



[Epic](#) by Foster & Déchery
performed at [greenroom](#)
Reviewed by [Simon Belt](#) May 2011

The pitch for this show definitely intrigued me:

'**Epic** will go on a **quest for History**; the big one, written about in books, the one with World Wars in it, with memorable dates and names you learn at school, but also the personal one, the human one, the one you can relate to.

This is a playful and experimental journey through twentieth century history, combining personal stories, fanciful re-enactments of key historical events, video interviews with eccentric relatives, and a cameo from Bertolt Brecht.'

I approached the performance thinking it would be in the tradition of the **people's history** approach - trying to understand and explain history from the perspective of ordinary people and how they create history rather than it being created for them. My experience of people's history or theatre from the 80's was dull so I was pleasantly surprised at how theatrically adept the performance was, and also, recognising how dull our times are historically, how strong the yearning to make some history or be part of something grander spoke through the production.

The show opens up with touching clips of video recordings of family members of the cast reciting some memories of what seems like a by-gone age, and sometimes, a quite alien and exciting time of important social changes. That is except Pedro Inês, who apologises for having no surviving national history prior to democracy in Portugal 1974. The epic, as I should have realised, related to the Brechtian use of drama as a medium, to present popular themes through experimenting with form to create an avant-garde modernist realism.



[Viewing the Arts](#)

Chloé Dechery is a French performer and theatre-maker based in London. Her practice leans across disciplines of Live Art, experimental theatre and movement. Chloé has presented solo performances, guided tours and site-specific pieces in festivals and venues such as Arnolfini Bristol, Forest Fringe in Edinburgh, The Junction Cambridge, The Burton-Taylor Studio in Oxford, BAC, Toynbee Studios, Shunt, Oval House, Siobhan Davies Studio, and also internationally in France and Estonia. As a performer, she has also worked with Improbable, Anne Bean, Sheila Ghelani, Gerry Pilgrim, Rajni Shah and Nomad Theatre. <http://www.chloedechery.com/>

Lucy Foster is a director, writer and performer. She is an Associate Director with Improbable and was recently in their show Panic, which toured to the Barbican and Sydney Opera

House. Lucy's solo work, including her most recent show Oh My Green Soap Box, has been shown in many venues across London, the UK and beyond, including Oval House, Camden Peoples Theatre, Shunt, BAC, The Junction, The Burton

-Taylor Studio, Pleasance Edinburgh and the Sophiensaele and Hebbel am Ufer theatres in Berlin.

<http://www.jumbled.org.uk/>

Edward Rapley is a live artist and actor who makes theatre, 1 to 1 shows and installations; specialising in playful solo work which is often joyous and painful at the same time. His recent solo works include Who Knows Where, The Middle Bit and 10 Ways to Die on Stage. Ed is a Supported Artist of The Basement and an Arnolfini Associate Artist.

<http://edwardrapley.co.uk/>

Pedro Inês is a Portuguese performer,

based in Amsterdam since 2003. He has collaborated with artists including Ivana Muller, Nicole Beutler, Keren Levi and Viljam Nybacka in music and live performance. His works investigate the politics of collaboration, notions of community, group dynamics and folk music.

Epic was originally developed at Battersea Arts Centre and commissioned and co-produced by Newbury Corn Exchange. This tour has been supported by Grants For the Arts via Arts Council England.

Creative Team:

Devised and performed by:
Chloé Déchery, Lucy Foster,
Edward Rapley and Pedro
Inês.

From an original idea by:
Chloé Déchery and Lucy
Foster.

Dramaturgy: Sharon Smith

and Mike Tweddle

Lighting Design: Martin
Langthorne

Video Design: Ian
William Galloway

Composition & Sound
Design: Bob Karper

Choreography: Pia
Nordin Design

Associate:

Katherina Radeva

<http://www.epicth>

eshow.com/