

# Get your gear on for Gym Party at the Traverse



Gym Party is a razor sharp and slightly dark comic exploration of hopeless determination and the universal desire to win. Three intrepid contestants compete in a series of games that range from hilariously stupid to uncomfortable, arbitrary, and downright heartbreaking.

The contestants are fearless in their commitment to do whatever it takes to win. But they also wish to please the audience and influence the course of the show by sharing their stories and perspectives. Increasingly, the contestants pepper the audience with comic, uneasy personal questions about their own desires to win and how they relate to those around them, turning the spotlight on the audience without pausing for response.

As the audience becomes more and more responsible for who wins, the punishments for the losers turn emotionally, then physically, violent. We find ourselves voting for the contestants even though we know nothing about them, based simply on aesthetics and the information we are being fed. We feel their vulnerability as we observe their failings yet do nothing to prevent their punishment.

Gym Party explores the psychology of winning and the nature of pride in all its triumphant and ugly incarnations. Packing a powerful punch with both hilarious and horrifying consequences, this honest and unique show is about competition and the limits of spectatorship.

Gym Party finds the sweet spot between pure play, sociopolitical satire and personal confession... sharp, silly

and surprisingly tender (The Times). Entertaining, thoughtful and anarchic, Gym Party speaks to anyone who frets about the state of the world and how we treat each other – then gets distracted by a dumb celebrity tweet.

Created by Made In China with Christopher Brett Bailey and Ira Brand. Commissioned by and developed at Battersea Arts Centre. Co-commissioned by Pulse, Sprint, Mayfest and Sampled festivals. With support from the Almeida Theatre and National Theatre Studio. Funded by Arts Council England.

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Courtesy John Hunter for Ruler