

The Walk Across America For Mother Earth
(Sample Text Version)
Written by Taylor Mac
With music by Ellen Maddow

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SETTING

A pantomime set. A giant map of the US in the foreground. The road. Two-dimensional. Colorful. Perhaps the white stripe on the side of the road extends into the audience as the play goes on. Perhaps it begins to zig-zag all over the theater. A cartoon world. Trap doors that come out of sky and earth. A set that rebels on its players and audience.

CHARACTERS:

All genders, ages, ethnicity and body types should be represented by the cast but the play should not be cast appropriately: women can play men, old can play young, fat can play skinny, and any ethnicity can play any role. All the characters in the play are either cross-eyed, tunnel visioned, or have heavy eyelids.

All characters wear vibrantly colored foundation makeup (similar to a Kathakali look). Their faces have so much sequins and eye work it seems as if they are wearing color commedia dell'arte masks. They have extreme features: prosthetic noses, massive ears, protruding chins, and wild matted towering hair. They wear anarchist street clothes made to look like commedia dell'arte attire (cut-off jeans meet farthingales and patch-work pantaloons, political slogan t-shirts made into corsets and bustiers, fanny-packs that look like bum-rolls and codpieces). All outfits have an element of a deranged beauty pageant. It should be colorful but the color has faded from too much use.

King Arthur: 40 to 70's. Heavy eyelids. He wears white foundation. His commedia equivalent is Sandrone.

Jimica/Key Key: One actor plays both roles. Jimica is in his 20's, is tunnel visioned, wears orange foundation, is a Flemish Belgian (Dutch speaking) and his commedia equivalent is a Zanni. Key Key is a scraggly mutt.

Kelly: 20's. He is tunnel visioned, wears pale blue foundation and his commedia equivalent is the Innamorato (Lover).

Angie: 20's. She is tunnel visioned, wears pink foundation and her commedia equivalent is the Innamorata (Lover).

Flower: 40's to 50's. She is cross-eyed, wears pale green foundation and her commedia equivalent is Colombina.

Marsha: 40's to 60's. She is tunnel visioned, wears purple foundation and her commedia equivalent is Pulcinella.

Rainbow Carl: 20's to 30's. He is a Flemish region (Dutch speaking)

Belgian. He is tunnel visioned, wears rainbow foundation, and his commedia equivalent is Harlequin.

Greeter: 50's to 70's. He is cross-eyed, a lech, a radical fairy, wears gold foundation and his commedia equivalent is Pantalone.

Nick: 40's. He is cross-eyed, wears silver foundation and his commedia equivalent is Il Dottore.

The Zanni:

Beeka: 20's to 40's. Also a Flemish Belgian (Dutch speaking). She is the musician of the play and walks while she plays. She has only one line of dialogue but the director and actor should find places for her to make musical exclamations. She has heavy eyelids and orange foundation

The Grass/Wakenhut: Grass on the side of the road and one of the plays assistants (responsible for the moving set-pieces) and a musician. They may be in the prologue. Also plays a Wakenhut at the end of the play (a rent-a-cop).

The Creek/Wakenhut: A creek by a road and one of the plays assistants (responsible for the moving set-pieces) and a musician. Also plays a Wakenhut at the end of the play (a rent-a-cop).

ACCENTS

The accents should be specifically broad.

ACTIVIST PROP

All the characters have their own activist prop, which are attached to their person somehow. The props help them make their points, raise their status in the community, and take control of the narrative. They are as follows:

Jimica: a tattoo on his chest of a Native American

Beka: a guitar and small portable amp

Kelly: a small dry-board and marker

Angie: a soapbox

Flower: a daisy.

Marsha: a bullhorn

Rainbow Carl: his camera.

King Arthur: a drum

Greeter: a fan

Nick: a conch shell

Kelly, Angie, and Nick walk on the side a road.

KELLY

Remember a month ago?

ANGIE

Before the walk?

KELLY

Sitting in the parking lot of the 7-11.

ANGIE

You and me.

KELLY

Always you and me Angie.

ANGIE

In *Real America*.

KELLY

Waiting at the doorstep of... of what?

ANGIE

Convenience.

KELLY

Right.

ANGIE

Always waiting.

KELLY

For a moment when age-

ANGIE

Or an empathetic over-21-year-old-

KELLY

Would give us access to good times.

ANGIE

And we hated where we were.

KELLY

Growing up in *Real America* was like... like-

ANGIE

Drowning in a giant discarded big-cup of yesterdays half-drunk coagulating soda.

KELLY

Yeah. And nobody cared.

ANGIE

And we care.

KELLY

We care so much more than *Real Americans*.

ANGIE

And so never belonged in *Real America*.

KELLY

And you were planning. Ever since we were on jungle gyms. Planning a way away from *Real America*

ANGIE

And our *Real American* families.

KELLY

And then, as if the thing we'd been seeking was seeking us,

ANGIE

The leaflet.

KELLY

Right. A leaflet,

ANGIE

Blowing in the wind-

KELLY

Landed at our feet.

NICK

Ow.

ANGIE

And on this leaflet was the walk.

KELLY

This... what? This...

ANGIE

Expedition.

KELLY

Expedition into...

ANGIE

Adulthood.

KELLY

Yeah.

ANGIE

But you were afraid.

KELLY

I questioned.

ANGIE

You were afraid to lose.

KELLY

What if I pour my heart into a cause only to lose?

ANGIE

We won't.

KELLY

Not the action. Us. Everyone always says friends grow apart when priorities explore.

ANGIE

Not us.

KELLY

I was afraid that if we did this we'd be like all the other people in the world who disseminate their friendships, their souls, to the point where they have none.

ANGIE

So we promised not to.

KELLY

Right.

ANGIE

This is that moment Kelly. A moment where we can do something of consequence with ourselves.

KELLY

I know.

ANGIE

To be born into a time of apathy and destruction is a magnificent privilege.

KELLY

I know, this is our opportunity-

ANGIE

To be great people.

KELLY

I know.

ANGIE

To express our empathy.

KELLY

You don't have to tell me.

ANGIE

And through that expression save oceans and lives and culture.

KELLY

I'm here.

ANGIE

We can't squander-

KELLY

I know. I'm here. The leaflet called out and we could-

ANGIE

If we accepted the call-

KELLY

We could finally leave the ugliness of *Real America*.

ANGIE

And join a *chosen* family.

KELLY

Who have the tools and the will to strive for beauty.

ANGIE

And now a months passed.

KELLY

And here we are so far away from *Real America*.

ANGIE

Walking across the United States of America.

KELLY

Together.

ANGIE

Every day our lives consists of walking.

KELLY

But.

ANGIE

What?

KELLY

Together. Right? Walking together? Right? Angie?
Right?

NICK

Would you mind scooting over so I don't have to walk
behind you?

KELLY

But then *I* have to walk in the traffic.

ANGIE

The side of the road isn't built for community living.

KELLY

(A discovery)

There for twosomes.

NICK

Sometimes threesomes.

ANGIE

Mostly not.

KELLY

Mostly the third person has to walk behind.

NICK

(In the ditch)

Or in the ditch.

ANGIE

(Standing on her soapbox)

It's like the architecture of the social dictate of how we
get from place to place is about leaving someone behind.

KELLY

(Writing the word "vile" on his dry-board and
holding it up for all to see)

That's! So! Vile!

NICK

Ow.

KELLY

Stop whimpering Nick.

NICK

I have blisters under all my toenails. And they're falling
off! My toenails are falling off.

He pulls a toenail off his toe. The sinew of
the toe, attached to the toenail,
elastically stretches and finally pulls off,
leaving a mangled bloody toe in it's wake.

NICK (cont'd)

I'm getting the feet of an eighty year old and when this is all over-

(Perhaps liking the idea)

Will probably have to go on disability from varicose veins. But I'm not giving up. I will make it to the end.

KELLY

To the test site!

ANGIE

Shut it down!

Greeter appears on the side of the road with his "Mother Courage" push-cart. The push-cart is full of "walk" T-shirts, stickers, and agit-prop items he sells along the way. He holds a mason jar of lemonade.

GREETER

Fresh rest-stop lemonade for the hopeful revolutionaries!

They stop walking.

ANGIE

Greeter!

KELLY

Eww.

ANGIE

(To Kelly about Greeter)

He's sweet.

KELLY

(Sotto Voce to Angie)

He always looks at me as if he wants to cradle me in his bosom.

GREETER

(Having snuck up behind Kelly)

I like to find the wounded birds.

KELLY

(Caught off guard)

Ah!

GREETER

(Offering the popcorn to them)

Nutritional yeast popcorn?

KELLY

I'm not wounded.

GREETER

Of course you are. You could have run to the city to frolic
in your youph.

Greeter pronounces youth with a ph.

GREETER (cont'd)

But instead, here you are, following the plan of a lesbian
and a leaflet.

ANGIE

Ha!

GREETER

And why? Because you think you're not beautiful. But
you're wrong. If there's one thing I'd like to teach the
youphs it's that they are beautiful because they are
youphs.

ANGIE

Greeter, I woke up today and knew what I wanted to do
with the rest of my life. Once the walk is finished.

GREETER

We've just begun and you're already planning for when
it's over.

ANGIE

(Standing on her soapbox activist prop)

We *have* to plan ahead. Shutting the test site down is
just the beginning. We are creating a movement. Like
you did before us. We're going to affect positive change.
I want us to be those people. The people who do that.
Direct action changes things.

(MORE)

ANGIE (cont'd)

And if we don't radicalize the template then I give you permission to judge my generation.

KELLY

(Teasing a little)

Angie always makes plans.

ANGIE

You never make plans.

(To Greeter)

Kelly wouldn't even be on this walk if it weren't for my plans.

KELLY

You're using my past as ammunition.

ANGIE

You think I want to be the only one who makes plans?

KELLY

I just-

ANGIE

I'd *love* it if somebody *else* would make the plans.

NICK

(His feet hurting.)

Ow.

GREETER

(Taking the focus with his fan activist prop)

The sixties weren't as grand as you like to imagine. All that wasted time. Everyone calling for revolution. Revolution is impossible if the people can dumpster dive brand name coffee. But the collapse is coming. This path is completely unsustainable and that is what will bring change. When things fall apart is when the people will wake up. Everyone will join us then. Empathy and action won't be the role of the few but of all. It will be the only way to survive. EVERYONE WILL CARE FOR EVERYONE!!!

NICK

I won't care for everyone.

GREETER

I didn't mean you. You're a casualty of a Reagan administration mental-hospital cut-back. You can't be expected to care for others.

NICK

I always cared more about ants than people. Did you know if you remove an ant ten feet from its selected path it will wander lost to its death? And monks are sweeping them aside so they don't step on them but, in their sweeping, the ants lose their path and die.

(Evil)

How can you love *that*?