

# clancy productions, inc.

## Horse Country

by CJ Hopkins

### synopsis

Officially the finest play at the 2002 Edinburgh Fringe, HORSE COUNTRY is an absurdist love affair with words. It begins as the banter between Bob and Sam, two seasoned comedy pros, but quickly becomes a relentless, ravenous examination of our behavior, values and beliefs. As they slump at a table littered with the detritus of consumerism, their discussion ranges from card games to fishing trips to talking seal acts, and yet everything this hilarious yet ominous duo touch on takes on a deeper and more urgent meaning as the play seeps beyond the edge of the stage. Destined to become a classic of 21st century theater, it's complex and provocative, a snapshot of a time when global capitalism emerges as the single most powerful force on the planet, and its people are just waking up to a supremely hollow victory.

### awards

- WINNER: EDINBURGH FESTIVAL FRINGE FIRST 2002
- WINNER: SCOTSMAN BEST OF THE FIRSTS 2002
- WINNER: ADELAIDE BEST OF FRINGE 2004

### production history

- Originally produced at The Edinburgh Festival Fringe, August 2002
- London premiere at Riverside Studios, April 2003
- UK tour May 2003
- Feature presentation at DuMaurier World Stage Festival, Toronto, 2003

- Australian tour March-April 2004, dates included Adelaide Fringe Festival, Belvoir Street Theatre, Sydney

## press quotes

“Hopkins builds a fractured portrait of a country torn between nostalgic ‘traditional values’... and a more yearning liberality...blisteringly funny...it’s often the case that Edinburgh Fringe-goers...can elevate a show into something greater than it actually is. Horse Country is a welcome exception.”  
The Times (London)

“...brings the spirit of Godot to America’s bars and puts the bourbon in Beckett...a helter-skelter ride through American culture and the American psyche, ending up in a postmodern landscape where Hitler struts by and reactionary values are at odds with liberal consciences...fascinating...”  
The Guardian

“...with this remarkable duologue...Hopkins mounts a brilliant (and hilarious) critique of the emptiness of American life and the meaninglessness of the popular culture that attempts to fill the void...Hopkins’ ability to look honestly into the black heart of existence is a true expression of free speech; his artfulness in fashioning a critique of culture from the ashes of popular entertainment is a true marker of civilization.”  
The Globe and Mail

“a really substantial piece of theatre... sharp, brilliant, intense, fast-moving, made for the moment we live in... comic, disturbing and revealing...there’s no faulting John Clancy’s superb direction or the blistering, brilliantly observed performances.”  
The Scotsman

“One of those classics we’ll talk about fifty years from now...brilliant...”  
Theater Reviews Limited

“C.J. Hopkins’ deceptively small but perfectly formed duologue is a near-perfect 21st century pop cultural off-the-record exchange. Performed brilliantly by David Calvitto and Ben Schneider...John Clancy’s production is the epitome of off-off Broadway...much bigger and deeper than the sum of its apparent parts.”

“...an eyes-wide open freeform whirligig of deceptively disciplined exchanges...this taut, breathless smack-across-the-back-of-the-head affair will also make you laugh like a drain.”  
The Glasgow Herald

“...a timely re-examination of the wild, wild, West - the ‘horse country’-brimming with inverted commas and post-apocalyptic sentiment that is also in line with the finest of American avant-garde theatre tradition.”  
The Stage

“Philosophical, probing and cartoonishly comic, Horse Country...is quite simply a breath-taking piece of work that dares you to keep up to speed... feral Ferris wheel of comedy, confusion, contradiction, obfuscation and bent-out-of-shape straight talking that leaps out of the room at you and harnesses you to its mischievous mindset before you can say ‘Go easy on that bridle, pardner’. All of it delivered with a quite magnificent high-octane comic brio by David Calvitto and Ben Schneider...this is one philosophical nag that looks set to run and run.”  
Metro

“...stimulating and thought-provoking...a welcome addition to the canon of all things absurd and beautiful.”  
The List

“Funny, poignant and witty...John Clancy’s beautifully paced production is faultlessly acted by David Calvitto

and Ben Schneider...I can't think of a better way to spend one hour of your life than in the company of this fast moving, fast talking pair."  
TheatreWorld

## production information

Cast of two.

60 minutes.

Minimum stage size 15' deep by 15' wide. Simple technical needs. Spotlight. No light cues, no sound cues. Venue provides wooden table, two wooden chairs. ONE CHAIR IS BROKEN EACH NIGHT BY ACTOR. CHAIR MUST ACTUALLY BE DESTROYED. NEW CHAIR NEEDED FOR EACH ADDITIONAL PERFORMANCE. Same day load in.

## images



