

A Guest Production at the Odyssey Theatre Ensemble

BLACKTOP HIGHWAY

a gothic horror screenplay'd on one man's body



NOVEMBER 9 through DECEMBER 15, 2018

Friday & Saturday at 8PM, Sunday at 2PM, Wednesday, December 5 & 12 at 8PM

No performances the week of November 19 through November 25th.



This project is supported in part by a grant from the City of Los Angeles, Department of Cultural Affairs, and Los Angeles County Arts Commission.



Written and Performed by **John Fleck**

Directed by **Randee Trabitz**

Video Design by **Heather Fipps**

Lighting Design by **Bosco Flanagan**

Costume Design by **Christina Wright**

Puppet Design by **Christine Papalexis**

Production Team

Video Tech: **David Alvarez** Lighting: **Beth Mack** Stage Assistant: **Rebecca Bermudez**

Running time approximately 90 minutes

“I believe the artistic value the horror film most frequently offers is its ability to form a liaison between our fantasy fears and our real fears.” -- Stephen King

WHO'S WHO

JOHN FLECK

Writer/Performer

John Fleck is an actor and/or performance artist depending on who you talk to. An actor since 1976 he gained notoriety as a performance artist in 1983 when he climbed on top of the One Way Bar in Silverlake at a monthly event called THEORETICAL and proceeded to strip tease while singing Puccini's Madam Butterfly. It was a heady uphill ride from performing in LA and NYC clubs to creating larger pieces in performance spaces and museums while also establishing a career as an actor in theater and TV/film.

Fleck's resistance to being pigeon holed began in 1990 when he and three other performance artists were labelled 'obscene' by the likes of Senator Jesse Helms and Congressman Dana Rohrabacher who put pressure on the National Endowment for the Arts to rescind funding to the four artists thus forever branding them the NEA 4. Their case went to the Supreme Court which they won. *Blacktop Highway* premiered @ REDCAT (LA) in 2015 with a critically acclaimed splash in 2016 @ Dixon Place (NYC) and continues to evolve, blurring the line between performance art and theater. Other award-winning and sometimes controversial self-scripted shows include: *MAD WOMEN*, *Side EFFlecks May Include*, *Nothin' Beats Pussy*, *A Snowball's Chance in Hell*, *Dirt*, *Blessed are all the Little Fishes*, *'ME' Psycho Opera* and *I got the He-Be-She-Be's*.

A sampling of past performance venues includes; the ICA (London); ICA (Boston); The Warhol Museum (Pittsburg); The New Museum, The Public Theater, The Guggenheim Museum, PS-122, Second Stage, La Mama, Dixon Place & Joe's Pub (NYC); The Broad Stage, REDCAT, The Getty Museum, Cal Plaza, MOCA, Taper 2, Evidence Room, Bootleg & Skylight Theater (LA).

As an actor, recent theater credits include: *SAPO* (Culture Clash @ Getty Villa), *Go Back to Where You Are* (Odyssey Theatre), *PEACE* (Culture Clash @ the Getty Villa), *Tobacco Road* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Atlanta* (Geffen Theater), *Applause* (Reprise, UCLA), *A Perfect Wedding* (Kirk Douglas Theater), *Noises Off* (Cape Playhouse-Dennis, Mass.), *She Stoops to Comedy*, *Small Craft Warnings*, *Cringe* and *Berlin Circle* (Evidence Room), *On the Jump* (South Coast Rep), *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (Tiffany Theater), *The Granny* (Old Globe), *The Illusion* (LATC).

TV/Film (a sampling): *Orville*, *Criminal Minds*, *True Blood*, *Anger Management*, *Bones*, *The Middle*, *Weeds*, *The Closer*, *Nip Tuck*, *Carnivale*, *Seinfeld*, *Murder One* and *Tales of the City*. He is one of only three actors who have performed as many roles in all the *Startrek* TV series (*The next Generation*, *Deep Space 9*, *Voyager* and *Enterprise*). Film credits include *Velvet Buzzsaw*, *Alaska is a Drag*, *Falling Down*, *Waterworld*, etc. that enable him financial fluidity to create his, not necessarily for profit experimental theater.

RANDEE TRABITZ

Director

Randee is a director based in Los Angeles. She recently staged *we, the invisibles* by Susan Soon He Stanton at the State Playhouse, at CalStateLA. She staged all the previous versions of *Blacktop Highway*, at RedCat and Dixon Place in NYC with her long-time collaborator, John Fleck. She directed a run of new works at Berlin's English Theater in Germany, took her own version of Sophocles' *Electra* to an international festival Delphi, Greece and staged a pirate musical on a Disney Cruise Ship. She's directed many solos works with Obie-winning satiric-puppeteer Paul Zaloom, of Beekman's World fame. Her work has been seen at regional theaters, (*The Mystery of Irma Vep* and *Hedwig and the Angry Inch*) at Actor's Express, Atlanta and in Santa Fe, and many intimate theaters specializing on new plays with writers like: Doug Cooney, Julie Hébert, Bridget Carpenter, Jessica Goldberg, Jamie Brandli, Elizabeth Dement and Susan Merson. She worked in some big places too, like MOCA'S Geffen Contemporary (Brecht/Weill's *Happy End*), California Adventure Themepark (*Chance to Shine*), Cal Plaza, The Getty (Fleck's *Dirt*), the L.A. Opera (*Jack and the Magic Songbird*) and the Performing Arts Center in Santa Clarita (*Lysistrata*, *Hair*) and Redcat in Disney Hall (*Blacktop Highway* and Zaloom's *Mother of All Enemies & ABCdarium*). Her productions have garnered some prizes, (LA Weekly Award, Garland and Ovation Awards, Finalist Short and Sweet Festival) and been awarded grants (CAD, Durfee and Flintridge). Randee teaches and directs in the Theatre Departments of CSUN, CSULA and at College of the Canyons, in and around Los Angeles. She has worked as a critic for the L.A. Weekly and analyzes writing and screenplays for Disney Animation. Upcoming is the premiere of Stephanie Allison Walker's incredibly timely *Friends With Guns* at the Road Theater in March!

HEATHER FIPPS

Video Design

Heather Fipps is a filmmaker and designer for theatre and film productions. She earned her MFA from Cal State LA in Television, Film and Theater Production. Her work as video designer for multi-media theatrical productions includes: *Blacktop Highway* (REDCAT, Dixon Place) *One Drop of Love* (National Tour) *Wizard of Oz* (Theater 360) *Last Resort* (Tudor House) *Hedda Gabler* (CSULA) and *Hold Me Tight* (Hollywood Fringe) Her scenic design has been seen on BBC, CBS, PBS, SyFy and Netflix. Most recently, she directed the documentary *Process Collettivo* featuring Mark Bradford at the 2017 Venice Biennale. To view more of her work visit www.heatherfipps.com

BOSCO FLANAGAN

Lighting Design

Bosco has designed lights for theatre on four continents, winning awards from Edinburgh (Best of Fest), to New York (Fringe Festival award) and Los Angeles (LA Weekly awards). He currently designs in L.A., and his work continues to take him all over the world. Recent work include *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Snow Geese* for ISC in Griffith Park, *Johnny Got His Gun*, *The Happiness Project*, *Harlequino*, *1984* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* (World Tours) for the Actors Gang. *Naked*, *Tempest Redux* for the Odyssey Theatre (2017 Stage Raw Award for Light Design), and *Mine Eyes Have Seen* and *By the Bog Of Cats* for Theatre Banshee. *MacBeth In Rhythm* for Shakespeare Center and *Hitchhikers Guide to the Galaxy* for Wallis Annenberg, *Lysistrata Unbound* for the Odyssey Theatre and *Titus Andronicus* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* for ISC in the Park.

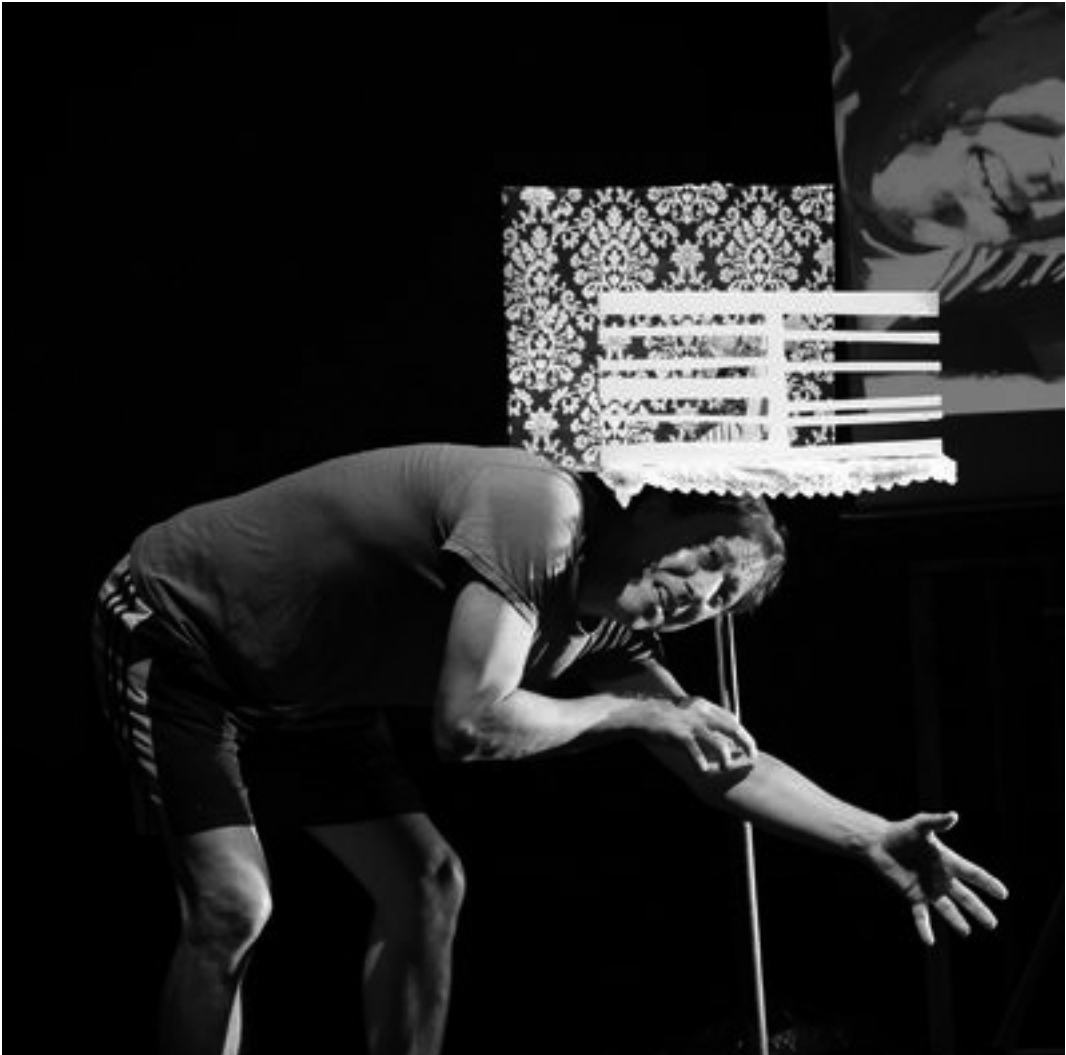
CHRISTINE PAPALEXIS

Puppet Design

Christine has been making puppets, monsters and other weird costumes after starting her puppetry career at Bob Baker Marionette Theater. She has worked on movies, TV, and stage projects with artists such as Marsian DeLellis and Cheri Gaulke. She recently directed a short film with her marionettes made of found objects. Favorite projects include *Team America: World Police*, *The Muppets*, *Dave Made a Maze*.

SPECIAL THANKS

Brian Brophy, Anita Lee, Alejandro Rondon, Doug Henry, Henry Mendell, Randy LaBorde, Anne Militello for original REDCAT lighting design, Isabella Reyes, Weba Garretson, Dixon Place (NYC), Mark Murphy, REDCAT (LA), Steve Renz, Nidhin Patel, James Feur, Bridgit Murnane, Cal State LA, Camille Saint Saens, Henry Purcell and the fabulous team @ the Odyssey Theatre.



Blacktop Highway, a gothic horror screenplay'd on one man's body pits theater and cinema against each other in an hysterically funny and disturbing dialectical tennis match between live performance and mediatized image. And as the title suggests, Fleck indeed does play all the parts – screenwriter, narrator, commentator / critic and all other characters, both human and animal in a tour-de-force that probes into the dark depravities of a strange family living in a dilapidated house along the coast of Maine.

Besides employing all tropes of the filmic genre Fleck also holds up a cracked mirror reflecting a mediatized and polarized American landscape experiencing what philosopher Jean Baudrillard refers to as 'Death of the Real' where the distinction between the 'real' and the 'simulation' of reality has collapsed.

TELL A FRIEND!

RESERVATIONS: 310-477-2055 ext. 2 or odysseytheatre.com