

Lauritzen prize
Travel bursary 2009 to actor Martin Buch.
Award speech by theatre critic Lars Wredstrøm

Who would dare become unfriendly with Martin Buch? – definitely not me! For his crazy interpretations of various men from all levels of society share a common characteristic in that they all build on an almost research-like wealth of detail, not least his roles as a snob. And who wants to play that kind of part even though most of us probably have a shade of it in us.

"In fact, I used by father's colleagues when working with the role of the snob Fritz," explained Martin Buch recently. And it has to be said that this role as a snob has definitely led to things, also in fine interaction with his colleague Rasmus Botoft in his rendition as his drinking companion "little Poul".

Both characters, Fritz and Poul, appearing again in the DR satirical programme "Normalerweise" and the radio show "Rytteriet" (The Cavalry) - even though the characters and their interaction in fact go back to their shared past in Tisvildeleje Revue – here bow in part to self-discovery but also equally to the rowdy "Teater Marianne".

But what is it that Martin Buch achieves in the rendition of his men or male roles? A question made no less pertinent considering that he actually got 42,000 fan-hits in just two weeks on his Facebook profile shortly after a TV role.

The spell or watchword is that Martin Buch has a rarely seen ability not just to perform but also defend the often mentally-challenged man, quite apart from all that person's material benefits.

Quite simply, he makes his male characters so recognizable that it is easy for us to see ourselves in them, even when in all their egocentricity, they are almost appalling and insufferable to listen to.

As such, he performed but also defended for example his role as a lover as Antonius in Maria Rydén's production of "Absolute Holberg" at the Grønnegård Theatre in 2000. A resoundingly good, amazingly amusing model interpretation that Martin Buch also used in playing the part of Ottavio in Moliere's "The Schemings of Scarpin" at Det Danske Teater in 2002.

Martin Buch has striking appeal and human warmth. But if there is something missing in him, or rather in his repertoire, it is horrifying seriousness.

For the capriciousness he demonstrates means that he also privately has and uses a raw, dark, amazing sinisterness.

Kind and accommodating as he is, he could perfectly well play a cruel part - it is just that we have not had a chance to see it as yet.

So at JL-Fondet and the Lauritzen Prize Committee, we hope that you will consider using your travel bursary to challenge and investigate the dark side of a character's make-up. A genre with which you will certainly go far when you have the great talent that you do. So if you actually have to be criticised, it must be by way of urging you not to rest on your acting laurels at the humorous end of the scale. You are much too talented for that.

You just need to pull yourself together, get out and about in the world - but hurry back because while you are away, you will be missed on stage.

Martin – congratulations on this year's travel bursary.