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Tuesday 29 March 2022

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BRANDI ALEXANDER

I am woman, hear me roar ★★★★★

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After a five-year hiatus, Tatiana Pavela's Brandi Alexander is back in the stand-up business and she has something not very funny to say: she was raped, and now she's opening for her rapist.

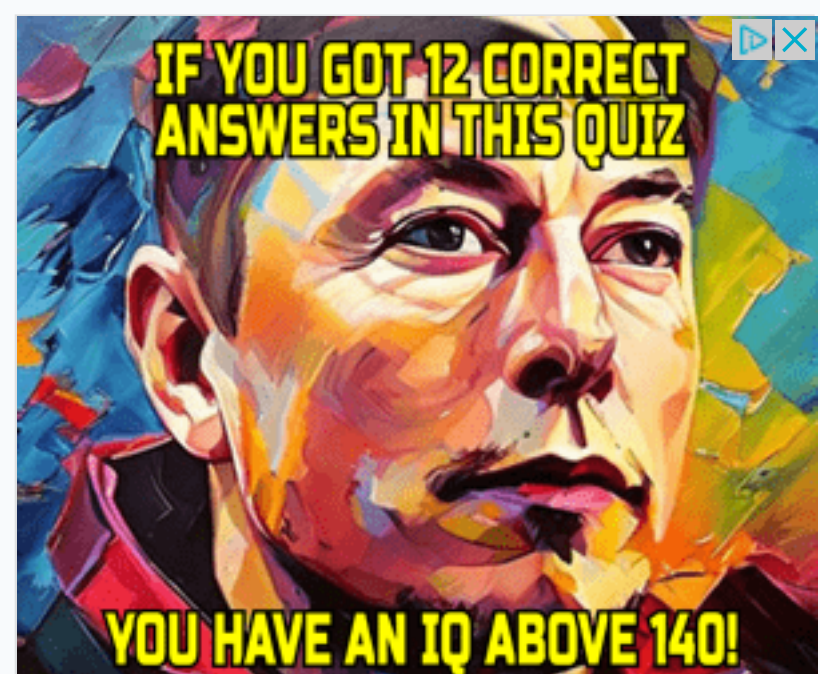
It might not sound like the premise of a fun show, but Brandi Alexander is an outrageously funny and shocking study of the position of women under rape culture. Pavela demonstrates a masterful understanding of the art of performance, both as a comedian and as a woman: her Brandi Alexander starts off eager and manically upbeat, a smile plastered on her face as she bounces from joke to joke, her humour crude and incisive and every second edging closer to discomfort.

It's when the anger shows behind the gritted teeth, however, that Brandi Alexander really comes into its own – a tour de force of female rage that won't play nice anymore. Pavela viciously tears apart the broad gamut of misogyny and rape culture, from the power structures inherent in the comedy world to the complete lack of repercussions for men who perpetrate rape.

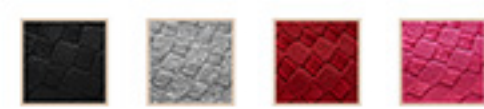
Brandi Alexander is a show for the Hannah Gadsby era, a female fantasy of accountability in a world of Harvey Weinsteins and Louis CKs. Fearless and uncomfortable, it's a show that demands to be heard.

Gilded Balloon Rose Theatre, until 25 Aug (not 12, 19), 9.45pm, £9.50-£10.50 (£8.50-£9.50).

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