

Purgatorio

Devised by the Clownz With Apple Company

Produced by Boyz With Apple Collective

Performers

Abril.....Mary
Alex Austin.....Bouncer
Anne Shook.....Sissy
Balfour Clark.....Monroe
Julianna Austin.....Bartender/Dancer
Lena Pepe.....Aella
Lou Sydel.....Little Andy
Sarah Hansel.....Jackie
Theo Duclo.....Me

Production Team

Frances Rippy.....Director
Helen Magowan.....Lead Writer, Videographer
Julianna Austin.....Fight Director
Lily Anna Berman.....Scenographer: Sets
Lou Sydel.....Choreographer
Naomi Friedman.....Scenic Artist
Padra Crisafulli.....Scenographer: Sound
Paola Castañeda.....Lead Scenographer: Costumes
Samantha Anderson.....Lighting Consultant

Special Thanks

Accademia Dell'Arte in Arezzo, IT; Liz Hetzel; Shakespeare & Co in
Lenox, MA, USA; Quinn; Keira DiGaetano

Synopsis

Purgatorio follows 7 troubled souls and their torturers dancing to salvation in Club Purgatorio, a surrealist techno dreamscape. Inspired by Dante Alighieri's *Divina Commedia* and developed at the Accademia Dell'Arte in Tuscany, this devised physical theatre piece explores desire, dependency, and divinity through ecstatic movement. It invites the audience to press where it hurts, live their darkest fantasies and then to dance it off after.

Content Warning: This production includes depictions of sex, violence, drugs, and use of strong language which may be upsetting to some. Viewer discretion advised.

Director's Note

Purgatorio is the most recent examination of the boundaries between life and death in a series of projects on the subject. Through reflecting on this pattern, and *Purgatorio's* place in it, I've (finally) learned what this play is about. We mined the liminal spaces between life and death partly to grieve those we've personally lost and provide catharsis in a culture which denied our collective need to mourn during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic in favor of productivity. Purgatory also resonated with me as a place of transition, recalling my experience of gender. We see a trans man die at the start of the piece, but this isn't a story about trans pain, it's a story about the necessary death of a past self and the challenging, painful, but ultimately blissful rebirth of the truer version made in your own image. The act of transition is a radical act of self-determination and this play explores the shame which surrounds that experience, compounded by the universal social corrective shame experienced during and after transgressing against our fellow man. The characters in *Purgatorio* navigate shame and only through understanding, accepting, and processing it together do they find salvation.

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