

“The play's L.A. premiere is superbly acted and adeptly designed...it culminates in a powerfully moving conclusion...John D. Johnston is splendid as the gruff yet frightened widower, unprepared to face the challenges of his age: the ongoing decline of his body and mind. Projecting rage, impatience, despair, and the suppressed tenderness beneath the bluster, the actor creates an affecting and credible characterization. Ryan Johnston gives a poignant performance as the prodigal son, coming to terms with many lost years of family connection and the inevitable sadness yet to come.”

-Back Stage West

“...Bruce Gooch's barnyard gothic is set on a farm where the horses are dead, the cows sold and the dog eaten by coyotes. Mom's dead, too, and son Zac (Ryan Johnston) is in exile. This leaves Papa (John D. Johnston) alone to work the land, whether or not it needs working, because it's a sin to slack....Set designer David Potts has draped the walls in dense netting and installed a front porch that looms like a gallows. It's an apt backdrop for when Zac returns to find his muscular pops has gone dangerously senile. And as the set is stockpiled with a hatchet, knife, saw and shotgun, I'd take Dad seriously when he threatens that he won't leave his land without a fight. Andrea Robinson is quite fine as a local waitress who swings by to check on the fellas, but the stars of the show are the evocative technics...and the elder Johnston, whose presence dominates the play like a frontier Fury....veteran actor John D. Johnston pivots on a nail head from mulish to brutish to yearning, giving the play an immediacy...”

-LA Weekly

“...a fine work filled with poetic imagery, expressing the grandeur, beauty, and mystery of the cycles of life and death, nature, and man's place in the world....The pillar of this production is John Dennis Johnston. His performance is marvelous – simple and straightforward, brimming over with passion for the land....Ryan Johnston is excellent...David Potts has given us an original and true environment that almost takes on the role of chorus attentively standing watch over the action in the play.... The original sound and music (Kyle Johnston and Matthew McGaughey) is modern, eerily compelling...”

-Stage Happenings