



A MACHINE THEY'RE SECRETLY BUILDING

BOX OFFICE INFORMATION

A full [Marketing Pack](#) is also available
via admin@proto-type.org

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proto-type

Proto-type Theater A Machine they're Secretly Building

"I want you to know what's happening..."

From what might be a news desk, an office, a bedroom, a bunker under a mountain or a theatre, two people - reporters, senators, freedom fighters, or just... well... concerned citizens like you - think about what it is to speak up, speak out, blow the whistle and lift the veil.

A Machine they're Secretly Building charts a course from the Top Secret secrets of WWI intelligence (via the moon, 1972's Chess World Championships, a disco in Oklahoma and the cafeteria at CERN) through to 9/11, the erosion of privacy, Edward Snowden and the terror of a future that might already be upon us.

Proto-type have combined original text and classified intelligence documents with film from digital artist **Adam York Gregory**, and music and sound design by **Paul J. Rogers**, to vent their frustration at the insidious machine of surveillance.

A Machine they're Secretly Building is about how we got to the point where our governments are spying on us and how that's changing who we are.

"A sharing of disbelief, an articulate wail of anger" – Mark Smith, British Theatre Guide

"Think Adam Curtis meets Chris Thorpe meets Proto-type!" – Audience response

"Simple but striking... unflinching and important." — Megan Vaughan

"a compact, harsh assault on our conscience, wrapped in an accessible, attention grabbing package" – Salter Ego



CREDITS

Proto-type Theater A Machine they're Secretly Building

Written and directed by Andrew Westerside

Devised and performed by Rachel Baynton and Gillian Lees

Digital design and artwork by Adam York Gregory

Original music and sound design by Paul J. Rogers

Stage Manager Thomas Marcinek

Producer Gillian Lees | Consultant Producer Matt Burman

A Machine they're Secretly Building was commissioned by Lincoln Performing Arts Centre (Lincoln), Warwick Arts Centre (Warwick) and hAb (Manchester). Supported by Tramway, Glasgow, Lancaster Arts at Lancaster University, the Britten-Pears Foundation and the National Lottery through Arts Council England.



Supported by the Britten-Pears Foundation

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

PERFORMING PROTEST

Age 16+ | All skill/experience levels | Max 25 participants | Half & full-day versions available

Concerned? Called to action? Ready to dissent?

How do you put your protest and your politics on the stage? In this workshop, participants will devise, in groups or individually, small first-stage works of protest performance using the techniques that were used by Proto-type to create their newest piece - *A Machine they're Secretly Building*.

Suitable for studios or site-specific locations, the workshop will explore tactics and strategies for writing, devising and staging contemporary political theatre and performance.

SOCIAL MEDIA

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/proto-type-theater

TWITTER: @proto_type

Please use **#AMTSB** wherever you can to help us find and share your posts. Feel free to share, like, use and retweet any of ours!

ABOUT THE SHOW

SUITABILITY: We suggest a lower limit of 14 years old because the show contains some strong language and because the company's work may be challenging for a younger audience.

Those younger than 14 are welcome to attend but accompanied by a parent or guardian at their own discretion. The company are happy to answer enquiries from those interested in bringing someone under the age of 14 who would like more details to inform their choice.

ACCESS: The piece features a combination of spoken text, composed sound and film. We can provide large-print versions of the script and touch tours in advance of the performance - please contact admin@proto-type.org to arrange. We are also keen to work with venues to provide BSL interpretation where possible.

DURATION: 1 hour - no interval.

GROUP BOOKINGS: Groups at 6th form level+ are recommended as the show contains some themes and references that may be challenging for younger audiences.

We are happy to help visiting groups learn more about the piece and how and why we made it.

We are also happy to contact groups after they have booked to discuss any details they would like clarifying and to provide supporting materials to enhance their visit.

We can also offer workshops or post show Q&A sessions.



WHO WILL THIS APPEAL TO?

- Those with an interest in contemporary culture, current affairs, global politics and digital rights campaigning
- Theatre, performance and Live Art attenders
- Those who are interested in the debates surrounding privacy, national security and whistleblowing
- Theatre, performance, Live Art, media, politics, philosophy and cultural studies students and academics
- Fans of theatre works by Gob Squad, Chris Thorpe, Forced Entertainment, Reckless Sleepers, Michael Pinchbeck and Action Hero

ENQUIRIES:

Please direct any marketing or other media enquiries to admin@proto-type.org

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE SHOW?

A Machine they're Secretly Building is a multi-media performance which features live action, text, film, bold animation and a specially composed musical score.

The company, **Proto-type Theater**, began the process of making the piece by looking at the work and impact of high-profile figures like Edward Snowden, Chelsea Manning and Julian Assange, but you do not have to have know anything at all about these people or their work to enjoy a full experience of the piece.

Proto-type are not telling the story of these figures, instead the show looks at the kinds of politics they are involved with (truth, secrecy, privacy, government). These have been the primary inspirations for the work. Those that *are* familiar with these subjects will find moments of connection to the material that they might appreciate.

It's an atmospheric, piece of theatre which begins with a wry but accurate history of surveillance and terror. It then moves on to what is happening in the world now, responding to and attempting to explain the overwhelming depth of privacy invasion and it's impact on all of us.

The concerns of the piece may be serious but the show is also in turn witty and dryly funny. There are two performers who share the stage with a large projection screen which plays pre-recorded film and live-feed camera footage. Through the layering of text, video and sound the audience are drawn into the decisions of the past, the concerns of the present and plans for the future - what we can do to make a difference?

It's a performance, a protest and a cautionary tale against inaction - but mostly it is a sharp, bold and brilliant hour of theatre.

PRESS

“Both Baynton and Lees have a strong presence and chemistry, which is mostly (intentionally) muted but occasionally unleashed in more comic and exuberant moments... It’s confident, absorbing storytelling... The piece offers moments at which its performers question themselves: what is the alternative to living in this data-driven society? Going “off the grid”? Donning our collective tin-foil hats? Organising, collectivising, rioting? Well, things are generally good, and Google’s quite useful. The weather’s fine. Perhaps we’ll riot tomorrow... a sharing of disbelief, an articulate wail of anger and powerlessness” — **Mark Smith, British Theatre Guide**

“...after an hour in the company of Rachel Baynton and Gillian Lees you may want to go off grid, head to the woods and never touch a keyboard ever again! Baynton and Lees’ performances are compelling, their softly spoken words carefully pitched to have us learn forward in our seat to hear every word. They use charm and humour to disarm us but make no mistake, their message is forceful, their campaign as vivid as the lurid pink balaclavas they often don.” — **Glen Pearce, The Reviews Hub**

“This is beautifully crafted stuff that has a broader relevance and audience than a traditional theatre company based in one city could manage.” — **Tina Jackson, The Metro (Manchester)**

“Keep an eye out for this adventurous group...” — **Jason Zinoman, Time Out NY**

“...one of the more adventurous, innovative, cutting-edge groups that I know of.” — **Martin Denton, The New York Theatre Experience**

“...should renew your faith in what can be achieved in the theatre” — **The Public Reviews**

“Simple but striking... unflinching and important.” — **Megan Vaughan**

“...a compact, harsh assault on our conscience, wrapped in an accessible, attention grabbing package.” — **Charlie Salter, Salter Ego**

“An inspired, deeply political essay rounded off by heartfelt empathy.” — **Oxford Guardian**

“Powerful, thought provoking & beautifully achieved” — **Giles Croft, Nottingham Playhouse**

