





TEN WEST BIOGRAPHY

TEN WEST is the comedy duo of Stephen Simon and Jon Monastero under the direction of Bryan Coffee. Their signature blend of physical virtuosity and inventive comedy, joined with poignant writing, broad audience appeal, and a unique theatrical style inspired by vaudeville, commedia and clowning, has made them critical and audience favorites everywhere.

Ten West originated in the sketch comedy world and quickly became one of the top acts in the North American festival circuit, including performances in Vancouver, Seattle, Portland, Bellingham, Sacramento, San Francisco, Marin, Los Angeles, Chicago, New York and Toronto. From the beginning their work featured strong physicality, tight writing, and an emphasis on human connection. As they continued to create, they began experimenting with the parameters of the sketch medium, blurring the lines between sketch comedy, dance, and clown.

Ten West started to find its voice by losing it. Simon & Monastero's love for silent comedy, vaudeville, clown and commedia started to figure more prominently in their material as more and more of their work had no dialogue whatsoever. Though nothing is said aloud, their shows are anything but silent – the pair often uses music from all genres, using it as a third character. Far from being museum piece restorations, Ten West has taken classic Vaudevillian physical comedy and masterfully applied it to modern life. The result has delighted audiences around the country and earned the duo critical raves. No longer limited by words, they discovered that their shows transcended language and cultural backgrounds, making them a favorite of international as well as U.S. audiences. They soon found the sketch/vignette format somewhat limiting and began writing full-length theatrical shows in which no words are spoken at all. In addition to their mixed-form show, *YOU HAD ME AT VINCERO*, and dozens of stand-alone pieces, Ten West currently has four “silent” shows: *NIGHTS ERRANT*, *LIMONCELLO*, *INEFFABLE*, and *THE UNDERSTUDIES*.

Jon and Stephen both have backgrounds in education, so it was a natural evolution to create a Ten West show specifically for schools. Together with their director, Bryan Coffee, Ten West created their latest show, *The Fracas Brothers: Conflict Resolution through a Vaudevillian Lens*. Partnered with the Orange County Performing Arts Center's Arts Teach program they have been performing at schools throughout Southern California. Also, they've taught workshops in physical comedy and clowning at Rio Hondo College, San Marino High School, Animo High School and for Kids on Stage at the Morgan-Wixson Theater.



TEN WEST BIOGRAPHY (continued)

The duo continues to defy categorization and play in all venues and styles around the United States and Canada. Frequently, artists who see their show bring the duo in on non-Ten West projects. These endeavors include being guest artists of the Los Angeles Philharmonic to create original material for their production of *The Composer is Dead* at the Walt Disney Concert Hall, and being brought in by writers and directors for the feature films, *Wasting Away* and *The Scream of the Bikini*, and short films *The Procedure* and *10 Easy Steps for Mortician Success*. Their universal appeal has made them audience favorites in all formats: corporate, cabaret, carnival, film & television, awards shows and benefits, educational shows and stand alone theatrical events. Ten West is two-man comedy at its most inventive.

The L.A. Weekly gave their most recent production, *Nights Errant*, a "GO!" **Pick** and wrote "The two-man clown show is a wacky Dadaist trip.... all very goofy, giddy, funny and executed with infectious charm."

Backstage West gave it a **Critic's Pick** and wrote, "...inspired lunatics...absurd practical jokes, wild improvisations, comic deceptions and farcical battles of will...highly endearing...performed with flair and terrific, Saroyanesque charm."



Ten West Individual Biographies:

Bryan Coffee (Director) –In addition to directing the award-winning, nationally loved physical comedy duo Ten West, Bryan is graduate of The Second City LA. with appearances on *I-Carly*, *Monk*, and *Blue Collar TV*. Bryan also performed his one-man show *The Weekly Armenian* at The Comedy Central Stage LA. As if that isn't enough to blow your face off, Bryan was also a member of multiple award-winning sketch comedy group The Class Project.

Jon Monastero - has performed recently at the Disney Concert Hall in *The Spirit of the Cello* (as *The Spirit of the Cello*) and *The Composer is Dead* (*Pall Bearer*), and at the Mark Taper Forum in *The School of Night* (*Harlequin*). Other theatrical credits include *Summersounds* at the Hollywood Bowl (*Jack Donkey*), *The Illusion* at Open Fist Theatre (*Matamore*), *Fafalo* at the Miles Playhouse (*Fafalo*) to name a few. He speaks fluent Italian, can talk your ear off about the Civil War and is wicked good at pratfalls and balloon animals!

Stephen Simon - recent theatrical productions include *Hamlet Shut Up* (*World Premiere*) and *A Mulholland Christmas Carol* at Sacred Fools Theatre, and *The Composer is Dead* at the Walt Disney Concert Hall. Television work includes the half-hour comedy, *We're Not Together* (series regular) and *All That*; feature films include *Eagle Eye* and *Wasting Away*. He is a graduate of Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Clown College (with honors), gardens fiercely and has a backyard flock of chickens, and regularly finishes the NY Times Sunday crossword puzzle.



Press

"...pure escapism—a frolicsome, light-hearted romp, full of gags and slapstick." *Indietheater.org* review of "Ineffable"

"all very goofy, giddy, funny and executed with infectious charm."
L.A. Weekly Go! Pick

"two-man clown show...is a wacky Dadaist trip."
L.A. Weekly Go! Pick

"...all performed with flair and terrific, Saroyanesque charm."
Backstage West Critic's Pick

"a perfectly matched team of clowns, anarchists, and pantomimists."
Backstage West Critic's Pick

"I think it's safe to say I was unequivocally mesmerized the entire length of the show." *Time Out Chicago Magazine*

"...raw, captivating physicality."
Time Out Chicago Magazine

"Their work is admirably classic in feel, fun yet sinister, always intimidatingly hilarious, and held in the highest of regard by anyone with a sharp wit and the luck to have seen them live." *Sketchcenter.com*

"...old-fashioned, wholesome and thoroughly likable."
The Oregonian

"it will keep you laughing on the ride home."
Backstage West

"...these guys are headed somewhere very interesting."
Chicago Tribune (from our first show in 2005!)



TEN WEST Performance History

Theatrical Venues

Waterfront Theatre, Vancouver B.C.
 Gladstone Hotel, Toronto Canada
 Upright Citizen's Brigade Theatre NYC
 Soho Playhouse, NYC
 The Brick Theatre, Brooklyn
 Theatre Building Chicago
 Capitol Hill Arts Center, Seattle
 The Comedy Underground, Seattle
 iDiom Theatre, Bellingham, WA
 24th St. Theatre, Sacramento
 Geery Theatre, Sacramento
 241 Throckmorton, Mill Valley
 Eureka Theatre, San Francisco
 Comedy Central Stages
 Disney Concert Hall
 Santa Monica Pier
 Queen Mary, Long Beach
 Improv Olympic West
 Pomona Fairgrounds
 Sacred Fools Theatre
 Will Geer Theatricum Botanicum
 Steve Allen Theatre
 El Rey Theatre
 The Coffee Gallery, Altadena CA
 Hermosa Beach Playhouse
 National Comedy Theatre/ComedySportz LA
 NoHo Performing Arts Center
 Shakespeare Festival LA
 Barnsdall Park Art Gallery Theatre
 Inside The Ford Theatre
 24th St. Theatre. Los Angeles
 Theatre of Note
 Art/Works Theatre
 Morgan-Wixson Theatre
 Elephant Theatre
 Fake Gallery
 The Viper Room
 El Cid
 Tangier's
 Little Pedro's
 The Bordello
 Bootleg Theatre
 Stone Bar
 The Complex
 King King
 The Mint
 The Lounge Theatre
 Eclectic Theatre
 Safari Sam's
 Elephant Performance Lab
 McCadden Place Theatre

Lillian Theatre

Educational Shows

Orange County Performing Arts Center
 San Marino High School
 Animo High School
 Lincoln Middle School
 San Marin High School
 Kids on Stage
 Rio Hondo College

Festivals

Harvest Festival
 Bellingham International Comedy Fest
 LA Improv Comedy Festival iO West
 San Francisco Comedy Festival
 Topanga Children's Festival
 Abbott Kinney Festival
 Los Angeles Comedy Festival
 Sketchfest Chicago
 Seattle Sketchfest
 Toronto Sketch Comedy Festival
 Sketchfest NYC
 Portland Best of the Best Festival
 All Sketch Festival Sacramento

Cabaret/Burlesque

Velvet Hammer Burlesque
 Ink and Iron Festival
 MBar
 Tangiers
 Rocket Video
 El Cid
 Little Pedro's
 The Bordello
 Drake's Erotic Emporium
 King King
 Stone Bar
 The Mint

TV/Film/Radio

Mortician's Apprentices
 Queer Edge QTV with Jack E. Jett
 iRRegular Show M+2TV
 NPR Sacramento
 The Spirit of Young America Podcast

Special Events/Corporate Entertainment

Sideshow at the Santa Monica Pier
 The Composer is Dead with LA Philharmonic
 Sheraton Hotel La Jolla
 Southland Harmony Chorus Show