

<http://www.rsc.org.uk/mercy>

## A YOUNGER THEATRE

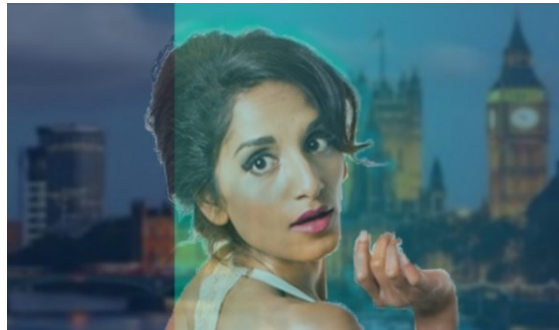
<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com>

### Review: Treya's Last Dance, Bridewell Theatre

By [Ettie Bailey-King](#)

<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/author/ettie/> on February 17, 2016 in [Theatre](#)

<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/category/theatre/>



Packing thought-provoking theatre into parcels of just forty-five minutes, the Bridewell Theatre serves up lunchbox-sized slices of the arts. Cradled between office blocks and museums, with city workers and tourists from around the world in the audience, it's packed with diversity. Not a bad venue, then, for a show about the sometimes painful incompatibility between our individual and collective identities in a multicultural world.

*Treya's Last Dance* is a delicious treat for the lunch hour: whip-crack sharp, funny and touching. It's a one-woman show that feels more like a million-strong Dickensian cast of characters. Shyam Bhatt gives voice to rasping old ladies, middle-aged Indian men, Afro-Caribbean preachers, bitchy cousins and howling seven-year-olds with breathless ease. Each of them is convincing and deeply charming. Bhatt is not only bang-on accurate

but delivers her impressions with a kind of tender affection. Without both, her ethnicity-spanning impressions – okay, maybe just that homophobic black preacher – might play uncomfortably.

In under an hour, Bhatt's performance builds the kind of character complexity you hope for in a feature film. Bhatt takes a simple conceit – a speed dating event in a dive bar – and uses it to shine a light on her protagonist's past and present. Treya's answers are directed straight towards us, as though we are her speed-dating companions. They are weird, frank, utterly unguarded vignettes. It's a brilliant means of inducting us into her world, and something of a metaphor for the sudden intimacy between performer and audience. So credible is Bhatt's awkward performance as Treya that one almost feels voyeuristic bearing witness to it all.

Bhatt's script is sharp and well-observed. She draws excoriating portraits of a date who learnt all his charm "from Bollywood and porn", the kind of bar that serves "red or white", and a cousin with "maximum three brain cells". This lends the play a robust and raucous tone, but beneath the surface it's a more subtle affair. It's delicate and deftly written: interwoven themes circle, touch and return throughout the piece. The metaphor of "lavender shortbread thins" transports Treya into her past – like a twee update on Proust's Madeleine – towards her dead brother Thanvir. The motif of mild versus spicy food speaks to the tension between being both Indian and British, and the symbolism of Treya's Ghunghroos (Indian classical dancing anklets with bells on) lingering in a dusty attic suggest the dangers of losing touch with one's roots. These details lend Bhatt's play a deeper poeticism beneath the witty mimicry and chortle-inducing one-liners.

Much has been made of the play's LGBTQ focus. While it undoubtedly addresses the continuities and clashes between gay, British and Indian identities, *Treya's Last Dance* is so much more than a play about being gay and Indian. It treats Asian LGBTQ issues and the prevalence of suicide with the great

respect that they deserve, but it also manages to be a play about dancing, dating and the difficulties of a socially awkward Indian girl from Croydon.

Treya's Last Dance *is playing at the Bridewell Theatre until 19 February. For more information and tickets, see the [Bridewell Theatre website \(http://www.sbf.org.uk/lunchbox-theatre\)](http://www.sbf.org.uk/lunchbox-theatre). Photo: Jay Snell*

---

**Love it? Share it:**

 Facebook

(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-treyas-last-dance/?share=facebook&nb=1>)

 Twitter


(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-treyas-last-dance/?share=twitter&nb=1>)

 Google


(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-treyas-last-dance/?share=google-plus-1&nb=1>)

 LinkedIn

(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-treyas-last-dance/?share=linkedin&nb=1>)

 Tumblr

(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-treyas-last-dance/?share=tumblr&nb=1>)

 Email

(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-treyas-last-dance/?share=email&nb=1>)

---

**Related**

Review: Spring Awakening ( <a href="http://www.spring-awakening-bridewell-theatre/">http://www... spring- awakening- bridewell- theatre/</a> ) May 14, 2012 In "Musical"	Review: Dancing at Lughnasa, Gaiety Theatre ( <a href="http://www.dancing-at-lughnasa-gaiety-theatre/">http://www... dancing-at- lughnasa- gaiety- theatre/</a> ) October 8, 2015 In "Internatio...	Feature: Q&A with Drew McOnie ( <a href="http://www.qa-with-drew-mconie/">http://ww... qa-with- drew- mconie/</a> ) February 5, 2014 In "Articles"
--	--	---

## Tags

[Bridewell Theatre \(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/bridewell-theatre/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/bridewell-theatre/)

[LGBT \(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/lgbt/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/lgbt/)

[LGBTQ \(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/lgbtq/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/lgbtq/)

[LGBTQIA \(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/lgbtqia/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/lgbtqia/)

[one-person show \(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/one-person-show/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/one-person-show/)

[Shyam Bhatt \(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/shyam-bhatt/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/shyam-bhatt/)

[Tiffany Nichole Greene \(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/tiffany-nichole-greene/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/tag/tiffany-nichole-greene/)

---

### **PREVIOUS STORY**

[Review: \*Kodo One Earth Tour 2016: Mystery, Barbican Centre\*](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/review-kodo-one-earth-tour-2016-mystery-barbican-centre/)

[\(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/review-kodo-one-earth-tour-2016-mystery-barbican/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/review-kodo-one-earth-tour-2016-mystery-barbican/)

### **NEXT STORY**

[Review: \*The Encounter, Barbican\*](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/review-the-encounter-barbican/)

[\(http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/review-the-encounter-barbican/\)](http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/review-the-encounter-barbican/)

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

---



Ettie Bailey-King

<http://www.ayoung-ertheatre.com/author/ettie>

Ettie is the outreach officer for The Schools Consent Project (@SCPLondon, [www.theschoolsconsentproject.com](http://www.theschoolsconsentproject.com)) and a creative writer at Write Young Things ([www.writeyoungthings.com](http://www.writeyoungthings.com))

## RELATED POSTS

---

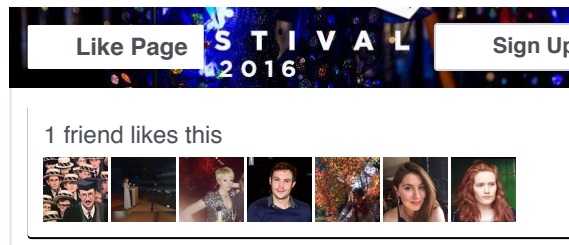
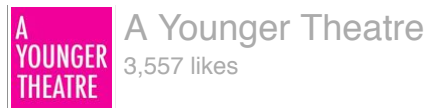




[\(index.php?adclick=19\)](#)

<http://www.twitter.com/ayoungertheatre>

<http://www.facebook.com/ayoungertheatre>



## Recently on AYT

---



<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-richard-iii-rosemary-branch-theatre/>

Review: Richard III, Rosemary Branch Theatre

<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-richard-iii-rosemary-branch-theatre/>

By Toby Vaudrey on January 24, 2017



[\(http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-holding-the-man-brockley-jack-studios/\)](http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-holding-the-man-brockley-jack-studios/)

Review: Holding the Man,  
Brockley Jack Studios  
(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-holding-the-man-brockley-jack-studios/>)

By Connie Stride on January 24,  
2017



[\(http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-out-there-on-fried-meat-ridge-road-white-bear-theatre/\)](http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-out-there-on-fried-meat-ridge-road-white-bear-theatre/)

Review: Out There on Fried  
Meat Ridge Road, White Bear  
Theatre  
(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-out-there-on-fried-meat-ridge-road-white-bear-theatre/>)

By Jessica Handscomb on January  
24, 2017




[\(http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-assisted-suicide-the-musical-southbank-centre/\)](http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-assisted-suicide-the-musical-southbank-centre/)

Review: Assisted Suicide – The  
Musical, Southbank Centre  
(<http://www.ayoungertheatre.com/review-assisted-suicide-the-musical-southbank-centre/>)

By Hattie Pierce on January 23,  
2017


(<http://www.twitter.com/ayoungertheatre>)

(<http://www.facebook.com/ayoungertheatre>)


 **A Younger Theatre**  
3,557 likes

Like Page **STIVAL**  
2016


1 friend likes this




### Tweets by @ayoungertheatre

 **A Younger Theatre**  
@ayoungertheatre

Review: Richard III, @rosemarybranch  
@godotswatch "a creative risk"  
[ayoungertheatre.com/review-richard...](http://ayoungertheatre.com/review-richard...)

	<b>Review: Richard III,...</b> "I am Determined to ..." <a href="http://ayoungertheatre.com">ayoungertheatre.com</a>
--	--

1h

 **A Younger Theatre**  
@ayoungertheatre

Review: Holding the Man,  
@BrocJackTheatre @BigBootsTheatre  
"a must watch"  
[ayoungertheatre.com/review-holding...](http://ayoungertheatre.com/review-holding...)



[Embed](#)

[View on Twitter](#)

(<http://www.facebook.com/ayoungertheatre>)