




Written by Camilo Almonacid
Directed by Estefanía Fadul
Produced by Houses on the Moon Theater Company
In Association with Weathervane Theatre

INFO PACKET

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ABOUT THE PLAY

Welcome to HOTEL HAPPY! At this high-end erotic resort in Bogotá, Colombia, sex workers Sofi, Lulu, and Candela are hiding a displaced donkey after rescuing him from an unhappy fate. When three American mercenaries visit the hotel on a special mission, the women must protect their new friend at all costs because, as they will soon discover, he is no ordinary donkey.

A play about sexual tourism in Colombia and that industry's close connection to the country's ongoing armed conflict, HOTEL HAPPY explores U.S.-Colombian relationships through a farcical lens, using the power of absurdity to reflect how the decimating effects of war displace us all.

This timely and ambitious project boasts a seven-person cast and an eighth character – a donkey – played by a life-size puppet!



PROJECT HISTORY

Development for HOTEL HAPPY began in 2017 when Houses on the Moon supported playwright Camilo Almonacid, a member of the company's Architects Creators Group, with a New York State Council on the Arts Individual Artist Grant to support a one-month research and playwriting residency in Bogotá, Colombia. From that residency, Almonacid was inspired to utilize magical realism to create the world of the play, employing life-sized puppetry and other theatrical devices to highlight the underrepresented costs of US interventions in Latin America, including the impact of war and displacement on the human, animal, and natural worlds.

In June 2021, thanks to support from the National Endowment for the Arts, Houses continued development on the piece with a week-long workshop at NYC's Theatre Row Theatres. A collaboration between Almonacid, Estefanía Fadul (director), Matt Acheson (puppetry director), and an extraordinary cast, the workshop centered on developing the show's puppetry elements, and culminated in a fifteen-minute, professionally-filmed presentation of select scenes, shot by award-winning documentary group Echoes of Incarceration.

Additional development on the show took place in May 2023: following a three-day scriptwork and puppetry intensive, Houses presented the show's first full-length staged reading at NYC's Open Jar Studios on May 8, 2023.

HOTEL HAPPY premiered Off-Broadway from **February 14-March 3, 2024** at 122CC's Second Floor Theater (150 1st Avenue, NYC), and is now available for touring and licensing. For more information, please contact Managing Director Susan Goodwillie at susan@housesonthemoon.org.



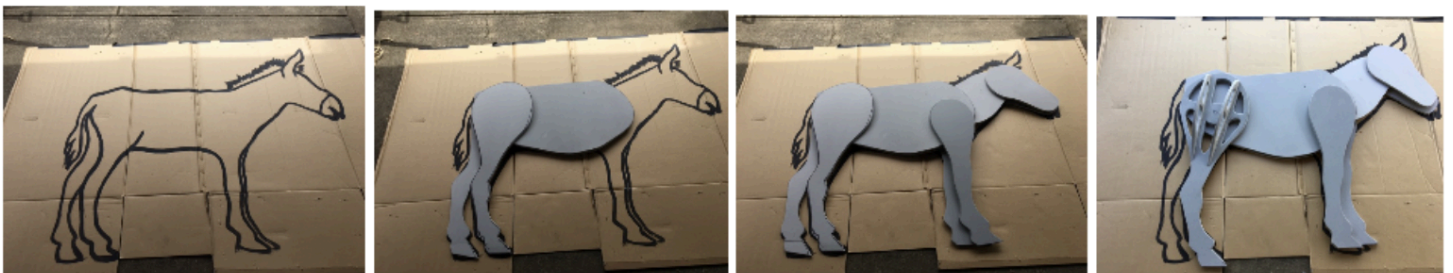
ABOUT THE ARTISTS

HOUSES ON THE MOON THEATER COMPANY was founded in 2001 with a mission to dispel ignorance and isolation through the theatrical amplification of unheard voices. Our projects begin with relationship building, collaboration, and partnership with grassroots community organizations to identify an urgent social need; a vital untold story that must be heard. Our creation process includes extensive research, first-person storytelling workshops, and interviews, and our work is presented Off Broadway as well as in non-traditional spaces throughout New York City, the US, and internationally.

CAMILO ALMONACID (Playwright) is a multi-talented artist based in New York City with over ten years of experience creating dynamic stories that explore the diverse voices of America. Some of his notable plays include *The Assignment* (A.R.T./NY Theatres 2017), *Westpine Myopes* (Rita Goldberg Award 2014), *Checkin In* (Irv Zarkower Award 2012), *For the Flies* (Here Arts 2015), *Church Of Why Not* (Theatre 167 2015), *After the Crowds* (Queen's Museum, NY times Critics Pick 2014), and *Shithole* (Here Arts 2010). In addition to being a playwright, he is also a skilled freelance writer who has collaborated on branded content projects with major media outlets like Netflix, Remezcla, and Vice Media. Camilo Almonacid holds a BFA in acting from Rutgers University and an MFA in Playwriting from Hunter College. He is a proud member of the Dramatist Guild. You can find more information about his work at camiloalmonacid.com.

ESTEFANÍA FADUL (Director) is a Brooklyn-based Colombian-American director, and co-Artistic Director of Ensemble Studio Theatre. Recent projects include the world premieres of *Eva Luna* by Caridad Svich (Repertorio Español), *The Garbologists* by Lindsay Joelle (Philadelphia Theater Company), *Carla's Quince* created with The Voting Project (Drama League Award nomination), *Zoom Intervention* by Noelle Viñas (Weston Playhouse, NYTimes Critics Pick), *The Same Day* by Stefan Ivanov (Sfumato Theatre, Bulgaria), and *C. Quintana's Azul* (Southern Rep) and *Scissoring* (INTAR). Estefanía has developed new work off-Broadway and regionally at the Public Theater, Playwrights' Realm, NYTW, Chautauqua, Audible, Goodspeed, Juilliard, and more. She is the inaugural recipient of New York Stage and Film's Pfaelzer Award, and an alumna of directing fellowships at Clubbed Thumb, the Drama League, O'Neill/ NPN, Williamstown, and Repertorio Español. She serves on the Drama League's Board of Directors, and is a member of the Leadership Circle of the Center for Performance and Civic Practice, the Latinx Theatre Commons advisory committee, the Lincoln Center Directors Lab, and SDC.

MATT ACHESON (Puppet Direction + Design) is a puppet and theater artist who was based in Brooklyn for 20 years and now lives in Pittsburgh. He is a founder of AchesonWalsh Studios, a kinetic creation studio providing design, fabrication, direction and performance services, whose clients include Amazon Studios, Broadway, Radio City Music Hall Lincoln Center Theater, The Alliance Theater and the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, Long Wharf Theatre, Radio City Music Hall, Disney Cruise Lines, Cirque Du Soleil, and the Yale School of Drama. Matt has had the pleasure of working with many exceptional artists including Basil Twist, Dan Hurlin, Mabou Mines, Lee Breuer, Paula Vogel, Chris Green, Metropolitan Opera, The Swedish Marionette Cottage, MTV, Lake Simons and Nami Yamamoto and directed and curated The Puppet Lab, an experimental puppet festival at St. Ann's Warehouse for over a decade. He was the Puppetry Director for *War Horse*, during its run at Lincoln Center Theater and for the North American tour. Matt designed, built, and directed the marionettes for Rinna Groff's *Compulsion*, original production directed by Oscar Eustis and the recently remounted production of *Compulsion* directed by Johanna Gruenhut at Theater J in DC.





WORD OF MOUTH

“An enchanting theatrical fable...Almonacid spins out [the play’s] complications with comedic depth, expressive dialogue and a roaring dénouement.”

--Daryl Reilly, TheaterScene.org

“HOTEL HAPPY stands as a testament to the power of theater to tackle serious issues with humor, absurdity, and a deep understanding of the human experience in the face of war and displacement.”

-- Martin De Juan, [NY Wire](http://NYWire.com)

“Fun and exciting...HOTEL HAPPY made me SUPER happy!”

--Eva Heinemann, [Hi! Drama](http://Hi!Drama.com)



BOOKING

***FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BOOKING,
LICENSING, OR TOURING, PLEASE CONTACT
INFO@HOUSESONTHEMOON.ORG***

