

**THE MARSH SAN FRANCISCO PRESENTS
LIMITED ENGAGEMENT OF ACCLAIMED
BREED OR BUST**

Written and Performed by Joyful Raven

Directed by Jael Weisman

October 19, 26, & November 2, 2024

SAN FRANCISCO, CA (5 September 2024) – After a successful run in Berkeley earlier this year, award-winning actor, director, and “story midwife” **Joyful Raven** returns to **The Marsh** in a limited engagement of her timely, entertaining, and thought-provoking solo show *Breed or Bust*. More relevant than ever, with women's reproduction rights at the forefront of the upcoming turbulent election, this compelling one-woman production takes audiences on a subversive and hilarious journey through female reproductive options, from the taboos of abortion to the nuances often left out of these important conversations. The *San Francisco Chronicle* praised Raven's punchlines as "so juicy as to offer healing catharsis for all your frustrations with constricting gender norms," *Theatrius* also gave the show a rave, noting, "I can't remember the last time I loved every minute of a production, but I did for this one. I'm telling my friends to go. We all need to laugh." *Breed or Bust* blends unabashedly honest storytelling, stand-up comedy, and dark humor, as Raven reckons with her reproductive choices and contends with her primal baby-making instincts. With her fertility clock ticking down, she reflects on the complex relationship between womanhood and motherhood. Should she surrender to the role of weird aunt, or should she start a GoFundMe to freeze her geriatric eggs? *Breed or Bust*, performed by Joyful Raven and directed by **Jael Weisman**, will be presented 8pm Saturdays, **October 19, 26, and November 2, 2024**, at The Marsh San Francisco, 1062 Valencia St., San Francisco themarsh.org.

Before coming to The Marsh, *Breed or Bust* enjoyed a critically acclaimed run at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival, where it garnered an Off West End Theatre Award (Offie) nomination. Critics in Scotland praised the show, calling it a “masterful approach to storytelling. Seductive, shocking, and heart-warming to the extreme” (*Theatre Weekly*, UK), “a fun and feminist look at one of life’s perennial dilemmas, freshly told,” (*The List*, UK) and “a riveting personal story that is

funny, shocking and insightful, offering a sensitive and innovative exploration of the pressures and taboos surrounding female reproductive choices” (*The Independent*, UK). This riveting and riotous show made its world premiere at PlayGround San Francisco in its 2022 Solo Performance Festival and was given an encore limited run in fall 2022 at the Potrero Stage where the *San Francisco Examiner* lauded Raven, noting that she “tells it openly, without self-pity or sentimentality. And she tells it funny.” *Breed or Bust* has also been performed in Los Angeles at the Hollywood Fringe Festival, where it received a Producer’s Encore Award, and was nominated for Best Comedy amongst more than 400 shows. *BroadwayWorld* hailed *Breed or Bust* as “heartbreaking and deeply heartfelt, taking a serious subject and offering an often-humorous look at what women go through when it comes to breeding decisions. It’s a difficult subject, and Joyful made it an easy one to watch.”

ABOUT THE CAST AND CREATIVES

Born into an iconic political theater family, **Joyful Raven** (Writer/Performer) has been devising theater for over 20 years. She has directed and mentored hundreds of storytellers, co-founded the award-winning theater company Rococo Risqué, and co-authored four plays for the Prize of Hope-winning company Human Nature. She also wrote and starred in the solo comedy *Tales of a Sexual Tomboy*, which enjoyed an Off-Broadway run and won Best of the Fringe at the San Francisco International Fringe Festival. *Tales of a Sexual Tomboy* was deemed “one of the funniest shows now on display on Bay Area stages” by the *San Francisco Chronicle*. She also teaches regular storytelling and solo theater classes at the Berkeley Rep School of Theatre and her own studio in Oakland, California.

Multi-Obie-winning director, **Jael Weisman** (Director/Developer) is a founding member of the Dell’Arte Players Company and a trailblazer in actor-based theater. With Dell’Arte, Weisman’s works have toured extensively in the U.S., South America, and Europe, earning him numerous Dramalogue Awards for Directing. He has directed acclaimed productions including *Whiteman Meets Bigfoot*, *Performance Anxiety*, and *Mad Love*. Other noteworthy projects include *The Dragon Lady’s Revenge* with The San Francisco Mime Troupe, which traveled to New York and was awarded an Obie; the American premiere of *Red Noses; Uncle Gunjiro’s Girlfriend* at the Adelaide Festival; and *Mermaid Meat* for the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra. He has collaborated with luminaries like Carlo Mazzone-Clementi and Joe Chaikin and worked with renowned Bay Area performance artists including Jeff Raz and Brenda Wong Aoki.

ABOUT THE MARSH

The Marsh is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” Launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, it annually hosts more than 500 performances across the company’s two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh’s specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “solo

performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest.” The East Bay Times named The Marsh one of the Bay Area’s best intimate theaters, calling it “one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible.” In April 2020, The Marsh launched its digital platform MarshStream and hosted more than 700 live streams which provided 300 performers and its youth class participants a platform to continue discovering, developing, and producing art during the COVID-19 pandemic shutdown. Today, The Marsh presents both in-person live performances and content on its MarshStream, continuing to expand its reach to audiences onsite and around the world. The Marsh believes in the power of people’s storytelling and has several classes for the public to create their own works as well as through its developing work performance series: Monday Night Marsh, Tell It on Tuesday, and Marsh Risings. The theater company also collaborates with over 25 San Francisco public schools providing a year-round youth program serving students at its theater and in the classrooms.

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: After a successful run in Berkeley earlier this year, award-winning actor, director, and “story midwife” **Joyful Raven** returns to **The Marsh** in a limited engagement of her timely, entertaining, and thought-provoking solo show ***Breed or Bust***. More relevant than ever, with women's reproduction rights at the forefront of the upcoming turbulent election, this compelling one-woman production takes audiences on a subversive and hilarious journey through female reproductive options, from the taboos of abortion to the nuances often left out of these important conversations. The *San Francisco Chronicle* praised Raven's punchlines as "so juicy as to offer healing catharsis for all your frustrations with constricting gender norms," *Theatrius* also gave the show a rave, noting, "I can't remember the last time I loved every minute of a production, but I did for this one. I'm telling my friends to go. We all need to laugh." ***Breed or Bust*** blends unabashedly honest storytelling, stand-up comedy, and dark humor, as Raven reckons with her reproductive choices and contends with her primal baby-making instincts. With her fertility clock ticking down, she reflects on the complex relationship between womanhood and motherhood. Should she surrender to the role of weird aunt, or should she start a GoFundMe to freeze her geriatric eggs?

***Breed or Bust* is:**

Written and performed by Joyful Raven
Directed by Jael Weisman

WHEN: **October 19, 26, and November 2, 2024**

SHOWS: 8:00pm Saturdays

WHERE: **The Marsh San Francisco, 1062 Valencia St., San Francisco (between 21st & 22nd Streets)**
Parking is available at New Mission Bartlett Garage at 21st St. between Mission & Valencia St.

BART station (closest): Mission & 24th St

TICKETS: \$20-\$35 sliding scale; \$50 and \$100 reserved

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit themarsh.org or call **415-282-3055** (Monday through Friday, 1:00pm-4:00pm).

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PRESS: Contact Paige D'Encarnacao, CBCO Public Relations & Marketing
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here: <http://cbpr.co/press/breedorbust>