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forced entertainment

Rider Spoke

This event has finished

Until Oct 21 [Barbican Theatre](#), Silk St, London, EC2Y 8DS [MAP](#)

Rating: ★★★★★



© Matt Adams

Venue: [Barbican Theatre](#), Silk St, London, EC2Y 8DS [MAP](#)

Phone: 0845 120 7550

Category: [West End](#)

Times: Thur-Sun 5pm-8.45pm starting every 15 minutes

Price: £10 incl bike hire, £5 bring your own bike

Tube: Barbican/Moorgate/St Pauls

Blast Theory specialises in off-road theatre. But it's the audience which gets on its bike (literally) in their new experiment. After signing their liability for your life away, you cycle off to explore the city, recording your responses to prompts which come (via your headset) from a snazzy handlebar-mounted console. The aim is to find 'hiding places' to record site-specific answers to its questions, which start with 'What are you like?' and grow increasingly provocative.

'Rider Spoke' is, at best, an extreme confessional which turns London's spectacular and squalid alleys into a theatrical backdrop for your own memories. At worst, it's the too-green stem of a brilliant idea, sabotaged by lack of time and thought, and a vastly expensive but slow and demented computer console. The console graphics – disappointingly, about as maturely imaginative as a fake tattoo – flash when you reach a safe place.

But it dislikes any places which may already have recordings hidden in them (basically all the intriguing hidey-holes near the Barbican). And it has a ludicrous definition of 'safe' (whizzing up the right-hand side of two lane-traffic was the only place it flashed up for me to halt).

By dint of ignoring its control-freak instructions and stopping wherever I liked I had a lovely, meditative adventure. But there will be as many different experiences as there are riders, and there's little attempt to represent them collectively. Your recorded musings are available (virtually) to the other riders, but there's not enough time to search out the spots where they're hidden. At the end, you're asked to make a public vow. While I was very merrily yelling my intent to look harder at the world into a CCTV camera, my Time Out colleague was round the corner swearing 'never to come on an arty farty site-specific production again...'

Caroline McGinn, Mon Oct 15

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Until Oct 25
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Thu Oct 25
Kurt Elling + Claire Martin

Wed Oct 31
Michael Clark Company

Oct 31-Nov 10
small metal objects

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- Pizza Express (Pizza & Pasta)
- See all restaurants near Barbican Theatre**

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