

Pack of
Other(s) : an other theater company



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PACK OF OTHERS
Presents
The Canadian Premiere of
TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER
by Erika Kate MacDonald



New Show by Queer Solo Performer Explores Language and Rap
Part of The St-Ambroise Montreal FRINGE Festival, June 13-23

MONTREAL, QUEBEC - Pack of Others is coming back to Montreal with their newest original show, *Tap Me on the Shoulder*. Rap is the focus of Erika Kate MacDonald's fierce and heartfelt one-woman show about words, empowerment, and challenging the status quo. *Tap Me on the Shoulder* opens on June 14th as part of the St-Ambroise Montreal Fringe Festival.

Hailed by hip-hop innovator Jon Braman as "part of the central cultural conversation of our time," *Tap Me on the Shoulder* looks at rap through a personal lens. MacDonald's previous solo show, *FLUID*, won the Director's Choice Award at Harvest V: The Montreal LGBT International Theater Festival, and was named to Curve Magazine's top ten hottest lesbian plays. The Pack's other show, *Peg-ass-us*, a romantic sex-ed comedy about a sexual act known as 'pegging,' had its world premiere at the Montreal Fringe in 2008, and has gone on to win many Fringe awards including Best Comedy at the 2008 San Francisco Fringe Festival, and a 2012 Boulder International Fringe Festival Encore Award.

"You don't have to like rap to like this show," says playwright/performer MacDonald. "But you do have to come with an open mind. You may be surprised." She adds, "We love Fringe audiences for their open minds. As a company, Pack of Others is committed to making work that welcomes audiences at all levels of familiarity with the topics we address. That's what we did with *Peg-ass-us*, and Montreal Fringe audiences really responded."

Structured as a ten-step lesson plan for "How to Become a Rapper," *Tap Me on the Shoulder* tells the story of one nerdy white girl who unexpectedly started rapping, tracing a coming out / 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 Indonesian traditional dance to craigslist roommate conversations to a Shakespeare-inspired close reading of '90s rap classic Illmatic.

"Do I want people to leave my show feeling empowered to go and start writing their own raps?" MacDonald asks. "No, not necessarily. The show is set up and billed as a "lesson" – ten steps to become a rapper. But I use that frame intentionally and not without irony, because it quickly becomes clear that this is not exactly an instruction manual."

Tap Me on the Shoulder had its New York City premiere in March of this year, at legendary experimental theater Dixon Place, where it was presented as part of their signature Performance Works-in-Progress Series. Montreal is the show's first stop in a scheduled three-city Fringe Festival tour which will bring the show next to Minnesota and Edmonton, the two largest Fringe Festivals in the United States and Canada, respectively.

TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER (cont.)

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT/PERFORMER

Erika Kate MacDonald wrote and performed Pack of Others' flagship show *FLUID* (2007), as well as two prior self-produced solo shows: *Voting Rites: An Exploration of New Hampshire Women's Attitudes Towards Voting* (2004), an interview-based piece; and *Go <imperative>* (2003), a set of traveling character studies. She taught yoga professionally in communities all over Brooklyn for several years, but now makes her home in Northampton, Massachusetts, where she recently performed the role of Sebastian in Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (The August Company), and is an active member of the Smith College Gamelan Ensemble. She speaks fluent Indonesian and Italian, and every once in a while can do a Friday New York Times crossworld puzzle on her own. She grew up in a small town in southern New Hampshire and studied Theater at Yale University.

Selected quotes from reviews of MacDonald's previous solo show, *FLUID*:

"The real star of the show is her stage presence, charming, playful, and, yes, sexy."

– Philip Lowe, *Official Minnesota Fringe Blog Review*

"Erika Kate has amazing presence and wicked comic timing." – Sophia, *San Francisco Fringe audience review*

"One of the best this year... behind the comedy and the personal journey is some real intellectual rigor."

– Chris Wayan, *San Francisco Fringe audience review*

"A magnetic stage presence, charismatic and charming." – Brian O'Neal, *Minnesota Fringe audience review*

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Performances are at Fringe Venue 4 - Scène Mini, located at 4247 St-Dominique, in the Plateau region of Montreal. All performances are in English. Run time is 60 minutes. Please note that all shows start on time. Seven (7) performances are scheduled:

Friday ----- June 14 at 18:15

Saturday ----- June 15 at 15:30

Sunday ----- June 16 at 24:00

Monday ----- June 17 at 20:00

Friday ----- June 21 at 22:15

Saturday ----- June 22 at 15:45

Sunday ----- June 23 at 20:00

Ticket prices for this show are \$10 / \$7, plus a \$2 per ticket ticketing fee. Reduced admission is available to students, seniors, and anyone wearing a denim vest. Tickets and the full schedule of all Fringe performances are available on the festival's website: www.montrealfringe.ca. The box office can be reached by phone at 514.849.FEST, or in person during the festival at Parc des Amériques, located at the corner of St-Laurent Blvd. & Rachel Ave.

ABOUT PACK OF OTHERS

Pack of Others is a Brooklyn-based theater company, founded in 2007 by Sophie Nimmannit and Erika Kate MacDonald, which focuses on developing original experimental theatre. Past touring shows include *FLUID*, a solo exploration of "bi"-sexuality written by MacDonald and directed by Nimmannit, and *Peg-ass-us*, a romantic sex-ed comedy about pegging written and performed by Nimmannit and fellow Pack member John Leo. The Pack has toured to Fringe Festivals in Montreal, Minnesota, Boulder, and San Francisco, as well as independent theaters, schools and conferences across the United States and Canada. For further information, go to Pack of Others' website at www.packofothers.org.

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