# Pear twins push boundaries with chaotic and playful phobia show at Soho Theatre



Identical twins Patrick and Hugo McPherson, known collectively as Pear, continue to captivate audiences with their unique blend of sketch comedy. With their imposing 6ft 7in stature and unmistakable connection, they have carved out an impressive niche in the competitive arena of comedy, especially at festivals like the Edinburgh Fringe. Their latest venture, *Phobia*, presented at the Soho Theatre, promises an engaging mix of chaos and laughter, building on the success of previous shows, such as *But Braver*.

The duo's comedic style thrives on subversion; while they embrace the quirky aspects of being twins—complete with playful banter about their lesser-known triplet Emmanuel, who struggles to join their act—they dig deeper into the dynamics of identity and expectation. Throughout *Phobia*, audience members witness them push boundaries, often stepping beyond conventional humour to explore deeper themes, all while keeping the atmosphere light-hearted and playful.

The show cleverly utilizes audience participation to amplify its satirical take on fear—an engaging premise ripe for exploration. One particularly amusing segment involves guests being handed props, such as maracas, that they can use during intense moments. This interaction fosters an atmosphere reminiscent of chaotic student comedy nights, where spontaneity reigns and delightfully unpredictable moments unfold on stage. One can see the twins playfully riffing off each other's energy, a physical comic synergy that is deeply rooted in their shared upbringing and long history of collaboration.

Critics note that while the sketches occasionally veer towards abstraction, they are held together by the twins' impeccable timing and physical comedy. An early sketch depicts a pair of German border security officers wielding comically tiny plastic hands, exemplifying their mastery of visual gags and slapstick. Other highlights include a parody involving a US president and a humorously over-familiar FBI agent, showcasing the twins' knack for merging absurdity with relatable scenarios.

Despite the occasional loose ends in sketch writing—where some scenes seem to finish abruptly or falter in clarity—this early run suggests a promising trajectory. As they prepare for their upcoming Edinburgh performances, expectations are high for the further development of their material. Their previous show, *But Braver*, received praise for its quickfire sketches and comic timing, reinforcing their reputation as a compelling and versatile act within the comedy circuit. With comparisons to iconic duos like Reeves and Mortimer, Pear’s ability to blend the surreal with the absurd is expected to resonate well as they continue to fine-tune their performances.

Overall, Pear's latest offering is described as a whirlwind experience, combining clever writing and exuberant physicality to deliver a comedic experience that rivals their best work. As they continue to evolve their comedic craft, Pear remains a notable force in sketch comedy, inviting audiences to explore the intersections of humour, identity, and shared experiences through the ever-amusing lens of twindom.

### Reference Map

1. [[1]](https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/pear-review-edinburgh-fringe-comedy-b2752262.html) Lead article on Pear's *Phobia* performance at Soho Theatre.
2. [[2]](https://www.mumblecomedy.uk/2023/08/26/pear-but-braver/) Review of Pear's *But Braver* highlighting their timing and connection.
3. [[3]](https://www.chortle.co.uk/review/2024/08/18/56379/pear) Chortle’s review noting the twins' dynamic and physical comedy.
4. [[4]](https://www.theatretravels.org/post/review-pear-at-the-chalet) Description of Pear’s performance style and audience impact at The Chalet.
5. [[5]](https://www.comedy.co.uk/fringe/2023/pear/) British Comedy Guide's overview of Pear and their achievements.
6. [[6]](https://www.chortle.co.uk/shows/edinburgh_fringe_2023/p/34078/_pear%3A_but_braver) Chortle’s listing highlighting previous successes and comedic style.
7. [[7]](https://therecs.co.uk/pear-%E2%98%85%E2%98%85%E2%98%85%E2%98%85/) Review comparisons to iconic British comedy duos, discussing their engaging sketches.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/theatre-dance/reviews/pear-review-edinburgh-fringe-comedy-b2752262.html> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.mumblecomedy.uk/2023/08/26/pear-but-braver/> - This review praises Pear's show 'But Braver' as a fantastically satisfying experience, highlighting the twins' killer timing and inimitable connection. The reviewer notes their ability to read each other's thoughts and execute humor as if from one mind, attributing this cohesion to over 30 years of shared experience. The pacing, quickfire sketches, and sarcastic self-referencing are also commended, making Pear a standout act at the festival.
3. <https://www.chortle.co.uk/review/2024/08/18/56379/pear> - Chortle's review of Pear's 2024 Edinburgh Fringe show highlights the twins' tight dynamic and physical comedy. They playfully explore the concept of being a literal double act, with their 6ft 7in stature adding to the humor. The show features odd interactions, peculiar mimes, and musical interludes, all carefully choreographed. The script includes tight callbacks and meta-commentary on their comedy, with some sketches being more absurd and others more mainstream, showcasing their versatility.
4. <https://www.theatretravels.org/post/review-pear-at-the-chalet> - This review describes Pear's performance at The Chalet as a lightning-in-a-bottle show that had the audience in hysterics. The twins, born in Australia and now living in England, are noted for their matching outfits and twin shtick. Over the hour, they perform a series of hilariously written and performed sketches, covering various topics and leaving a lasting impression on the audience.
5. <https://www.comedy.co.uk/fringe/2023/pear/> - The British Comedy Guide introduces Pear's 'But Braver' show, noting their previous success with a debut sketch comedy show at Edinburgh. The twins are described as 'like Reeves & Mortimer at their best' and 'hilarious from start to finish.' The show is presented as a riotous and original hour, relentlessly packed with jokes, and is set to leave cowardice at the door.
6. <https://www.chortle.co.uk/shows/edinburgh_fringe_2023/p/34078/_pear%3A_but_braver> - Chortle's listing for Pear's 2023 Edinburgh Fringe show 'But Braver' highlights their previous award-winning and sell-out tour across the UK and Australia. The twins are heralded as 'like Reeves and Mortimer at their best' and 'hilarious from start to finish.' The show is described as a riotous and original hour, relentlessly packed with jokes, and encourages leaving cowardice at the door.
7. <https://therecs.co.uk/pear-%E2%98%85%E2%98%85%E2%98%85%E2%98%85/> - The Recs' review of Pear's show describes it as an exceptional sketch show that challenges preconceptions about the genre. The twins' performance is compared to Reeves and Mortimer and French and Saunders at their best. The show includes various sketches, such as a parody of stage hypnotists and a scenario involving gay ex-lovers at a séance, delivering a highly engaging and splendidly delivered hour of humorous entertainment.