

Girl in the Machine

Synopsis

'Do you want to live forever?
YES or NO.'

Polly and Owen have nailed it. Successful in their careers and wildly in love with each other, they feel ready to take on the world.

But when a mysterious new technology, promising a break from the daily grind, creeps into everyone's phones, their world is turned upside down. As the line between physical and digital rapidly dissipates, Polly and Owen are forced to question whether their definitions of reality and freedom are the same.

Girl in the Machine is a disturbing but compassionate vision of our potential digital future, and what it might mean for 'life' as we know it. The play premiered at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh, in 2017, directed by Traverse Artistic Director Orla O'Loughlin.

A sinister story of love and addiction that revisits age old themes whilst thrusting them into a dystopian digital future... thanks to Smith's cut to the chase dialogue, the horrors of what that could ultimately entail are viscerally realised. --Edinburgh Evening News

A gripping two-hander, a piece of dystopian sci-fi in the manner of Charlie Brooker's Black Mirror... takes our present-day unease about the intrusiveness of technology and pushes it a step into the future... Smith tunes in to several of our contemporary concerns, including the centralising control of big data and the blur between work and home in an always-on digital world... A high-stakes, will-she-won't-she battle that keeps us on edge throughout... Excellent. — Guardian

'Haunting and prescient... Smith invests this world with a rare intensity... there is a solid emotional base to the piece; it has a real authenticity, while the encroaching technological nightmare rings horribly true'
The Stage

Polly and Owen (Between 20 and 35 years old)

Polly is a hot-shot lawyer, whose increasing work load is not getting any easier, until she is given an electronic headset known as Black Box, whose precise function is never clearly delineated, but which helps the wearer to unplug from the daily grind. Gradually its hold over Polly grows, and over time, Polly becomes an addict and can't do without the black box.

Owen is a nurse, who gives the Black Box to Polly after they were given out at work. As the story progress's he realises that it was a mistake and starts to feel guilty, especially as Polly becomes more addicted. Throughout the play, he tries to make her see sense as it is destroying their relationship and marriage.

Josh Holden
Director