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Javaad Alipoor and HOME, in association with Traverse Theatre present the **WORLD PREMIERE** of

Rich Kids: A History of Shopping Malls in Tehran

Traverse Theatre, Traverse 2

1-24 August, times vary

First Review Date: 2 August, 11am

Co-created by Javaad Alipoor and Kirsty Housley

Dramaturgy by Chris Thorpe

Stage Design by Lucy Osborne

Sound Design by Simon McCorry

Projection/Video by Limbic Cinema

Cast Javaad Alipoor and Peyvand Sadeghian

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The creators of the award-winning, *The Believers Are But Brothers*, return to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe this August, with the **world premiere** of a show that confronts climate change anxiety, the collapse of political certainties and how privileged kids behave on Instagram.

Rich Kids, the second part of a trilogy of plays from Javaad Alipoor, is inspired by the stories that power unrest across large swathes of the world. While the leaders of countries like Iran preach an austere form of nationalism and religion, their children enjoy the fruits of their parents' riches: social media means that the poorest can see how the rich are living.

It is a story about the Rich Kids of Tehran. The gap between rich and poor is getting bigger and bigger around the world. Social media is accelerating this ever-deepening divide. In the

global south we see the children of elites and post-colonial dictatorships, flashing cash, dollar signs, Bollinger and infinity pool holidays while people languish under sanctions and dictatorships. All around the world more and more people, like their countries, are running out of steam, and their ruling classes are only out for themselves. *Rich Kids* asks, how did we get here, and what might come next.

But this is also, a play about **Instagram**.

Alipoor's trilogy of plays started with a whatsapp show, ***The Believers Are But Brothers***, this second part has a different social media angle.

Photographs have always done something weird to how we tell stories. As Susan Sontag pointed out, they have a way of freezing time, and making things look like they start, stop or at least pause at certain places. It's not that the way we tell the story of our lives on Instagram or by photo is any less truthful than any other way we curate ourselves.

But it's so easy to publish, you can share and scroll with almost limitless resource. Nothing ever runs out. So about 1.8 billion pictures are uploaded to social media every day. That's 657 billion a year. Which is to say, every two minutes human beings share more photographs than existed in total a century ago.

And this is also a show about history and the way it feels like its catching up with us

Writer and performer, Javaad Alipoor, said *"The Fringe is a fantastic place to premiere work, particularly timely work exploring the society we live in. It's exciting to be performing it for the first time at the Traverse, with its reputation for new writing."*

Javaad Alipoor is an artist, director, writer and activist who regularly makes theatre with and for communities that don't usually engage in the arts. In 2017 his play, *The Believers Are But Brothers*, opened at Transform Festival in Leeds before transferring for a sold-out, critically acclaimed run at Summerhall at the Edinburgh Fringe, where it received a Scotsman Fringe First Award. It has since enjoyed a London run, toured to Sweden, Canada and Australia, and was adapted for television and premiered on BBC4 in March 2019. He is a Scotsman Fringe First and Columbia University Digital Storytelling Award winner.

Rich Kids is a Javaad Alipoor and HOME co-production, which is co-commissioned by Diverse Actions, Theatre in the Mill, Norfolk & Norwich Festival and Bush Theatre.

Alipoor's breakthrough play, the first in the trilogy, ***The Believers Are But Brothers*** also **returns to the Fringe this year** after its hugely successful run in 2017. Fresh from the UK premiere of its BBC4 adaptation, this Scotsman Fringe First (2017) winner returns for a limited run at Assembly, **opening on 19 August**.

From the postcolonial Middle East, to the EU and USA, old orders are collapsing. Tech-savvy extremist groups are ripping up rulebooks while a generation of young men burn with

resentment and unfulfilled self-entitlement whilst falling into online worlds of fantasy, violence and reality.

'Complex... masterly... one of the most fascinating shows I have seen in an age' *****
(Financial Times).

The Believers Art But Brothers is part of the British Council Edinburgh Showcase 2019. Originally co-commissioned by HOME, Transform and Ovalhouse.

ENDS

For more information, interviews and press tickets please contact Susie Gray, The Corner Shop PR, susie@thecornershoppr.com 07834 073 795.

Listings information:

Rich Kids: A History of Shopping Malls in Tehran by Javaad Alipoor
Javaad Alipoor and HOME, in association with Traverse Theatre

Traverse Theatre, Traverse 2

1–24 August, times vary (1hr10mins)

Preview tickets £15/£9 | Full price £21 | Standard concession £15.50 | Under 30s & Students £15 | Other concession £5

<https://www.traverse.co.uk/whats-on/event/rich-kids-a-history-of-shopping-malls-in-tehran>

The Believers Are But Brothers by Javaad Alipoor
Javaad Alipoor and HOME

Assembly George Square Studios – Studio 2

19-24 August, 11am (60mins)

<https://www.assemblyfestival.com/whats-on/the-believers-are-but-brothers>

BIOGRAPHIES

Javaad Alipoor is an artist, director, writer and activist who regularly makes theatre with and for communities that don't usually engage in the arts. In 2017 his play, *The Believers Are But Brothers*, opened at Transform Festival in Leeds before transferring for a sold-out, critically acclaimed run at Summerhall at the Edinburgh Fringe, where it received a Scotsman Fringe First Award. It has since enjoyed a London run, toured to Sweden, Canada and Australia, and was adapted for television and premiered on BBC4 in March 2019. He is a Scotsman Fringe First and Columbia University Digital Storytelling Award winner.

Last year, Alipoor directed the stage adaptation of *One Flew Over The Cuckoo's Nest* for Sheffield Theatres, to mark the end of his three-year tenure as Associate Director at The Crucible Theatre. His previous stage work includes *Orgreave: An English Civil War*, about the Miners' Strike and the Arab Spring and *My Brother's Country*, about murdered Iranian pop icon Fereydoun Farrokhzad. Javaad Alipoor is Artistic Director of Northern Lines, resident of The Watershed's Pervasive Media Studio, a collaborator of The National Theatre's Immersive Story Studio, a member of Arts Council England's Northern Council, and was a founding trustee of Artistic Directors of the Future.

Co-creator Kirsty Housley is an associate of Complicité, with whom her work includes: *The Encounter* (UK/International Tour – Co-Director), *Seen and Not Heard* (Southbank Centre), *A Pacifist's Guide to the War on Cancer* (National Theatre – Dramaturg) and *War and War* (Pleasance).

Other recent directing include: *Wanted* (Chris Goode and Company /Transform Festival/West Yorkshire Playhouse), *Walking The Tightrope* (Offstage and Theatre Uncut), *All I Want* (Live Theatre, Leeds Libraries and Jackson's Lane) and *Mass* (Amy Mason / Bristol Old Vic / CPT). She is currently collaborating with Bryony Kimmings, Complicité, The Unicorn and the Bush Theatre. Her play *Myth* (written with Matt Hartley, from an original idea from Kirsty) opened at the RSC in Spring 2017.

Dramaturg Chris Thorpe was a founder member of Unlimited Theatre and still works and tours with the company. He is also an Artistic Associate of live art/theatre company Third Angel. He has worked with, among others, Forest Fringe, Slung Low, Chris Goode, RashDash, Belarus Free Theatre and Portuguese experimental company mala voadora – his fourth piece for the company, *Your Best Guess* opened at Lisbon's Almada festival in 2015. He also plays guitar in Lucy Ellinson's political noise project #TORYCORE and works with the National Student Drama Festival.

Chris is an Associate at the Royal Exchange, Manchester. His play for the Exchange, *There Has Possibly Been An Incident* was selected by Simon Stephens for the Stuckemartin Berlin, 2014. It has been produced in Denmark and Sweden, on German radio, and is has been produced in Saarbrücken and Vienna, with more productions in the pipeline. He has an ongoing collaboration with director Rachel Chavkin from New York's TEAM. Their first piece *Confirmation*, is currently touring internationally and they are starting to develop their next. His other main collaborator is poet Hannah Jane Walker with whom he made *The Oh Fuck Moment* and *I Wish I Was Lonely*.

Currently, Chris is touring *Confirmation* and Unlimited's *Am I Dead Yet?* He is writing a new version of *Beowulf* for the Unicorn Theatre, and has written a new piece, *Victory Condition*, for the Royal Court which will be produced there in 2017. He recently wrote *Chorus* for *The Iphigenia Quartet* at The Gate Theatre. He is also working on *The Mysteries* for the Royal Exchange with Sam Pritchard, who directed *There Has Possibly Been An Incident*. His piece for director Rachel Bagshaw, *The Shape of the Pain*, is currently in development.

Stage Designer, Lucy Osborne, UK Theatre Award winner 2014 for **Translations** - Best Touring Production, Jeff Award winner for Scenic Design (large) for **Twelfth Night**, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Jeff Award nomination for Costume Design (large) for **Twelfth Night**, Chicago Shakespeare Theater. This year Lucy has been nominated for a Falstaff Award for Best Scenic Design for **Coriolanus** at the Donmar Theatre.

Simon McCrory has been making music and creating sound design for theatre and film for over 15 years, working with theatre companies including Headlong, Old Vic Productions, Tiata Fahodzi, Theatre Hullabaloo & Cirque Bijou. His Sound design and music for theatre credits include: *The Hotel Cerise* (Theatre Royal Stratford East); *Ceirw – Savage Hart* (Citrus Arts); *Solaris* (Štátne Divadlo Košice); *Vincent River* (Old Vic Productions); *Joe Guy* (Tiata Fahodzi); *Iye Ile* (Tiata Fahodzi); *Boi Boi Is Dead* (Tiata Fahodzi & West Yorkshire Playhouse); *The Winters' Tale* (Headlong & Schtanhaus); *Blue Orange* (Tiata Fahodzi); *Guantanamo Boy* (Brolly Productions); *Bacchic* (Actors of Dionysus); Lemn Sissay's *Why I Don't Hate White People*, *Little Red Riding Hood*, *Rapunzel* (Liverpool Everyman); *Breeze* (Kolesk Dance). Film credits include: *May You Never Die* (dir Guy Davies), *Emily* (dir Guy Davies), *Tracker* (dir Matthew McGuchan), *Sick To My Bones* (dir Guy Davies), *One Day* (dir James Barriscale), *Beauty and Brains* (dir Catherine Donaldson), *The Surroundings and Its Bearings* (dir Ambrose Valley).