of the dead reaching down from above. This eerily gripping play is hypnotic. As a séance and a testament to the power of the mind, THE THIN PLACE raises ethical questions pointing at the danger of mind manipulation in politics and sorrow.

ARTISTIC VISION

THE THIN PLACE is an immersive experience for the audience, starting already when entering the theatre lobby. Greeted by a flair reminding back to the age of spiritualist séances of the Victorian age including a tarot card reader in action, this initial site-specific experience suits the intimacy of Teatret ved Sorte Hest. Once the audience moves to the stage, they are being immersed in an actual séance like experience, complete with candlelight, darkness and hypnotizing special effects. Followed by a heated, up-to-the-minute political debate between the play's four characters about the truth and moral corruption of psychics and spin doctors in modern politics.

As in the best horror, awful things are hinted at but left unspoken. Phones ring that shouldn't ring; shapes move. Feeding the genre of chill and horror, THE THIN PLACE's dramaturgical goal is to make the story—and a growing sense of dread—happen in the audience's head. Even as theatrical effects increase -, the presence of evil that the audience senses, is their own invention. With suspense growing, the rising tension will climax with a professional illusionary magic trick, as well as a mind-reading trick, involving an actual member of the audience. These mesmerizing coup-de-theatre create an outstanding and most unusual theatrical experience.

RELEVANCE OF PLAY

Fascination with the "Other world" has occupied our human minds since early recordings of history. "Thin places" are places where we can walk in two worlds, perceiving what we cannot capture with our regular senses. But we know there's something there: another side – another world – another existence. Lucas Hnath's approach is philosophical - questioning the line between truth and fabrication.

THE THIN PLACE is exploring the fateful, hinted romantic relationship between a grieving young woman and a professional female medium, while asking the most timeless questions about reality, the influenceability of the mind, and the omnipresence of death as we float through life. Gifted at taking the pulse of the world into account, Hnath explores our political and spiritual vulnerabilities (such as grief, isolation and longing for companionship), while also pointing at the danger of mind manipulation. Reminding us that the power of the mind can be a dangerous weapon in the hands of skillful manipulators to sway the masses and set in motion a course of action.

In modern society we are constantly bombarded by fake news. What happens to democracy when false statements by our world leaders are tolerated as "alternative realities", when it becomes politically correct to feed people false information, in order to serve one's own purpose? Sylvia, one character of the play reminds us that no one less but Hitler hired a psychic to learn how to master mind

manipulation and the masses. Controlling the mind of the masses holds a severe danger in this transitional time of uncertainty. Who can we believe in today's world of fake news, AI-generated data, and politics in the hands of Oligarch and Tech Elites? But most of all, does it even still matter to us and our society if a proclaimed statement is in fact true? Where is the thin line between a proven fact and an alternative reality we chose to believe - every time we watch the news, comment on social media, or debate politics with guests around the dinner table. Just as the four characters do during their cocktail party in THE THIN PLACE...

THE THIN PLACE SUMMERY (long)

Hilda's childhood was troubled. Her grandmother, who believed in the supernatural, tried to pass on her own psychic powers to Hilda. Hilda recalls the mind-reading games her grandmother used to play with her, hoping one day to be able to talk to her beyond the grave. Hilda's unstable mother didn't approve of this "demonic activity" and kicked the grandmother out of the house. Shortly afterwards, the grandmother suffered a fatal stroke and died, leaving Hilda with a mark of guilt. Then, one day when Hilda is a young adult, her mother suddenly and mysteriously vanishes, leaving behind an empty haunted house. Hilda is now grappling with loss, searching for answers. She visits a medium.

Linda, a middle-aged British woman (who had to leave the UK because of European Union rules about mediums' professional conduct) has moved to the U.S.—birthplace of spiritualism—and smartly build a career out of her psychic gift. Young Hilda attends a séance by the spiritualist, surprised at the detailed information Linda reveals about Hilda, information she has no business knowing. Describing herself as a "radio antenna" who can tune into those souls who have passed on to the other side, Linda calls upon Hilda's grandmother, who reassures Hilda that she's not at fault for the family rift or the subsequent stroke.

Suspecting that she may also have the gift herself, Hilda wants to learn from Linda, but Linda doesn't like to share her knowledge. When the two women have established a -hinted romantic- friendship, Linda reveals that she has no psychic powers at all and instead relies on calculated guesswork to achieve her effects. She justifies her so called "magic", explaining that what she does is not all that different from psychotherapy, except what she offers "actually works." She's in the business of giving reassurance and relieving guilt.

One night, the two women attend a cocktail party to celebrate Linda's US visa, which she recently obtained after coaching a political candidate how to work on people's minds. The cocktail party consists of Sylvia, Linda's wealthy patron and probable -romantic- source of her rent, and Linda's cousin Jerry, a political advisor. Wine-fueled the conversation turns confrontational, discussing life and politics and whether Linda's work of telling people what they want to hear is psychologically healing or a dangerous fraud. Jerry and Sylvia's heated discussion with Linda turn Hilda into an outsider of the group.

Suddenly Hilda reveals creepy facts about her mother's disappearance. A mysterious stranger, who claimed to be "from the other side" had come to take care of her mother, then suddenly she vanished never to be seen again. The story is interrupted by an eerie phone call coming from her mother's abandoned house, which gives everyone the creeps. The partymood is over, so is the relationship between Linda and Hilda. Yet to follow up on the mysterious call, the two women decide to drive to the deserted home. Strange things happen as Hilda and Linda enter the dark house where phones ring and shadows move. Bravely Hilda evokes the teachings of her grandmother and venture into the thin place, a place where the fingers of the dead reach down to us from above.