

# The Truth Game

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**QX REVIEW**

**BY SW?**

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## THE TRUTH GAME

Tell the truth quicker. Tell the truth quicker. Honesty's the best policy. The truth will set you free. The only need worth having is the need for truth.

Does that make you feel uncomfortable? Do you agree with such statements, perhaps, intellectually, but are unable to sanction them in practical aspects of your life?

If you're reading this, there's a fine chance you're gay, meaning there's a high possibility some of your life has been clouded by a shadow of guilt and fear. Terror of the possible backlash which seems inevitable at the prospect of coming out, is the classic example of a destructive lie. Taking sexuality as an example, it's possible that your 'coming out' was chaotic, uncomfortable and distressing. Even if that's the case, most gays and lesbians would agree that the drama of coming out is preferable to the spiritual destruction of a life in denial. The classic 'coming out' fear is that friends will desert the recently announced homosexual. The obvious response to this is, perhaps they weren't such jolly pals after all. Waving good-bye to suddenly homophobic mates can be confusing and emotional, but it's a necessary evil, and in the end, it's all good anyway.

The lesson learned here is that, even if telling the truth means losing job, lover, money or friends, by doing so, one retains self-respect. The strength gained from such empowerment will lead to greater and better jobs, lovers etc. The message is, fuck the consequences and tell the truth anyway.

The complex relationship with truth and it's potential repercussions is the theme of Simon Rumley's new film 'The Truth Game'. The film is the second outing for Rumley who's in the process of producing a trilogy of films about young people living in London. The plot involves six friends getting together for dinner and how their interaction leads to relationship break down, tension and revelation. Rumley describes it's aims,

'The film's actually an investigation into what truth really is and whether or not it matters in society today. I've always found it very interesting that the truth is something we're told should be adhered to...but in fact the pil-

lars of society, the ones who tell us to be truthful, are actually the ones being anything but.'

For want of a snappy strapline, the film could be called an Abigail's Party for the 21st century. It has elements of This Life, Queer As Folk and Human Traffic in that it's urban, contemporary and concerned with the foibles of pleasure seeking adults on the verge of 30+ crisis.

It has a cast of hip UK actors who're well versed in ensemble productions and all the cast give impressive performances. Stuart Laing plays Eddy, the coke dealing wannabe novelist with a slightly whiny, but beautiful and affluent girlfriend played by Selina Giles. They host the dinner party while flat-sitting for friends and invite two other couples. The varying guests are instrumental in questioning the trust between them, and consequently everybody else. Charlotte and Dan, played by Tania Emery and Paul Blackthorne are the most volatile couple, both being unfaithful and one being rather partial to the odd line of coke. Thomas Fisher and Jennifer White play Alan and Alex, the New Age-ish couple lacking in social skills and less materially driven than the other guests.

While they don't actually get down to playing the consistently troublesome 'truth game' favoured by students and shit-stirrers, various deceptions are revealed throughout the evening. The understated performances, taut direction and authentic production values creates deliciously uncomfortable viewing. Secret coke hoarding, terminal illness, friendship threatening infidelities and doomed ambition are just a few of the issues laid on the table after a few glasses of Chardonnay.

An interesting twist on truth comes from Eddy, who when accused of cheating on his girlfriend, admits the grope, but with apparently jockey irony. He tells the truth, but it's presented as a lie. This serves as a vehicle to ridicule his girlfriend's (correct) assumption and simultaneously maintain the moral high ground. The truth, it seems, isn't always presented in a truthful manner. Ain't that the truth. sw?

**'The Truth Game' has yet to receive full distribution and is currently showing at the NFT until 2nd August. NFT box office 020 7928 3232.**