

# The Great Game

*Tricycle Theatre, 269 Kilburn High Rd, London, NW6 7JR* [Full details & map](#)

**Theatre: Off-West End**

**Hidden London**



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## Time Out says

It's almost 200 years since British soldiers first tried to penetrate Afghanistan. Now, under the banner of the Tricycle Theatre, a cohort of (mostly British) writers seeks to pierce with the pen territory that could not be conquered by the sword. A full day spent watching these 16 plays (also grouped in three independent parts) probably won't give you greater access to Afghan hearts and minds. With the exception of David Edgar's 'Black Tulips' and Iranian Siba Shakib's very brief allegories of Afghan history, these shorts are more introspective than intrepid, a fascinating and frustratingly diverse indictment of incomprehension, fear, violence, and the bloody, unexpungable mess that playing global chess gets you into. Nicolas Kent and Indhu Rubasingham direct with alacrity. The Tricycle's stage remains bare, except for a richly coloured mural of mythological characters which gets progressively whitewashed out by the Taliban. Some playlets are too slight to make their own mark but, taken together, they make a remarkable timeline of arrogant strategy, brutality and good intentions. Even when they repeat each other's concerns this gives a sense of long-term futility which you rarely accumulate in a short night at the theatre.