

## THE TOURNAMENT INTERNATIONAL REVIEWS

# PRAISE FOR JOHN CLARKE AND THE TOURNAMENT

*'John Clarke's exhilarating The Tournament might just be the most inventive novel of the year... impossible to put down.'*

LEE MILAZZO, DALLAS MORNING NEWS, 9 NOV 2003

*'What Peter Ustinov did for Grand Prix racing, John Clarke has done for tennis and world culture combined.'*

CLIVE JAMES.

*'John Clarke has a brilliant comic mind which has remained Australia's secret for too long.'*

BEN ELTON.

*'The funniest man in Australia.'*

HOWARD JACOBSON.

*'...the highbrow spoof has a long and honourable tradition, and it is nice to see the form being resuscitated in John Clarke's The Tournament... full of good jokes and intellectual high jinks.'*

GUARDIAN (UK), 28/6/2003

*'A funny, clever book'*

WASHINGTON POST BOOK WORLD

*'The Tournament is a series of unexpected delights. Give it to someone with a well-furnished mind and a sense of humour.'*

TREVOR AGNEW, PRESS (NZ), 22/3/2003

*'A genius-touched tour de farce that imagines the 20th-century's intellectual giants competing in the biggest tennis tournament ever held.'*

KIRKUS REVIEWS, 1/8/2003

*'...a wondrously comic tumult of personalities, anachronisms, jokes – and of course, tennis.'*

KIRKUS REVIEWS, 1/8/2003

*'Who wins? Find out for yourself, and be dazzled along the way as, thanks to the indefatigable Clarke, you also brush up on last century's intellectual history.'*

KIRKUS REVIEWS, 1/8/2003

*'...matchups that seem wildly inappropriate and delightfully perverse.'*

DAVID PITT, BOOKLIST, 1/8/2003

*'It's a wacky idea, and although it's mostly played off for laughs, the author has somehow managed to make this preposterous premise pay off.'*

DAVID PITT, BOOKLIST, 1/8/2003

*'The novel, which is structured like a day-by-day report on the progress of the tournament, is completely original, a crash course in the history of twentieth-century culture. The dialogue is cheerfully nutty, as most of the characters speak lines that parody themselves.'*

DAVID PITT, BOOKLIST, 1/8/2003

*'This is one of those novels that shouldn't work and yet somehow it does, leaving us shaking with laughter and possessing a vivid sense of the competition between ideas and points of view that shapes our culture.'*

DAVID PITT, BOOKLIST, 1/8/2003

*'...a remarkable book...'*

DAILY EXPRESS (UK)

*'...our great humourist John Clarke's first novel, about a very unusual tennis competition.'*

JANE SULLIVAN, AGE, 23/11/2002.

*'Round our way, John Clarke rates as a national institution.'*

STEPHANIE BUNBURY, AGE, 7/12/2002 & SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 14/12/2002.

*'Proving they have better taste than they are usually credited with, television viewers have named John Clarke as the most popular person on the box at the moment.'*

SALLY JACKSON, AUSTRALIAN, 11/12/2002 & SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 14/12/2002.

*'Drawing on impressive reserves of knowledge on a wide range of people, Clarke highlights absurdity, pokes fun at power structures, and takes an irreverent look at celebrity, all through the framework of the tennis match and conventions in sports terminology.'*

FRANCESCA CANN, HERALD SUN, 4/1/2003

*'As someone interested in sport, however, I can say that he has written one of the best poems I have read on Australian sport, a parody of Dylan Thomas that captures the epic Test matches played in the imaginations of small boys across the nation with teams of half-pissed uncles after lunch on Christmas Day. I also know that, in the mid '80s, he engendered enthusiasm for a popular sport that didn't exist (farnarkeling) while more recently, in the television series The Games, he revealed much of what went on behind the scenes at the Sydney Olympics before it actually happened. In this, his latest offering, he has written the history of modernism as a tennis tournament.'*

MARTIN FLANAGAN, AGE, 21/12/2002.

*'Like O'Brien, Clarke has an absurdist's fascination with logic so that in the course of the tournament a succession of incandescently bright and startlingly original minds are brought to bear on such apparently mundane matters as the shape of tennis balls, line calls and, in the case of Dutchman Vincent van Gogh, the very concept of the game itself.'*

MARTIN FLANAGAN, AGE, 21/12/2002.

*'If I were a publisher and a bald middle-aged man came to me with an idea for a novel about a tennis tournament involving more than 100 19th and 20th-century celebrities from Marcel Proust to Coco Chanel, I would hurry him to the door. Impossible, I would tell him. Yet somehow John Clarke has done it.'*

BARRY OAKLEY, AUSTRALIAN, 28/12/2002.

*'Take a seat in the bleachers and enjoy his mastery of the sporting cliché and his unerring satirical skills. And if his satires are deadly, his parodies are simply unplayable.'*

BARRY OAKLEY, AUSTRALIAN, 28/12/2002.

*'...a brilliant invention from a national treasure...'*

DAVID GAUNT, DAILY TELEGRAPH, 14/12/2002.

*'A total self-indulgence by John Clarke, this one, but when you're that clever, why not?'*

COURIER MAIL, 7/12/2002.

*'...extraordinary and daring...'*

BRIAN MATTHEWS, ABR, FEBRUARY 2003.

*'An immense, continuous and renewing energy flows from these various dimensions of wit, allusiveness, gags and uncomfortable historical reference.'*

BRIAN MATTHEWS, ABR, FEBRUARY 2003

*'...laugh-out-loud funny.'*

MILES MOODIE, WAIKATO TIMES, 8/2/03