

Edinburgh Fringe 2016 Review: Police Cops

The Pretend Men create the perfect all-American cop movie spoof. [Amy Gibbons](#) reviews

Thursday 25 August 2016



Image: Massimo Battista

★★★★★

Imagine *Starsky and Hutch* but in slow motion: every jerk of the head, every movement exaggerated; every sentence soaked in cliché upon cliché; every fight scene like a choreographed gym routine; every montage not only classically over-dramatic, but accompanied by blaring all-American music and half-naked men wrapped in flags. You're probably envisioning a version of The Pretend Men's *Police Cops* 12 times diluted and set behind a translucent screen. You have to see it to believe it.

And my God, should you see it. Zachary Hunt, Nathan Parkinson and Tom Turner perform a parody so hilarious, even they can't quite contain their laughter. Teeming with slapstick, caricatures and improv, the spoof covers every cliché of the 70s American cop movie imaginable – from sleazy Mexican drug lords stroking their equally sleazy pet cats, to exceptionally corny catchphrases (“You’ve gotta be the best damn YOU cop ever!”), to ridiculous plot twists and an unmatched bromance.

The production itself is impressive, action-packed and supercharged; never slowing down or coming to a halt even for a moment. The audience wonders at how the trio keep up the momentum, between them

covering what seems like a marathon of ground in an hour. They even conquer the curse of the parody, creating a plot that holds its own among scenes of synchronised tumbles and deliberately crappy mime. The show is somehow at once in disarray and quite coherent – nothing feels any more chaotic than it is clearly intended to be.

Police Cops is more than a solid spoof; it's an unparalleled endeavour to do what has been so many times attempted but never perfected – it's flawlessly executed, and very, very, *very* funny.



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