

Pressespiegel the tadbrothers

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Jewish comedians take on Germany

By Oliver Bradley

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BERLIN (EJP)--- David and Avi Toubiana are the newest comedians on the German slapstick circuit. Last year, the former class clowns finally made their way onto the big stage with their very own show – and found success.

After a successful pre-season run at Berlin's BKA comedy club, the Toubiana Brothers are back at one of the German capital's best known comedy venues - the Ufa Fabrik – presenting the second run of their "Murder on the Panini Express".

The show is a typical whodunit with all the stereotypes. It revolves around a murder and a piece of bread that has taken on the concerns of a wide range of characters, each one played by either Avi or David. No mercy has been spared the clichés that are prevalent in Italian society – including the hysterical women, unruly children and a paedophile priest.

Contrary to all other whodunits, everyone wanted to be the culprit once it was aired that the murderer would actually inherit the victim's estate – despite the fact that none of the protagonists knew the murder victim.

Positive reviews

"Once the Toubiana Brothers climbed onto the stage not a moment went by without the them taking full control of their audience's laughing muscles," theatre critic Johannes Boie wrote in Jewish newspaper, the Juedische Allgemeine (JAZ).

The Tadbrothers, as they are known, "spared no one...everyone left the theatre in tears and with stomach aches," Boie continued.

The Toubiana's professional careers did not begin on a spot lit stage but rather at school. "Already in elementary school we were the class clowns," the brothers said.

29 year old Avi told EJP that the brief jobs that he and his three year younger brother David held "could not quell a surging passion for comedy".

This infatuation with comedy brought the brothers onto the stage sooner than they had ever expected. But even offstage, whenever the brothers are in the company of other people, not a moment goes by when they are not entertaining – bringing anybody that surrounds them to hysterical laughter.

They seem to have successfully beaten the odds – proving their teachers, who told them that clowns have no chance of earning money, wrong.

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Close siblings

The inseparable brothers grew up in the western German city of Duesseldorf and were very active in the Jewish life. "However, with only 20,000 Jews in Germany, while we were growing up, being active meant that we had to move around the entire country to be involved with Jewish life and participate at the events that were being organised by the different Jewish communities," Avi told EJP.

The necessity to be mobile has given the brothers an advantage – there is almost no young person within the country's rapidly growing Jewish community, standing today at over 100,000, who does not know who they are - each one a potential audience member and many a proven source of advertising for the show.

Although Murder on the Panini Express is not a Jewish show, the typically fine art of Jewish slapstick comedy cannot be missed. The Tad Brothers' have successfully emulated their role models the American slapstick comedians the Marx Brothers, of 1930s and 40s fame.

This has made them successful at being able to cross cultural and ethnic lines and attracted hundreds of theatre goers from all walks of life.

"The Tad Brothers' have brought with them a suitcase full of fresh ideas... Their self-composed Panini Express surpasses the unexciting shows that are routinely staged....and Avi and David know that the secret to good suspense and humour is a stringent build-up of a plot and a simple story line...perhaps the original story as well," Boie wrote in his critique.

The brothers studied together at the Lee Strasberg Acting School in New York. After having ended their studies several years ago, they stopped off in Toronto, in their quest for an audience – something they have now found on the stages of Berlin.

The Show will run through November 11 at the Ufa Fabrik, Viktoriastrasse 10, 12105 Berlin, Tel.: +49(30)755 03 0