

Berliner Morgenpost, December 13, 2022

Against hatred, for reconciliation. The musician Nadja Danciger, daughter of a Holocaust victim, brings her story to the stage as a musical: *Let's Talk Tacheles*

The way she comes along, waving on Friedrichstraße, one thing is immediately clear: nothing can easily spoil this woman's good mood. She laughs, she turns, she sways. A woman with a sense of rhythm in her body that is not missing a beat, and soon there will be dancing on the Friedrichstraße.

Nadja Danciger is a musician through and through. A studied concert pianist with no reservations about the entertainment business. But Nadja Danciger, who is equally at home in Berlin and New York, has an affair of the heart that is virtually charged with music and rhythm: she has written a musical - as musical as it is political: *Let's Talk Tacheles*. A project that she recently previewed at Berlin's eclectic venue *Musikbrauerei* - and which virtually struck a chord in the minds and souls of the audience.

A perfect show performed by professional dancers and singers about a young woman who sets out from New York to find freedom in Berlin 1990. There is a complicated story behind it, which must be discussed. But first it should be noted: Whoever is sitting in the audience on this late summer evening and hears that piano intro, the rising melancholy when Rachel, the young freedom seeker, seems to touch heaven and hell at the same time with one voice, feels only one thing: goosebumps.

Nadja Danciger (51) says: "This musical is simply made for Berlin." She knows it, not only because she put it on its feet - but because it is strongly based on her own story: Her counterpart on stage is Rachel. Rachel, a well-protected American songwriter who wants to escape her domineering mother. This mother is Jewish and survived the Holocaust as a child in hiding. Her family emigrated. And this mother wanted only one thing: for her daughter to marry a Jew and become a good girl. It turned out differently. In the early 1990s, Nadja set off for a world of former perpetrators: Nadja went to Berlin. Off to the club scene. To Berlin's *Tacheles*. She experienced the intoxication, the openness, what was then probably freedom. And there Rachel is, singing her song that leaves no one cold.

With her mother, who is now in her mid-80s, she never talked much about politics, says Nadja Danciger. "My mother spent nearly a year and a half in hiding underneath a farm, and that creates trauma for a young child." It shaped the way her mother looks at the world, including Germany. Danciger doesn't want to live like that. She thinks: "There is too much hatred in the world." She feels safe in Germany, despite the increasing anti- Semitic tendencies and attacks against Jews.

Nadja Danciger played the piano as a child. Music is part of her life. In New York, but also in Berlin, where she has worked as a music supervisor for SAT.1 Television Network, produced various albums, and founded a Yiddish girl band, *The Bagels*, performing with the band throughout Berlin as their lead pianist and musical arranger.

Now, however, she wants to bring her musical to both stage and movie theaters around the globe. Together with her husband, Academy-Award winning filmmaker Matt Danciger, she has been working on this project for years - decades, in fact. Nadja wrote the music, Matt the screenplay and stage book, and the renowned and

multiple award-winning Tracy Scharf the lyrics. They were only able to rehearse for two weeks for the preview at the *Musikbrauerei* she says. The quality is high. But she wants more. She wants this musical to finally make it to the big screen and stage. There is interest from Stage Entertainment, BB Promotion and Broadway, she says, throwing up her arms. Now she needs a bit of luck. "The important thing is that people all over the world can see it and hear our message. It's spreading this message of freedom and love that is most important to her: overcoming hatred, teaching tolerance and creating new beginnings. And she is also concerned with the reconciliation of her mother's generation. The driving force behind all this was that "my mother survived the Holocaust. We survived for a reason!"