

British Theatre Guide

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Incoming / Exodus

Devised by the company
The Lab Collective
Camden People's Theatre
17–21 October 2017

Remember all those heated debates about migration?

Cutting immigration was one of Theresa May's favourite speeches, though migrants being so valuable no reductions were made.

But what would we do if we had the chance to decide who is allowed into the country?

The Lab Collective gives us the opportunity to find out in its devised show *Incoming / Exodus*.

The audience is divided into four districts of Camden and asked to elect for each a representative to form a front of stage committee to decide which applicants for immigration to the area should be accepted.

Film footage of each applicant is screened to give us an idea of their age, wealth, education, occupation and health. At any time, members of the groups could make an intervention at a central mike.

The atmosphere is relaxed and people choose their level of involvement. Administrators Mark (Matthew Flacks) and Viola (Amelia Vernede) steer us through the performance.

The debates tended to favour the more educated and wealthy over those with health needs, but there was a minor rebellion in support of the Russian journalist Sasha whose gender is described as Q. Audience members insisted "they" could not risk the wait.

The show's construction is thoughtful with some forty-odd ways the audience could take the show from refusing to allow any immigration to overthrowing the system and declaring open borders, though I was told a blocking mechanism was ready for that latter possibility.

The show's objectives are liberal but its agenda and probable outcome conservative.

The audience feel obliged to follow the rules. In the end they voted to exclude David the unemployed construction worker and allow in a thirty-four-year-old multimillionaire.

It's an entertaining, interactive game that gives people a taste of how different choices might be made without the risk of encountering the consequences of that choice. You can imagine it being a useful tool for the UK Border Agency.

It's a game played by the UK government that leaves thousands to drown in the Mediterranean and millions to rot in refugee camps spawned by its military invasion of other people's countries.

And I guess the UK simply forgot to ask those people if they wanted an invasion.

Reviewer: [Keith Mckenna](#)