

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

‘Coming to a Living Room Near You’: Northampton Solo Performer Builds Community through Home Performances

TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER Returns to Pioneer Valley in “Home Performance Series”
Beginning February 6th

NORTHAMPTON, MA (February 1, 2014) - Local playwright and performer Erika Kate MacDonald brings her critically-acclaimed original play **TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER** back to the Pioneer Valley in a six-show **Home Performance Series**. Rap is the focus of Erika Kate MacDonald’s “earnest and eloquent” (*Bloody Underrated*) one-woman show. The six shows will each take place in a different living room in Amherst, Easthampton, Hadley, Holyoke and Northampton over the month of February.

As illustrated by emerging festivals such as the International Home Theatre Festival and the Chicago Home Theatre Festival, home performances are a growing trend in American theatre. In an era of declining theatre patronage, home performances are a medium many performers are exploring to circumvent and highlight issues of accessibility – for instance cost, and distance between venues and would-be theatre-goers’ homes – that prevent people from producing and attending live theatre.

But for playwright and performer Erika Kate MacDonald, home performances are also a natural fit for the content of **TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER**, whose setting is the living room of a Brooklyn apartment and whose primary themes are of home, resilience, community, and creativity. “The very act of producing a home performance show is one of community building and empowerment: homeowners become the producers and their neighbors and friends become the audience,” says playwright-performer Erika Kate MacDonald. “It has been a wonderful opportunity for me to share my work with my community and an exciting and accessible way for people who may not even think of themselves as ‘theatre people’ to get involved in performance in a meaningful way.”

Loosely structured as a 10-step lesson plan for “How to Become a Rapper,” **TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER** follows one nerdy white girl’s coming-of-age journey from the granite hills of New Hampshire to the fifth-floor walk-up vistas of Brooklyn. Against a backdrop of fast-paced NYC sidewalks and intimate living room listening parties, the rap “lessons” cover a surprisingly wide range of material, from “queer time” in conversational styles, to Indonesian traditional dance, to a Shakespeare-inspired close reading of ‘90s rap classic *Illmatic*. *The Edmonton Journal* hailed **TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER** as “An unassuming and endearing work,” asserting that “Even (or especially) if you know nothing about hip-hop, this is a great place to start.”

The precise locations of the **Home Performance Series** are secret. Audience members must RSVP online for a particular show. They then receive an email with the address and additional information regarding parking, transit, and other location-specific details. The **Home Performance Series** kicks off **TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER**’s 2014 tour, the backbone of which will be home performances across the country in New England, the Midwest and the South after an appearance at the 2014 Orlando Fringe Festival.

MacDonald is a co-founder of Brooklyn-based theatre company Pack of Others, and has toured across the U.S. and Canada to Fringe Theatre Festivals, independent theater venues, conferences, and schools. Her past work includes a cabaret-like solo show about bisexuality, titled *FLUID*, which was named to *Curve Magazine's* "Top Ten Hottest Lesbian Plays."

TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER premiered in June 2012 at the Dynamite Space in the basement of Thornes Market in Northampton, a performance which was co-sponsored by C3 Northampton. It had its New York City premiere in March 2013 at legendary experimental theater Dixon Place. Last summer the show toured to Fringe Festivals in Montreal, Minneapolis, and Edmonton, to critical acclaim.

TICKETS AND PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

Reservations can be made on the Pack of Others website: www.packofothers.org. Performances are scheduled for the following dates in the following locations: Hadley, THURSDAY, 2/6 at 7pm; Florence, SATURDAY, 2/15 at 4pm; Holyoke, TUESDAY, 2/18 at 7pm; Northampton, SUNDAY, 2/23 at 7pm; Amherst, TUESDAY, 2/25 at 7pm; Easthampton, FRIDAY, 2/28 at 8pm. Tickets are \$5-\$15, sliding scale, payable at the door (no one turned away for lack of funds). For further information, visit Pack of Others' website at: www.packofothers.org.

ABOUT PACK OF OTHERS

Pack of Others is a Brooklyn-based theater company, founded in 2007 by Sophie Nimmannit and Erika Kate MacDonald. The Pack has won recognition at many festivals (**Best Comedy**, San Francisco Fringe; **Encore Award**, Boulder Fringe; **Director's Choice Award**, Montreal Harvest Festival). Past shows include *FLUID* and *Peg-ass-us*. For further information, visit Pack of Others' website: packofothers.org

The Home Performance Series is supported in part by a grant from the Easthampton and Amherst Local Cultural Councils, local agencies which are supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

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For more information, please contact:

Erika Kate MacDonald
Pack of Others
646.483.7310
erikakate@packofothers.org
packofothers.org