

Press Kit for



A novel by Randy Ross

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New Novel Offers an Unflinching Look at How Men Feel about Sex, Love, Marriage, and Paying for a Hand Job

Sag Harbor, NY -- April 20, 2016 The Permanent Press, a noted publisher of literary fiction, acquired *God Bless Cambodia*, a picaresque comedy from performer and fiction writer Randy Ross. The novel will be published in hard cover March 20, 2017.

God Bless Cambodia follows the adventures of Randall Burns -- forty-eight, out of a job, and tired of wasting his time pounding away on *Match.com* as if it were a game of Whac-A-Mole.

One day at Barnes & Noble, he comes across a travel guidebook for single men with a unique itinerary and a titillating passage on vaginal thrush. Burns is no traveler: He hates public toilets, loud noises, weird smells, and people who sweat. Eventually, the call of the thrush, his fears of dying alone, and a snarky e-mail from ex-girlfriend Ricki, compel him to take the trip.

During his travels, Burns strikes out with women on three continents and suffers loneliness that would have broken Papillon. The only thing that keeps him from returning home is Ricki, who continues to email, declaring her certainty that he's having a rotten time and won't last another week.

On the fourth continent, Burns accepts that he's going to die alone and the sooner, the better. He bungee-jumps, eats food from street carts, and visits a body spa named "The Curious Finger." He lets go of his germophobia and his quest for a woman, and begins to enjoy himself. Ricki emails again. She's now on antidepressants and sorry for her past behavior. Is his luck with love about to change?

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Founded in 1978, The Permanent Press is an independent press committed to publishing works of social and literary merit. <http://www.thepermanentpress.com>

Author Randy Ross is a Boston-area writer and performer. His one-man show, "The Chronic Single's Handbook," based on *God Bless Cambodia*, has been featured at fringe theater festivals in the U.S., Canada, and Edinburgh, Scotland. In 2007, he took a trip around the world and learned to say in three languages: "Speak English?" "Got Pepto-Bismol?" and "Where is the evacuation helicopter?" This is his first novel.

Media Contact

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Resume for Randy Ross

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Web site: www.randyrossmedia.com

Twitter: @rsquaredd, @chronicsingle

SUMMARY OF QUALIFICATIONS

Editing/Writing/Performing/Management: More than 15 years experience working for print and digital media; novelist, humorist, journalist, blogger.

EXPERIENCE

05/07 to Present: RANDYROSSMEDIA.COM; Somerville, MA

-Writer/Lecturer/Performer

- Wrote comedic novel with the working title, *God Bless Cambodia*. (The Permanent Press, April 2017)
- Lectured about social media and self-promotion for writers at local colleges and adult education centers.
- Performed one-man show, *The Chronic Single's Handbook*, at fringe theater festivals and other venues in the U.S., Canada, and Edinburgh, Scotland.

-Web Content Consultant

- Directed content development for launch of *Software.com*; created technology booklets for *PCWorld.com*.
- Developed case studies, press releases, buyers' guides; assisted with site redesign, PR strategy, search engine marketing for e-commerce site Daimler Industries. This was a three-year, two-day a week project.

02/00 to 05/07: PC WORLD; Boston, MA

-Executive Editor

- Senior-level editor of highly trafficked Web site (30 million page views/month)
- Edited/Programmed: home page, downloads library, small business section.
- Managed budgets, supervised in-house staff and outside contractors.
- Experience with: content management systems, production systems, blogging platforms, social media.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

- Wrote articles on food and health for local, national publications, including *The Boston Herald* and *JAMA*.
- Published two blogs: *chronicsingle.com* (for single people), *theloneliestplanet.com* (marketing for writers).
- Wrote fiction, humor, and erotica for literary journals, including *Black Heart Magazine* and *ForTheGirls.com* (porn site for women)
- Certified as a personal trainer. (2002-2014)
- Planned and completed four-month, solo trip around the world in 2007. (Five continents, eight countries)

EDUCATION

- Medill School of Journalism, Northwestern University, M.S. in Journalism.
- University of Vermont, B.S. in Marketing.

PRESS /AWARDS

- July 2015: Four star review at Winnipeg Fringe Festival.
- March 2012 and November/2010: Mentioned in *Boston Globe*.
- September 2011: Finalist in *Drum/Side B* Dual Publication award for short fiction.
- December 2010: Winner of MassMouth Boston story-telling slam.

Award-winning novels from THE PERMANENT PRESS

GOD BLESS CAMBODIA



RANDY ROSS

“Randy Burns is an unfulfilled, middle-aged guy you usually find in sports bars, strip clubs, and Judd Apatow movies. In Ross’ debut novel, Randy takes a worldwide journey on the advice of a self-help travel guru to dis-

cover himself, find enlightenment, or get laid—which in his world are pretty much the same thing. Traveling to five continents he gets bored on sightseeing tours and unsuccessfully hits on women.

“The closest thing to an epiphany comes when he finds cheap Jim Beam and a paid companion in Vietnam. Meanwhile he’s pestered by angry emails from his ex-girlfriend Ricki. The author sometimes writes like a stand-up comic [which he is], going for the easy laugh whenever the story threatens to get emotional. But poignant moments slip through, and this story of a flawed character’s midlife crisis becomes an easy one to relate to.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

Available from Brodart, Amazon, B&T or us
www.thepermanentpress.com
phone 631-725-1101

Edinburgh Fringe 2014

The Chronic Single's Handbook

Genre:

FringeReview

RECOMMENDED SHOW

Venue: The Space at Surgeons' Hall

Low Down

A chronically single guy takes a trip around the world looking for the woman of his dreams. Randy Ross writes and performs this solo show.

Review

This is a very literary-style solo theatre show. Based on the writings of Randy Ross, we have an autobiographic three-quarters of an hour that tells a story by delivering a set of vignettes from his four month, post-redundancy trip around the world, to the aftermath of that trip.

The style is direct, with some simply done elements of theatre. The show is often more powerful for that less-is-more approach, and it also allows the power of the writing to come through without the distortion of theatre tricks. That said, the one or two set pieces in there were funny and effective so there is clearly scope here to decide on whether this is primarily a literary reading, or a more full on solo theatre show. Where it currently sits is somewhere between the two - engaging, interesting, sometimes emotionally charged, and often sharply funny.

Ross holds the stage well, with a gentle charisma, and an honesty that makes darker elements of the tale raw and effective. The story is fairly linear, interspersed with a few proverbs. Ross tells a story that is well worth hearing, offers no cheesy messages, but instead presents a journey of discovery that he is still on. Many in the audiences connected to that journey and this will certainly make a very marketable book!

Scenes are shared in direct storytelling style and Ross makes these memories entirely believable. We are back there with him, sharing those moments, savouring the ironic reflections, enjoying some of life's tougher punchlines. He plays women with comedic ease, never overplaying and this "measure" is a huge strength of the performance. This happens where strong writing meets bare, effective solo performance. Too many solo shows at the fringe overdo their sets, costumes and sound backdrops. Here we rely almost totally on the narrative, in the more than safe hands of an able raconteur – our host, our narrator, and someone who has something of importance to impart. Randy Ross is a chronic single, and is that condition curable?

I enjoyed this show for its courage to remain simple. I liked it less when it felt more like recital. I liked it most when the content became theatrically alive without losing its bare simplicity.

Overall, a quality solo show. Recommended.

Reviewed by Paul Levy 16th August 2014

Website :

<http://www.chronicsingle.com/>



The Randy Ross Three Minute Interview

by Alexander Woolley on 14th August 2014

Randy Ross, an erotica-writer, has come to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe to put on his one-man show, *The Chronic Single's Handbook*, a tale of a never-married hypochondriac, who travels around the world looking for love. Alexander Woolley caught up with Ross to hear more about his production, which is on at theSpace until 16th August.



Incidentally, my mother has seen the show several times. Her take was 'Boys will be boys.'

Tell us about the show.

My show, *The Chronic Single's Handbook* is an edgy romantic comedy about a chronically single guy who takes a trip around the world looking for the woman of his dreams. It sounds pretty wholesome, but the show carries content warnings for adult situations, adult language, and more adult situations, including a

visit to a body spa called The Curious Finger.

Your show is based on your own (unpublished) novel. How have you found working on the same material at the same time in two different media?

It's tricky. A novel is about twelve hours-worth of material. The show is less than one hour. To adapt the novel, I hired a director/dramaturg and we spent months cutting and rewriting. We cut out characters, plot lines, and themes. We rewrote and rewrote.

In a novel, you can use complex imagery and metaphors because readers can take their time, reread them, think about them. On stage, patrons only have only a second or two to grasp an image. Also, you have to repeat key themes, especially if they're mentioned in an early scene and then again towards the end of the play.

How do people react to the “humorous erotica” aspect of your show?

In the U.S., a bit called 'Domination for Dummies' has horrified some audiences, particularly in Washington D.C.. One reviewer in D.C. must have forgotten that she was at a fringe festival and got her panties all in a bunch – parts of the U.S. are very politically-correct; if you look at someone crossed-eye you risk violating their rights.

At the Orlando Fringe, and so far at the Edinburgh Fringe, people have laughed. Some audiences don't take themselves too seriously.

Incidentally, my mother has seen the show several times. Her take was 'Boys will be boys.'

I've noticed that women in the audience usually laugh or enjoy the naughty stuff. Their husbands or boyfriends are often unsure of how to react. If they laugh, perhaps they fear they'll get a kick in the shin – or shut off from future sex.

Are you happy to be single?

I prefer to be in a relationship. I think most people prefer to be in a relationship – the right relationship. But finding the right relationship can be tough for some people, especially if you're a little quirky or outside the mainstream.

My show offers two messages for single people: 1) There are worse things in life than being single: disease, death, divorce. 2) As a single person, if you ever give up hope of meeting someone, you're done for.

Incidentally, I was in a long-term relationship that went bust the week before I left for Edinburgh. Being a performer can be tough on your love life!

THE SINGULAR MAN

A Visit to the Loneliest Planet

March 19, 2012

Randy Ross, a singular writer and humorist, went on an around-the-world adventure that inspired him to write a hilarious book about being single.



Randy Ross (center) prepares to bungee jump in New Zealand – just one of many misadventures during his four-month travel odyssey.

Have you ever dreamed of taking a trip around the world? Massachusetts-based singular writer Randy Ross did, and five years ago, he made his dream come true. After traveling for four months, across five continents, he offers the following advice for other would-be world travelers: “Don’t do it.”

In 2007, Ross was laid off from his job of 15 years as an editor at *PC World* magazine. Three months later, he lit out for Venezuela, Greece, South Africa, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Australia, and finally New Zealand. He traveled continuously from September through December. “I wanted to come home after two weeks, but I had already spent \$6,000 on plane tickets,” he says. “I was stuck.”

So what was the problem? Ross, who used to run a world travel site, says that some people are configured to travel for long periods alone and some aren't. “Unfortunately, you don't know what kind of traveler you are until you're living in a hostel with 22-year-olds, in a country that we bombed and invaded, and trying to figure out how to use your first squat toilet.”



Ross faces his fear of heights.

The four-month journey wasn't all bad. Ross can now say in three languages: “Do you speak English?” “How much is the Pepto-Bismol?” and “Excuse me, is this the evacuation helicopter?”

During the trip, the 53-year-old writer went bungee jumping three times. “I'm usually afraid of heights, but when you're up on a bungee platform with a bunch of heckling college kids, it's more painful to chicken out than it is to jump.”

When pressed, Ross did have one good thing to say about the trip: Facing his fears of heights, dysentery, and toilets without seats, changed his attitude. “Once I got home, I found that I was a lot less afraid of life and of taking risks.”

For the last four years, he has been writing a novel with the working title: “The Loneliest Planet: A Handbook for the Chronically Single,” which he expects to circulate to agents later this year. The book is about a never-married hypochondriac by the name of Burns, who takes a trip around the world hoping to change his luck with love.

The book combines the personal journey of “Eat, Pray, Love” with the romantic frustration of “Portnoy’s Complaint,” he says. “In other words, it’s about what it’s like to be over forty and single.”

If the story sounds a little familiar, it’s because it is. “The novel is based loosely on the trip, and the main character, is kind of my alter-ego,” Ross says. “But he gets a lot more action than I ever did.”



Ross doing a reading from his book at a Boston “Story Slam.”

In the book, Burns strikes out with women on three continents, experiences loneliness that would have broken Papillon, and ruminates about old girlfriends. Jay, with the cute shiksa nose, dumped him because of a pair of socks. Ricki? A pair of shoes. Why hadn’t he married Jackie with the nice trust fund? Why did all his exes have masculine names?

On continent four, Burns meets a Western sex tourist and his girlfriend *du jour* who offer a tour of Phnom Penh massage parlors. Burns is lonely and desperate. But he is also germ phobic and the one thing he fears more than undercooked beef is catching an STD.

Ross has reworked scenes from the book as stand-alone stories and reads them at poetry slams, story slams, and even at one smut-slam. “I won a story slam, but I wasn’t smutty enough to win with the smut-slam,” he says.

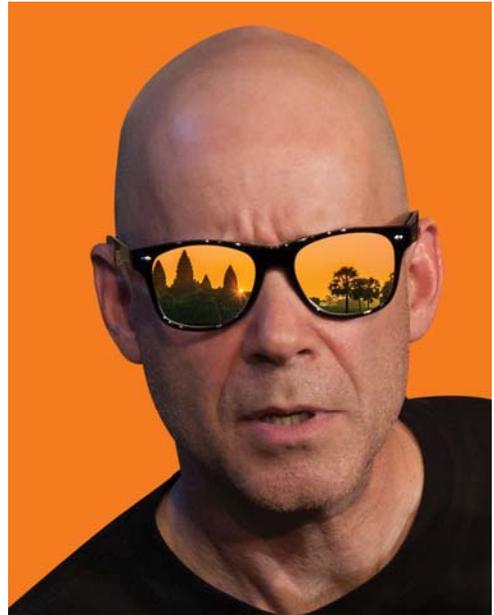


[Randy Ross](#) lives in Somerville, Massachusetts (just outside of Boston). When he’s not working as a Web content consultant or finishing his novel, he enjoys complaining, downhill skiing, and eating hot spicy food that makes his hair stand up. To find out more about Randy, visit his website at www.randyrossmedia.com and his blog at www.theloneliestplanet.com.

Hi-Res Photos Available in Color Versions [at this link on randyrossmedia.com](http://randyrossmedia.com)



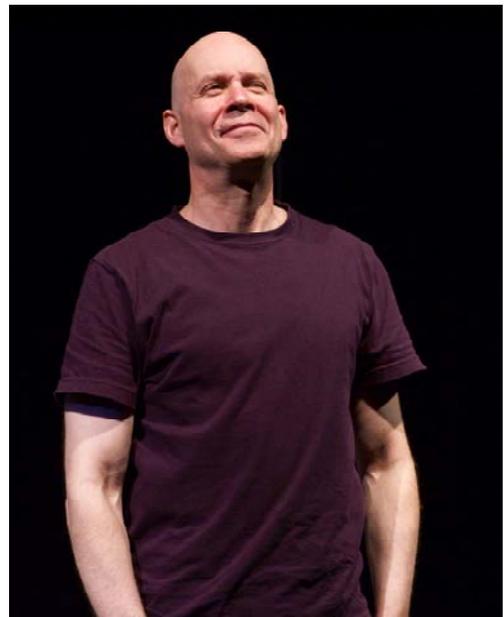
Book cover



Author photo



Scene from one-man show based on the novel



Scene from one-man show based on novel