



THEATRE

Rich Kids

TRAVERSE THEATRE



You can't question Javaad Alipoor's ambition. Ancient Mesopotamian empires, geological layers of chicken bones, the half-life of polystyrene cups, Thomas Gainsborough, Susan Sontag, Iranian political history, gold iPhones – all that and plenty more gets crammed into the mere hour of his breathless *Rich Kids: A History of Shopping Malls in Tehran* at the Traverse.

And that's even without mentioning the wordy narration, video projections, Instagram feeds, live video and multipanelled set. It all leaves you more than a bit bewildered.

Alipoor has a story to tell, about how huge historical forces have shaped the Middle East over millennia, and how an obsession with emulating European values has led to the



**Javaad Alipoor
and Peyvand
Sadeghian in the
multisensory show**
PETER DIBDIN

cocaine-fuelled, champagne-quaffing, Instagram-obsessed offspring of today's Iranian elite.

It's about how our rampant consumerism is ravaging our planet. And it's about a coked-up car crash in Tehran, Alipoor and co-performer Peyvand Sadeghian's starting point.

Top of the show's issues is its reliance on Instagram. Download the app and you can participate in the performance, scrolling through images as the performers discuss

them, and even watching a live stream of what's happening on stage in front of you. Great ideas, but they only add to the confusion.

As a theatrical embodiment of excess and confusion, *Rich Kids* is a sprawling, chaotic masterpiece. But as a dissection of history, of shifting cultural attitudes, and of our impact on the planet and on each other, it's got some way to go.

To 25 August (0131 228 1404)

DAVID KETTLE

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