

# Of Horses and Men

Cert 15 Iceland 2013 81 mins

## Crew

Director/Screenplay Benedikt Erlingsson  
 Cinematography Bergsteinn Björgúlfsson  
 Film Editing David Alexander Corno  
 Original music David Thór Jónsson

## Cast

Ingvar E. Sigurdsson Kolbeinn  
 Charlotte Bøving Solveig  
 Steinn Ármann Vernhardur  
 Kjartan Ragnarrson Grimur  
 Helgi Björns son Egill  
 Juan Camillo  
 Roman Estrada Juan

## Synopsis

*Iceland, the present. Through a series of six interlocking stories - tales of love, death, loyalty, suffering and sacrifice - we meet the inhabitants of a remote valley community who are united by their love of horses and divided by their pettiness, jealousies and propensity for rash, invariably asinine antics.*

*Here, all life revolves around local wild horses that are seasonally tamed. The uneasy relationship that exists between the harsh Nordic environment, the beasts and men reveals the human streak in the horse and the horse in the human.*



## Booking Information

**Distributor:** Axiom Films

**DVD bookings:**

**CINEMA for ALL Booking Scheme**

see page 8 for more information

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[www.bffs.org.uk](http://www.bffs.org.uk)

**Available:** Now



## Reviews

*Of Horses and Men* is from Iceland and a marvel. It is clever, funny, shocking and lyrically absurdist, this tale of nag-nutty ranching folk pursuing, taming, riding and, if necessary, killing – but tenderly or as a last resort – wild horses. Think of Arthur Miller/John Huston's *The Misfits*. Add volcanic scenery and bleak comedy.

First-time filmmaker Benedikt Erlingsson presents the love of horses as a kind of inter-species romance... by the time the cast of characters – those still living and un-chastened – unite for a town party amid the season's new-corralled horses, Erlingsson has persuaded us that the Wild West is alive and well in a new (to our eyes) Wild North. Heroism; outlawry; violence; and that elemental law that all men were born equine but some are more equine than others.

*Nigel Andrews, Financial Times, June 2014*

... Erlingsson is best known as an actor, yet his debut shows real flair for meticulously constructed humour, vignettes which build skilfully from titters to guffaws and which deliver cracking physical punch-lines and the occasional shock. He's ably assisted by a cast who balance believability with comic assurance while never overplaying the material.

The film also boasts a near-microscopic focus on horse peepers which divide each chapter, quite literally providing a reflection of events. These horses are the observers and sometimes unwitting accomplices to this series of human calamities — they and we watch helpless, aghast (and is it too much of an anthropomorphism to say that they too are amused?).

Revelling in the majesty of the horse is hardly a screen first, although the relationship between humans and horses has more commonly been explored as mawkish sideshow. Erlingsson's film has great reverence for its equine heroes, but boasts something that's lesser seen: the comic contrast between man and beast — their dignity, our chaos; their robustness, our fragility; their simplicity, our maddening complexity. It juxtaposes the community's ramshackle, booze-fuelled romps with the magnificence and dependability of these long-suffering animals

*Emma Simmons, Little White Lies, June 2014*

## Awards, commendations, and so on...

Winner of the **Nordic Council's Film Prize 2014**

**Best New Director**, San Sebastián International Film Festival 2013

Iceland's official submission for Best Foreign Language Oscar 2014