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“I JUST WANTED TO BE FRANK ABOUT THE WHOLE WEIRD PHENOMENON”

NORTHAMPTON, MA (October 10, 2007) — When a trusted mentor asked, “*What are you obsessed with? What keeps you awake at night?*” Johanna Walker was embarrassed to admit that “*it wasn’t ending the war or saving the planet or revealing the truth of some great moment in history. It was really just that old thing about finding my Dreamguy.*”

The Zany Angels Performance Art Festival slated for this coming November will showcase Walker’s highly physical, compassionate, evocative result of mining that obsession. **Anatomy of a Yell: one woman’s search for true love and the pineapples she devours along the way**, is a one-act, one-woman romp through the crazy landscape of internet dating, empowered single-hood, and deflecting the agenda of an older generation. Onstage, Walker embodies the men she dated and interviewed, flirts with her laptop, argues with her Mom over coffee, explores an Alice-in-Wonderland mystery room, attacks a papaya with a very big knife, and dances with her suitcase in frenzied preparation for a hot date.

“This is the teapot my mother gave me. She served tea to my dad from this teapot on the night she met him. She gave it to me thinking if I serve tea to my next date from this teapot, I’ll surely marry him. The part of the story she doesn’t tell, though, is that she was desperate. She was nearly thirty and she wasn’t married yet and this was devastating and the truth is she was gonna marry the next guy who walked in the room no matter how skinny his arms were or how ridiculous he looked in shorts. It had nothing to do with the teapot...But this teapot, there’s something about this teapot...”

Walker built the piece while pursuing an MFA in Contemporary Performance at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, in collaboration with International Theater Collective’s Lizi Watt, who describes working with solo performers as “*making an incision into the performer and then helping them yank out their own guts.*” Leigh Fondakowski, head writer for Tectonic Theater Company’s Pulitzer Prize winning play “The Laramie Project,” provided dramaturgical support and guidance.

Walker and Watt’s mutual intention for accessible theater is clear: “*This piece is about being honest onstage. We want the audience to leave excited, feeling like they could relate to the story, stimulated and challenged, but not ‘whoa, what was that all about?’*” The show apparently touched a common nerve with its stories of sexy emails and images from Walker’s childhood bedroom; giggles, guffaws, cheers and tears came from the nearly sold out audiences at the Boulder International Fringe Festival this August.

Walker’s highly regarded performances, cross-discipline collaborations and curatorial projects were loved by Northampton audiences for ten years before she left for Boulder to pursue an MFA. She returns now to share the fruits of her work there with the Northampton community. Before heading off to grad school two years ago, she instigated a “follow your bliss” fundraiser, and is graciously inviting donors to attend the shows free of charge. Audiences are likely to be at capacity.

Anatomy of a Yell runs one hour; it will be shown two times during The Zany Angels Performance Art Festival at **Thorne’s APE**, 150 Main Street, Northampton: **Friday and Saturday, November 9 & 10 at 8 pm**; Ticket prices are \$12 general admission and \$10 for students/seniors. Call (413) 586-5553 to make highly recommended reservations. For full festival details, please visit the festival website at www.zanyangels.com/performanceartfestival2007.