

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2023 – Bad Play

The play Arthur Miller would write after getting kicked in the head by a horse

Death of a Salesman. Our Town. A Streetcar Named Desire. And now, *Bad Play*. American sketch comedy group **Big Tobacco** has set out to write the next great American drama, pulling all the best tricks of the trade from Arthur Miller, Eugene O'Neill, and William Inge, and throwing them in a Vitamix with a healthy dose of irreverence. The result is *Bad Play*, an off-the-wall hour of high tragedy and low parody.

As honest countryfolk, Woody and Mabel prepare for the return of their two sons; one from the War and the other from maximum security prison. They dream of once again becoming a picturesque American family. But with everyone back together, personalities collide and the idyllic facade soon fades away – and what lies beneath is a sordid web of secrets, betrayals, violence, and rudeness. Will the family overcome their tragic idiocy and realise the American Dream? Or will they continue to flail around until the forces of evil claim them all?

Set in your average nonspecific American town, in your average nonspecific American time period (they've got both Facebook and rotary phones), *Bad Play* is a sendup of the classic American "Living Room Drama" with an edge. It's a loving tribute to the great playwrights of the mid-20th century, taking their groundbreaking work and taking the absolute piss out of it. A soldier's return from war. A man's fight to stay relevant in an industry that has left him behind. A mother's need to say things like "how was your day, dear?" or "Boys

stop that right now and help me set the table.” No trope is safe from the meat grinder of Bad Play. Is there hope for redemption for this messed up family? Is there virtue in trying even when doomed to fail? Is there going to be an intermission? It’s one hour of outrageous comedy for lovers of both good and bad theatre.

Sketch comedy group Big Tobacco (**Brad Beideman, Brian Fitzgerald, Lyndsey Kempf, and Eli Lutsky**) has been bending form, genre, and comedy in LA for over six years. Their monthly sketch show *1,000 Years of Cinema* parodied movies in a faux film retrospective over its two year run, and in 2021 they wrote a full broadcast-length parody of the Academy Awards. Now they’re taking on American theatre with a play that both mocks and celebrates the staples of the storied art form

BAD PLAY

August 3 – 28

19.05 (55 mins)

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