

Harry Bradley - Director
BA American Studies (4th Year)

Previous Experience -
Acting: Bull, The Great Gatsby,
A View From The Bridge, Mojo, Betrayal,
God of Carnage, Posh (NNT)
The Project (Edinburgh)



Tom Willis - Producer/Writer
BA American Studies (4th Year)

Previous Experience -
Acting: The Master and Margarita,
Customs, The Rehearsal (NNT)



The American Dream. A myth? A motivation? A cliché? It's been my fascination since I read *Death of a Salesman* as a teenager. The play expanded my passions for an art form, challenged my perceptions of a country and focused my path for the future. Now, as my time at university is nearly at an end, I feel I have come full circle. It seems fitting that the culmination of four years studying America, is a chance to explore it on the stage.

Having lived in Upstate New York for a year, *Electric Nebraska* has been the perfect vessel in which to share my experience and celebrate my interest. At a time in my life when big decisions are being made, the examination of choice, chance and self-definition is wonderfully exciting. The authenticity of the words, empathetic nature of the story and the perpetual relevance of the themes have made for a thrilling creative foundation.

Shannon, Rachel, Natalia, Aaron, Lou and Nick. You've made my first foray into directing an absolute joy. Thank you for your patience, your enthusiasm and your trust. Watching you take a hold of the script and inhabit these characters has been an honour. You're all electric.

To Jo, Sam and Laura. Somehow you've turned my drawings and bumbling descriptions into a gloriously designed production, and I thank you wholeheartedly for it.

To Tom. Thank you for entrusting me with your captivating work. To be your director, and your friend, is a delight.

And lastly, thank you to the Nottingham New Theatre as a whole. Being a part of this society has been superb and has shaped me. I'll cherish the memories. I hope you enjoy it, I have.

I knew that I wanted to write about Upstate New York before I had even got off the train in Albany two years ago. I was hooked on Richard Russo novels long before that, with their bittersweet nostalgia and accurate replication of the heartbeat of small-town New York. I also knew that New Jersey would come into it somehow. I had been listening to Bruce Springsteen ever since my dad bought me *Born to Run* when I was a teenager. When those two forces collide, they make something a little like *Electric Nebraska*.

Electric Nebraska is foremost, a story. I intended to bring to The New Theatre a piece of theatre that was thrilling to the audience as well as to the cast. *Electric Nebraska* was also my intention to come to grips with a certain political consciousness. The play attempts to explore class identity, the effects of unemployment, the allure of crime, and what we do when we find ourselves at loose ends.

Firstly, I would like to extend a thanks to Harry for accepting the responsibility of bringing *Electric Nebraska* to life. I had no doubts that he would enthuse an artistic passion into the play like nobody else, and the play is an experience that he shares as much as I do. Secondly, I would like to thank the cast of the play for not only being incredibly talented and intelligent, but for sharing an enthusiasm for this world of steel, guns and beer. To the technicians, a million thanks for your hard work, dedication, and time.

This play is dedicated to my hometown of Doncaster and the working people that inhabit it. It is dedicated to the mineworkers of South Yorkshire as much as it is to the steelworkers of Upstate New York. Among them are my friends and family, some of whom are not here with us anymore.

George Packer wrote that when factories close, populations decline and community falls, it is the voices of the people that are remembered in their walls. This is my attempt to capture those voices.