

From the factory floor to the catwalk, from Shanghai to London, World Factory weaves together stories of people connected by the global textile industry.

Riffing on our awareness of mass production and vulture capitalism, Zoë Svendsen and Simon Daw invite you to play a provocative game. Which card will you draw? Will you be an ethical factory owner? Or will profits always come first? In the rag trade, can anyone ever really win?

Featuring stunning video and a powerful score, World Factory is a thought-provoking investigation of fast fashion.



World Factory explores global consumer capitalism through the lens of the textile industry, from the heart of the industrial revolution in nineteenth-century Manchester to the world behind the 'Made-in-China' labels on our clothes today. METIS has been working with Shanghai-based Chinese theatre director Zhao Chuan and his company Grass Stage to undertake the research and development. From the pooled research, Grass Stage and METIS each produced a theatre production germane to their own social and political contexts. This show was researched by having a shirt manufactured in a Chinese factory.

Audiences of up to 96 at a time are seated round tables within a catwalk/factory floor bespoke design system. The show opens with a catwalk extravaganza

of quotations from Reagan, Thatcher and Deng Xiaoping, pinpointing the geopolitical origins of contemporary consumer capitalism, followed by stories from the frontline of the World Factory phenomenon, from the UK's history to the production of fast-fashion in present-day China.

At the heart of the performance is a scenario-based card game in which audience members, in small teams, play factory managers running a clothing factory. Dealt by a 'dealer' (performer) managing four teams, the stories unfold to a backdrop of video imagery and an increasingly sinister power-dynamic in relation to the dealer and their facilitation of the game. A bespoke sonic system gives each 'factory' team a unique experience specific to their chosen path through the game. The game has multiple routes and outcomes, interlinking questions of ethics, fashion, environmental impacts, working conditions, migration and globalisation. Casino-style, audiences trade in workers and money – but it is a game in which the audience had to decide what it means to win.

Simultaneously, our collaborator Zhao Chuan has made a new piece of performance work about the topic – the first version of this work has toured China in June 2014, with a second version presented in November 2014. METIS gave workshops as part of Grass Stage's residency at OCAT gallery space in the factory city Shenzhen in Southern China in November 2014.





Performers	Naomi Christie, Lucy Ellinson, Heather Lai & Jamie Martin
Direction/Design	Zoë Svendsen & Simon Daw
Light	Guy Hoare
Sound	Matthias Kispert
Associate Director	Kate O'Connor
Finale Composer	David Paul Jones
Choreography Consultant	Imogen Knight
Software Developer	Dan Williams
Assistant Director	Lucy Wray
Game Co-Writers	Zoë Svendsen, Simon Daw, Brian Walters, Kate O'Connor, Hilary Seaward & David Isaacs
Research Collaborators (China)	Zhao Chuan & Wu Meng
World Factory Photographs	David Sandison

**METIS** <http://metisarts.co.uk/> is a Cambridge-based performing arts company/network creating interdisciplinary performance projects through rigorous research. A fascination with maps, space, technology, travel and history drives our work in a range of media. Directed by Zoë Svendsen, our work is characterised by its pursuit of expressive forms that connect with the contemporary world.

The first iteration of World Factory was created and produced by METIS in co-production with the New Wolsey Theatre, Young Vic and Company of Angels and first performed at the New Wolsey Theatre and Young Vic in 2015

The project World Factory is supported using funds from the National Lottery through Arts Council England, Cambridge Humanities Research Grants Scheme, Max Planck Institute for the History of Science in Berlin and the Sino-British Fellowship Trust, as well as with the support of the New Wolsey Theatre, Ipswich; Young Vic; Company of Angels; Free Word; Centre For Chinese Contemporary Art (CFCCA); CSV Media Clubhouse, Ipswich; Birkbeck Centre for Contemporary Theatre; National Theatre Studio; Grass Stage; and the MPhil in Public Policy, Digital Humanities Network, CRASSH, Judith E Wilson Fund and the English Faculty, all University of Cambridge. BICC (the British Inter-University Chinese Centre funded by the AHRC) has supported research for events in Manchester and Shanghai. The University of Leeds has provided expert advice. The digital quilt and app technology is provided by theFusion Works.



**ZOË SVENDSEN**

## DIRECTION/DESIGN

Director of METIS [www.metisarts.co.uk](http://www.metisarts.co.uk), Zoë makes research-led interdisciplinary projects exploring contemporary political subjects, including: 3rd Ring Out ([www.3rdringout.com](http://www.3rdringout.com) /TippingPoint Commission Award), an adaptation of Brecht's short story, Four Men and a Poker Game (Northern Stage;The Tron), Difference Engine (Dance Umbrella;The Gate, London) and currently World Factory (New Wolsey Theatre/ Young Vic; [www.world-factory.co.uk](http://www.world-factory.co.uk)). As dramaturg Zoë collaborates on contemporary productions of classic texts, including Arden of Faversham (RSC) (with Polly Findlay) Edward II (National Theatre) and The Changeling (Young Vic) (both with Joe Hill-Gibbins). Zoë is Artistic Associate at the New Wolsey Theatre, and Associate Artist with Company of Angels, for whom she has translated several plays from German. Zoë lectures in Drama and Performance at the University of Cambridge, and is currently affiliated artist at the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin, and is an honorary research fellow at Birkbeck's Centre for Contemporary Theatre.

**SIMON DAW**

## DIRECTION/DESIGN

The Secret Agent (Theatre O;Young Vic), Owen Wingrave (Aldeburgh Festival/ Edinburgh International Festival),Widowers' Houses, The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd (Orange Tree Theatre);Wonderful Tennessee (Lyceum Sheffield);The Planet and Stuff (Polka /Tonic); Eventual Progress (Ekaterinburg Opera, Ballet Theatre);The Winters Tale, Democracy (also Old Vic, London),The Daughter-In-Law (Sheffield Crucible);The Metamorphosis (Linbury, Royal Opera House/The Joyce, New York); Dead Heavy Fantastic, Lost Monsters (Liverpool Everyman);As One (Royal Ballet); Romeo and Juliet (Shakespeare's Globe); DNA, Baby Girl,The Miracle,The Enchantment (National); Elling (Bush/Trafalgar Studios); French without Tears (English Touring Theatre); Romeo and Juliet (RSC, Stratford/Albery); Adam and Eve (TPT,Tokyo); Bloom (Rambert) and The Stepfather (Candoco).

Installation/Performance commissions include:The Competition (Shoreditch Town Hall); 3rd Ring Out (UK Tour);Wave Structures, Hopefully it Means Nothing, Sea House (Aldeburgh Festival) and New Town (Site Specific/Arches).

**GUY HOARE**

## LIGHT

A Doll's House; Far Away;American Lulu; Going Dark; Electra and The Story of An African Farm (Young Vic); Strange Interlude (National); Clarence Darrow (Old Vic); Roots; Serenading Louie; Be Near Me (Donmar Warehouse); NSFW; In Basildon (Royal Court); Little Revolution;A Delicate Balance;Waste (Almeida);All My Sons (Regent's Park);And No More Shall We Part (Hampstead Theatre); The Father (Tricycle Theatre, Kilburn); Peter Pan (National Theatre of Scotland); Future Proof(Dundee Rep); King Lear; Rutherford & Son; Othello (Northern Broadsides).

Dance includes:The Metamorphosis (Royal Ballet); Dracula (Mark Bruce Company);The Land of Yes and The Land of No (Sydney Dance Company); Front Line (Aterballetto);Varmints; Mischief; Havana Rakatan (Sadler's Wells);And Who Shall Come to the Ball? (Candoco); Bruise Blood (Shobana Jeyasingh); Just As We Are (bgroup); 4x4 (Gandini Juggling)

Opera includes: Jakob Lenz (ENO, Hampstead);The Firework-Maker's Daughter (The Opera Group, ROH & New York); King Priam, Paul Bunyan;The Lighthouse; Gianni Schicchi, Don Giovanni and Eugene Onegin (ETO).

**MATTHIAS KISPERT**

## SOUND

Matthias Kispert is an electronic music composer, performer and artist living in London.

He is Audio Director of media artist collective D-Fuse and regularly collaborates with digital artists including United Visual Artists, Quayola and Jason Bruges Studio.

Work includes: Small Global (with D-Fuse): Glastonbury Festival (UK), Get It Louder (Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou), Eyebeam (New York), Tekton (with D-Fuse & Labmeta): STRP Biennial (Eindhoven), Multiplicidade (Rio de Janeiro), Punto y Raja (Reykjavik), Particle (with D-Fuse): USC (Los Angeles), CYNETart (Dresden), ON\_OFF (São Paulo), ISEA (Belfast), Latitude (with D-Fuse):VIA (Mons), MOD (Guadalaraja), MU (Eindhoven), Sonic Acts (Amsterdam), EMAF (Osnabrück), Hong Kong Arts Centre, Undercurrent (with D-Fuse): CineCity (Brighton), Dis-Locate (Yokohama).Matthias Kispert is a lecturer in Sound Art at the University of the Arts London.

**DAVID PAUL JONES**

## FINALE COMPOSER

David Paul Jones is a multi-award-winning composer, pianist, vocalist and songwriter. Theatre work includes: Butterfly (Ramesh Meyyappan - UK/Singapore);The Green Snake (National Theatre China);The Missing, Mary Queen Of Scots Got Her Head Chopped Off, Elizabeth Gordon Quinn (National Theatre of Scotland);Those Eyes - That Mouth,The Devil's Larder, Barflies,What Remains (Grid Iron);Something Wicked This Way Comes, Pobby & Dingan, Caged (Catherine Wheels); Four Men And A Poker Game (METIS) and The Tree Of Knowledge (Traverse Theatre).

He is the recipient of several awards including the Glenfiddich Spirit Of Scotland Award for Music in recognition of his contribution to the theatre and music industry in Scotland.



*'One thing we might learn from World Factory is that if there is such a thing as responsible capitalism then it is in its death throes or was faking it all along.'*

Exeunt Magazine

<http://exeuntmagazine.com/reviews/world-factory/>

*'One of the guiltiest pleasures going'*

What's On Stage

[http://www.whatsonstage.com/london-theatre/reviews/world-factory-the-young-vic\\_37849.html?utm\\_source](http://www.whatsonstage.com/london-theatre/reviews/world-factory-the-young-vic_37849.html?utm_source)

*'A ground-breaking theatre/game. Deep, research-based. & Done with commitment.'*

Paul Mason via Twitter

*'Lively and ambitious ... World Factory makes us complicit in the process of exploitation before pulling us back to see a bigger picture that ain't so pretty.'*

The Times

<http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/arts/stage/theatre/article4446005.ece> (behind paywall)

*'Smart, mischievous and genuinely thought-provoking.'*

Financial Times

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/c40168ae-fee3-11e4-94c8-00144feabdc0.html> (behind paywall)

*'An ambitious, provocative and intricate piece of game-making, evading easy answers and polemic while succeeding in making us think'*

The Stage

[https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2015/world-factory/?utm\\_content=buffer](https://www.thestage.co.uk/reviews/2015/world-factory/?utm_content=buffer)

*'A stunningly presented experience. [...] the attention to detail is superb.'*

Time Out

<http://www.timeout.com/london/theatre/world-factory>

*'A richly absorbing experience'*

Evening Standard

<http://www.standard.co.uk/goingout/theatre/world-factory-review-richly-absorbing-and-thought-provoking-10262870.html>

*'The sophistication of the experience and the dynamics of the game make the production much more than a piece of interactive participatory theatre.'*

The British Theatre Guide

<http://www.britishtheatreguide.info/reviews/world-factory-young-vic-11546>

*'This is where World Factory shines as a piece of theatre. The traditional boundaries between audience and subject matter are smashed: we are implicated in the web of the show.'*

Culture Whisper

<http://www.culturewhisper.com>

*'Part theatre, part documentary, part adventure game, World Factory is as varied as the garments these factories produce. It's also one of those productions that so closely engages its audience in a specific and personal moment that any attempt to capture that essence on paper is never going to fully explore the piece without entering into spoilers.'*

The Public Review

<http://www.thepublicreviews.com/world-factory-new-wolsey-theatre-ipswich/>

*'This lively and ambitious show from the directors and designers Zoë Svendsen and Simon Daw amuses, involves and unnerves us throughout its 100 minutes. [...] How neatly World Factory makes us complicit in the process of exploitation before pulling us back to see a bigger picture that ain't so pretty.'*

**Dominic Maxwell, The Times**

*'In Zoë Svendsen's and Simon Daw's production of World Factory at the Young Vic, the audience becomes the cast. Sixteen teams sit around factory desks playing out a carefully constructed game that requires you to run a clothing factory in China. How to deal with a troublemaker? How to dupe the buyers from ethical retail brands? What to do about the ever-present problem of clients that do not pay? Because the choices are binary they are rarely palatable. But what shocked me – and has surprised the theatre – is the capacity of perfectly decent, liberal hipsters on London's south bank to become ruthless capitalists when seated at the boardroom table. [...] Capitalism subjects us to economic rationality. It forces us to see ourselves as cashflow generators, profit centres or interest-bearing assets. But that idea is always in conflict with something else: the non-economic priorities of human beings, and the need to sustain the environment. Though World Factory, as a play, is designed to show us the parallels between 19th-century Manchester and 21st-century China, it subtly illustrates what has changed.'*

**Paul Mason, The Guardian**

*'Many of us like to think of ourselves as ethical shoppers, but World Factory brings the murky economic realities of the globalised textile industry uncomfortably close to home. This clever and entertaining show, developed by theatre company METIS (in co-production with Company of Angels, the Young Vic and the New Wolsey Theatre), is part documentary drama, part game — and the result is smart, mischievous and genuinely thought-provoking.'*

**Sarah Hemmings, The Financial Times**

*'Beautifully facilitated by a cast of four, who act like croupiers, dealing each table a new card with a developing scenario and a binary choice, the show is like a speedily played boardgame; [...] it's sociable, exhaustingly good fun.'*

**Lyn Gardner, The Guardian**

*'A smart, complex and genuinely thought-provoking exercise in game theatre: this ingenious thought experiment from Zoe Svendsen – Joe Hill-Gibbins' dramaturg on The Changeling – and Simon Daw [is] an ambitious, provocative and intricate piece of game-making, evading easy answers and polemic while succeeding in making us think – and think hard – about the cost of our clothing.'*

**Natasha Tripney, The Stage**

*'...A stunningly presented experience. From the 'dealers' who manage our experience like implacable croupiers, slipping us bribes under the table or handing us the latest piece of bad news, to the huge screens broadcasting constant rolling footage of automated looms and industrial statistics, the attention to detail in Zoë Svendsen's and Simon Daw's production is superb. There's a real tactility to the game, as we examine the clothes we have made for faults and flick through folders of employees to slice into the latest round of redundancies.'*

**Stewart Pringle, Time Out**

*'... This is a show that tests the relationship between our competitive impulses and other factors. How far will ethical and environmental considerations impinge on commercial ones? Wrestling with this question, against the clock, makes for a richly absorbing experience.'*

**Henry Hitchings, Evening Standard**

*'The sophistication of the experience and the dynamics of the game make the production much more than a piece of interactive participatory theatre. [...] This is not another patronising, documentary-like representation of China. Very different in content and scope from The World of Extreme Happiness that only highlighted the wrong-doings of a country that is by far more complex than we in the West can comprehend. It is not merely didactic and shock-provoking. World Factory is an all-inclusive, enjoyable, intelligent production pointing to the 'dramas' of our society.'*

**Mary Maxilli, The British Theatre Guide**

*'An innovative and thoroughly well-researched exploration of the global textile industry, which remains not only comprehensive and coherent, but genuinely enthralling from start to finish.'*

**Bob Trafford, City A.M.**

*'Peel back the layers and make space on your clothes rail because there's far more to be found in World Factory than meets the eye- this isn't just about clothes. It pulls you in and gives you a short sharp shock. And while it may be a game for us, for others out there, it's a reality. One thing we might learn from World Factory is that if there is such a thing as responsible capitalism then it is in its death throes or was faking it all along. [...] One realises that no matter one's good intentions, the parabolic nature of authoritarian/ statism capitalism will always have something to throw back at you. [...] Not only is World Factory an entertaining educative tool to inform us about the clothes we wear on our backs, it also exposes the survival tendencies that keeps capitalism in its continual cycle- these tendencies being our own efforts to assuage its devastating effects.'*

**Verity Healey, Exeunt Magazine**

*'...One of the guiltiest pleasures going: Do you notice the videos playing up overhead? Real people at real work-stations, cutting, pressing, sewing; cooped up like battery hens in blank white halls under the cold glare of strip lights. One sits on a bucket, stirring two pots of dye and stares at the camera. Money, George Dodd wrote, "is a veil which hides the producer from the consumer." World Factory peels it all the way back. You sit uneasily in your clothes.*

*True, deep-down, we know all of this. We know that the ultra-competitive fashion industry is engaged in a constant cost-cutting battle. We know that the price war starts on our high streets. We know that results in poor working conditions, even sweat-shops and child labour.*

*However, World Factory lets you live those ideas as an embodied experience. It's one thing to be told about low rates of pay, another to be the person implementing those rates. Responsible capitalism isn't easy. You've little control. Consequences are unforeseeable, not least the invisible environmental impact, and decisions must be made, sometimes arbitrarily and often without any real alternative. The sense of competition carries you away, and the game is great fun as a result, but there are no prizes for principles. Only your numbers count. It's your conscience that has to cope.'*

**Matt Trueman, What's On Stage**

*'If you're expecting to be passively entertained, think again: this bold new fusion of performance and immersion is no standard show. World Factory makes the audience the protagonist, barraging you with a stream of conundrums, both moral and financial. We weren't told to care about the workers' conditions, we were made to care. And this is where World Factory shines as a piece of theatre. The traditional boundaries between audience and subject matter are smashed: we are implicated in the web of the show. Happily, for those that fear the forced involvement of immersive productions, the performance is left to the professionals, but it's up to the audience to mastermind their own dramatic trajectory. [...] this experimental production is a testament to the capacity for theatre to change our perspective on the world around us.'*

**Lucy Brooks, Culture Whisper**

*'World Factory is a bilingual performance – the actors speak to us in both Mandarin and English, and the slogans pumped out of tinny speakers by our tables switch between the two languages. This is a show interested in absorbing you fully into its world – when the workers go home for Spring Festival, the lights go off in the room and we are forced to wait for their return. The whole production is extremely thoroughly researched, and although this is apparent in every element of the show its full impressiveness is only demonstrated at the end. As our factories finish their year, the final figures for each are shown on the big screens. This prompts cheers as the audience see who has performed well, and cheerful banter and sideways glances with those who sacrificed ethics for productivity. The accuracy is startling – each audience member comes away with a printout telling them, for example, how much water they have used down to the litre. It all feels very physical and very real, and although the audience is full of laughter, growing bolder as the show progresses, the end does not let you forget that, for many people, these are real decisions that have to be made, decisions which have a direct impact on the world around us.'*

**Rebecca Coates, PlaysToSee**



Paul Miller @pmiller67 Jun 5

World Factory @youngvictheatre is so ingenious, funny and original. Brilliantly done.

LDNMayor Culture @LDN\_Culture Jun 5

World Factory @youngvictheatre Fashion unravelled. Fast paced, hard hitting, brilliant.

Greenpeace\_Southwark @GreenpeaceSouth Jun 6 Camberwell, London

Lovely evening at world factory @youngvictheatre on Friday! I drew the line at #ChildLabour tho!

Dr Marc Bush @Marc\_Bush Jun 5

Enjoyed the amazing participatory #WorldFactory @youngvictheatre, challenging, thought-provoking and #arts at its very best!

Frozen Light @frozentheatre Jun 5

An entertaining game, a terrifying reality, a brilliant piece of theatre. @MetisProjects @youngvictheatre #worldfactory

Dina Mousawi @DinaMousawi Jun 2

Powerful, interactive #theatre #WorldFactory @youngvictheatre I urge everyone to go. You'll never be able to buy clothes in the same way again

Florence Thompson @florencethompso Jun 1

I highly recommend #worldfactory @youngvictheatre... Tells the textile industry story in brilliantly creative way

Kaz Patwa @KazP Jun 1

Fantastic night @youngvictheatre for #WorldFactory mixed play/game. Made a profit & our team had the 2nd best worker's rating!

Will Alder @WillAlder May 30

Utterly brilliant #WorldFactory tonight @youngvictheatre @angelscompany - one of the best pieces of theatre I've seen all year.

Julia @ProbablyJulia May 30

I had such a guilt ridden yet amazing time at #WorldFactory tonight. Amazing interactive play at the Young Vic!

Toothpic Nations @toothpicnations May 27

Thoroughly enjoyed 'playing' with a group of like-minded strangers at the thought-provoking & immersive #WorldFactory @youngvictheatre

Theo B-B @theo\_bb May 24

Brilliant piece of immersive theatre on capitalist geographies of textile production.

Rachel Lincoln @rachel\_theatre Jun 8

Still thinking about #worldfactory @youngvictheatre last week. Such a good show!

Sarah Fortescue @sarahforty

Woooah. Spent an afternoon seeing #WorldFactory at @youngvictheatre - totally unlike any theatre I've seen before!

Rebecca Griffiths @rhgriff

@youngvictheatre #WorldFactory an awesome immersive experience! Well balanced view of the industry. Total appreciation for how complex it is.

nick @NickJThommo

Guys you need to check out WorldFactory at @youngvictheatre it is an inspiring, refreshing and utterly ingenious piece. Stunning, Five Star.

Selected comments from school pupils aged 13-14 who participated in the theatre show:

**What did the show make you think about?**

Where clothes come from and how the cheapest materials affect the environment. Also, the factories treating the workers.  
How just one decision can change the lives of so many  
It made me get a better understanding of the pressure that the world factory owners are under. Also it made me think about the poor conditions people work in.  
Factories, human rights, child labour, fashion

**How did it make you feel about clothes?**

It made me think more about where they are from  
I will now think about where clothes come from  
That they are helping to destroy the future  
That they come at a cost greater than the price  
Sad  
That we shouldn't waste clothes  
It made me realise what the workers have to do to get paid and how much cotton, water and oil we use to make them

**Do you have any other comments?**

Yes, I liked the performance very much and everyone was great, well done  
The show was interesting and the game was fun as well as you are learning something  
We had a good time, glad we came! X X  
It was an amazing experience Thank you  
It was a unique experience  
Thank you for opening our eyes to the world (of fashion)

**Feedback from development workshops held in Cambridge, London and Ipswich:**

*Thought provoking, addictive, frustrating, fun, engaging, challenging, informative, absorbing, tests moral principles.*

*The game really helps you think how business work and how to run your own and also how sometimes there is a hard decision to make.*

*This is absolutely fascinating. I loved playing the game, and I really felt that it could have gone on for an hour and a half perhaps. I never looked at my watch once and the theatre was sometimes made from discussing the dilemmas in detail. This is a wonderful idea and I look forward to the real thing. Also I really hope you keep the fact that there is no right answer. The dilemma is what fixates me.*

*Thinking about the individual lives and the pressures each factory worker faces makes you realise the responsibilities and duty of care involved makes you think HUGELY of the human lives and struggles behind these factories and labels.*

*I thought this was a v informatie and unique way of raising a touchy issue that relates to everyone in one way or another. A real eye opener.*

*I really enjoyed the game, especially the high stakes situation. It made me think, it is really easy to judge these corporate companies from a far but it is a lot different when you have your finger on the button.*

*I thought the game provided a realistic representation of the work environment in China. As well as what making decisions in the business sector entails.*

**2%**  
**FACTORIES THAT PAID A  
REGULAR WAGE**



# THE FUTURE

