

# CAVA Reviews

## ***“Continent” in Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2010***

From **4th to 30th August 2010** (26 stages)

At **C venues** ADAM HOUSE

Chambers street Edinburgh

[www.cthefestival.com](http://www.cthefestival.com)

*Reviews & Stars*

**THE SCOTSMAN** ★★★★★

“Master of comic mime”

**Theatreguide London** ★★★★★

“This is a show that is as entertaining as it is innovative”

**Fringe Review** ★★★★★

“You’ve got to love them, totally unpretentious unreconstructed joyful mime from a far away continent!”

**Fest** ★★★★★

“CAVA have reinterpreted a cult film and a genre of theatre with extreme skill and fantastic imagination, and the result is an utterly enchanting piece of theatre.”

**Three weeks** ★★★★★

“The show is well worth a look and is sure to immerse you in its own imagination.”

**LIST** ★★★★★

“There are some great slapstick set pieces”

fringereviews

★ hotshow

DANCE & PHYSICAL  
THEATRE  
CONTINENT  
6 CHAMBERS ST (VENUE 34)  
★★★★★

THIS hour of comic capers is supposedly inspired by the Coen Brothers' cult film, *Barton Fink*, but it's wise to push that thought aside when you enter the theatre. Aside from the central character (a novelist suffering writer's block) there's little of the Coens in here, but a whole lot of CAVA – a Japanese physical theatre company formed in 2003.

The five performers have clearly spent the past seven years honing their craft, for they are masters of comic mime. Without saying a word, they communicate a plethora of emotions and an increasingly silly storyline, filled with even sillier characters.

Sitting alone at his typewriter, dressed in a bright blue suit, our protagonist starts to fret when the words refuse to flow. Help arrives in the form of a female assistant, who switches between muse and ghost writer as the manuscript unfolds. Rival writers, an unscrupulous publishing boss and bizarre



CAVA fill a silly storyline with sillier characters inspired by the Coen Brothers' *Barton Fink*

characters from within the novel all burst on to the stage – each wearing vibrantly coloured suits and a range of witty facial expressions.

Our grasp of the narrative comes and goes, as CAVA skip energetically from one scene to the next – interspersing

the action with the odd bit of dance. The joy of *Continent* is not in the storytelling but the performance.

It's in the subtle looks to the audience, the innovative moments when an elastic band becomes an escalator, or a human body morphs into

a pumped up bicycle tyre. Cartoonish in style, the action bounds along to a suitably *Keystone Cops* soundtrack, giving this brightly coloured show the feel of a black and white classic.

KELLY APTER

Until 30 August. Today 7.20pm.

このおかしな戯れは、おそらくコーエン兄弟のカルトムービー「バートン・フィンク」に影響を受けたものだろう。しかし、あなたが劇場に行くのであれば、「バートン・フィンク」のイメージを頭から離れたほうが良いでしょう。創作に行き詰った小説家というコーエン兄弟の映画同様の中心人物を除くと、コーエン兄弟の要素は少ない、しかし CAVA の要素が沢山味わえます。(このフィジカルシアターカンパニーは 2003 年に日本で結成されました。)

この 5 人のパフォーマーは、CAVA を結成してからの 7 年間で、彼らの作品を磨き上げることに費やした。なぜなら、彼らは皆コミカルなパントマイムの達人揃いだからだ。言葉を使わずに溢れ出てくるほどの感情とおかしな物語をおかしなキャラクターを満載させて伝えてきます。

明るい青色のスーツを身に纏い、一人タイプライターに向かう我らの主人公。彼は自分の中から言葉が浮かばなくなることを心配し始めます。アシスタントとして女性が、時に創作のミュージックとして、時にはゴーストライターとして彼を助けます。小説の中の世界からライバル作家や不正に満ちた出版社のボスなど奇怪なキャラクター達が、それぞれに色鮮やかな配色の衣装とウィットに富みコントロールされた表情をステージで炸裂させます。

物語を把握しようとして行ったり来たり、CAVA は一つのシーンから次のシーンへの場面展開を少し変わったダンスを点在させながらエネルギーに行きます。「Continent」を見る喜びは物語の展開だけでなく、パフォーマンスそのものにもあるのです。

ゴムがエスカレーターになったり、人の体が空気を入れられる自転車のタイヤに変化したり。これらの革命的な瞬間は、観客に向けられた微妙な表情の中にあるのです。カートゥーンのようなスタイルで、Keystone Cops (サイレント映画のシリーズ)のサウンドトラックのような音楽とアクションを合わせて、このカラフルなショーは白黒映画の雰囲気も併せ持っています。(翻訳 丸山和彰)

## Fringe Review ★★★★★

<http://www.fringereview.co.uk/fringeReview/3576.html>

This show is a treat for lovers of cartoon physicality, visual humour mime and Japanese sense of fun.

It is a fast paced cartoon mime show very reminiscent of fondly remembered mime companies such as The Moving Picture Mime Show particularly reminding me of their show set in an office "Handle With Care" This kind of mime show seemed to go out of fashion for a while but this is a welcome return for this genre handled with a Japanese aesthetic. We were also treated to some wonderfully obscure pieces of music which is such a relief when you've heard the theme from 'mission impossible' accompanying some frantic performance for the umpteenth time.

It started slow and I wasn't sure whether I was going to like it but the sheer charm and accomplished naivete of the individual performers soon won me over. The first choral dance piece was wonderful to watch and from then on it was charming from start to finish. Apparently inspired by the Coen Brothers film 'Barton Fink' so the publicity says, but you don't really need to know that to enjoy the show, it quickly becomes clear that it is the story of the innocent but good man striving to win through and make his voice heard in a world of corruption, deceit, violence and outrageous bribery. And win he does, the girl, the contract, and the hearts of the audience though to be fair the whole company win the hearts of the audience and that is their great secret, each performer shines, each has a watchability all their own, from the tiny Terminator to the girl Friday each performer has a wonderful range of expressions and visual physical style.

I particularly liked the use of the elastic prop to create a whole range of instant situations. Looking at the audience at the end was an education, you don't often get such a bunch of happy faces all together, it was a sea of smiles, it's a very happy show and the performers do the old circus trick of saying goodbye personally standing by the doors as the audience leaves. You've got to love them, totally unpretentious unreconstructed joyful mime from a far away continent!

Reviewed by Chris Cresswell 14 August 2010

このショーのカートゥーンのような身体性、ユーモアのあるマイム、日本的な感覚の楽しさはとても愛すべきものだ。ショーはテンポが速く、私に「The Moving Picture mime show」というマイムカンパニーの、特にオフィスを舞台にした「Handle With Care」(「取り扱い注意」)という作品を思い起こさせた。

この類のマイム作品は時代遅れのようにでしたが、しかし、日本的な美意識を併せ持って戻ってきたこのマイム作品を私は歓迎したい。

ショーはゆっくり始まり、最初の段階で私の好みに合うかは分かりませんでした。それぞれのパフォーマーのチャーミングな魅力と純粋で完成されたショーに私は魅せられました。最初に全員で行うダンスは本当に素晴らしく、それからショー全体、始まりから終わりまで惹きつけられました。

このショーはコーエン兄弟の「バートン・フィンク」にインスパイアされていると広告にうたっていますが、ショーを楽しむ為には映画の内容を必ずしも知っておく必要はありません。純粋などこにでもいる様な人の良い男が、不正や暴力や賄賂のはびこる世の中で成功を追い求める物語だということはすぐに明らかになります。

そして彼は恋人と契約、そして観客の心を掴み取ったのです。パフォーマーは皆輝いていて、小さなターミネーターから女性秘書まで視覚性に富んだ身体性と素晴らしい粋に達した表現力を有しています。

私はゴムで即座に様々な状況を描き出すシーン特に好きでした。

あなたがしばしば幸せそうな笑顔を得ることができないなら、彼らの終演後の観客を見ることで教えられることがあるでしょう。そこは笑顔の海で、このショーは とてもハッピーなショーでした。観客が去る時には、昔のサーカスのようにドアの近くでパフォーマーが親しげに「グッバイ！！」と声を掛けてくれます。

そうするとあなたは、遠い大陸から来たこの楽しいマイムショーを愛さずにはいられないだろう！！(翻訳 丸山和彰)

<http://www.festmag.co.uk/reviews/536-continent>

This Japanese mime company have set themselves the perilous task of tinkering with some well-loved stories. The story is inspired by the Coen Brothers' cult classic, *Barton Fink*, and the performance takes Japanese traditional mime in a dramatically experimental direction. It's a brave undertaking, but the risk was undoubtedly worth it.

*Continent's* hero is a writer with a rapidly-approaching deadline. He is battling with writer's block; as he wrestles with his typewriter, the characters he creates become increasingly and absurdly intertwined with his reality. CAVA, the company behind this show describe their work as "Japanese Strange Performance". But "strange" doesn't do this unique blend of mime and dance justice. The cartoonish set design and costumes are visually captivating. The characters possess an astounding depth given their silence, and Yukiko Tanaka's performance as the romantically-involved secretary is marvelously expressive. When she dances, her ethereal movements are given emphasis by the contrast of her four male accomplices. Their clever choreography is bursting with energy and yet tempered by a distinctly Japanese formality that gives definition and strength to their movements. Minimal objects are used to create intricate spaces for accented action, and to transform the performers' bodies into an escalator, a bicycle, a door. CAVA have reinterpreted a cult film and a genre of theatre with extreme skill and fantastic imagination, and the result is an utterly enchanting piece of theatre.

Saturday 21 August by Rebekah Robertson

この日本のマイムカンパニーは、とても愛された物語を再解釈するという危険な仕事を自分達に課しました。その物語とはコーエン兄弟のカルトムービー「バートンフィンク」です。

パフォーマンスは劇的かつ実験的な方向性を持った日本のマイムによって描かれます。これはとても勇敢な作業で、しかも、そのリスクを負った価値は充分にあるように思われました。

「Continent」の主人公はメ切が目前に迫ったライターです。彼は書くことの行き詰まりと戦っています。彼がタイプライターと格闘すればするほど、彼の作り出したキャラクター達と彼の現実世界はますます不合理に絡み合っていくのです。

彼らCAVAは、自分達のパフォーマンスを「Japanese Strange Performance」とうたっていますが、「Strange」という言葉はこのユニークなマイムとダンスのブレンドを正確には表してはいません。

キャラクター達は静寂を漂わせる深みを持ち、そしてロマンティックな秘書を演じる田中優希子のパフォーマンスは驚くほど表現力豊かです。彼女が踊る時、彼女の軽やかな動きが共演者4人の男性の動きとのコントラストをより際立たせます。

彼らのクレバーな振付はエネルギーに満ち、動きに対する定義と強さが与えられた明確な形式によって調整されています。最小限の小道具を使って、アクセントになる動きのための複雑な空間を作り出し、パフォーマーの体をエスカレーターや自転車やドアに変容させます。

CAVAは洗練されたスキルと素晴らしい想像力によってカルトムービーと演劇を再解釈したのです。その結果は演劇として本当に魅力的なものとなりました。(翻訳 丸山和彰)

## Theatreguide London ★★★★★

A novelist rolls a sheet of A4 onto his typewriter. The rat-a-tat strains of Brazil accompany the tap of the keys as deadline looms. His wife bobs over his shoulder to offer suggestions and sandwiches. Manuscript is rejected by publisher who accepts rival writers who handily offer bribes. Such is the cycle of our literary hero's life until one day everything starts to go right... Armed with just five chairs, two screens, a desk and typewriter, garbed in brightly coloured suits, this vibrant, energy-packed production, courtesy of Japanese company Cava, needs no words thanks to impeccable characterization, script and a musical soundtrack of samba, salsa and klezmer. Movement veers from Tati to mime and clown slapstick, with the occasional nod to modern dance. The result is an energetic romp from five slick performers – Takaaki Kuroda, Hiroyuki Fujishiro, Kazuaki Maruyama, Thin Hosomi and Yukiko Tanaka - who wisely refuse to let technique get in the way of the plot. Neat and unexpected twists as the writer's story comes to life and physically leaps off the typed pages, resulting in a gang of inept hoodlums in a bizarre Russian roulette cheat sequence with a handgun. Reality merges with fiction and vice-versa. Interludes are similarly frequent and funny: golf-mad office cleaners clear up with a 9-irons, musical chairs ensue as the writers avoid handling a script, a Terminator dodges bullets prompting a manic car chase, two men become a bicycle and promptly deflate into flat tires. Inspired by the Coen brothers' 1991 film Barton Fink – in spirit rather than content one would judge - this is a show that is as entertaining as it is innovative. *Nick Awde*

## Three Weeks ★★★★★

"Bring your friends, families and dogs" were the parting words of CAVA star Kazuaki Maruyama last night; it's a statement that very much helps to sum up 'Continent', a show which caters for all with its ambitious balance of comedy, farcical contemporary dance and 1950s cartoon. A relentlessly up-beat soundtrack accompanies the silent tale of a novelist's labour, continually disrupted by rogue characters and corrupt publishers. Outrageous facial expressions, endless misunderstandings and Hiroyuki Fujishiro's impressive depiction of a robot kept the audience amused. I wasn't laughing as much by the end, however, as the music and the actors' sheer enthusiasm were beginning to overwhelm me. Despite this, the show is well worth a look and is sure to immerse you in its own imagination.

## The List ★★★★★

There's something curiously retro about this little piece, from the tight-fitting, slightly shiny suits worn by its performers to the old fashioned world of typewriters and briefcases it conjures up.

Perhaps, as the young Japanese company claim to have been inspired by the Coen Brothers' 1940s-set film Barton Fink, that shouldn't have come as a surprise: fans of the noir-y, gory excesses of that film, however, should prepare themselves for something altogether more gentle.

A thinly-stretched plot appears to tell the story of a novelist looking for explanation, and these sequences can lead to slow interludes within what is otherwise a frantic, sweetly silly piece of mime performed by an exceptionally charismatic cast. There are some great slapstick set pieces (mostly taking place within the writer's own imaginary world), but ultimately not enough to sustain the running time. Letting the cast go freeform might have proved a better showcase for their skills.