

MOVIES EYE C

Dialing In On The Delusional Diva

An interview with writer-actor R. Sky Palkowitz

| By John Esther

Like many actors in Hollywood, Sky Palkowitz, AKA Delusional Diva, had to take odd jobs before she got her big break. One of those jobs was working at a calling center that raises money on behalf of nonprofit organizations. While there, Palkowitz was quickly promoted to raise money

for a conservative think tank – which pretty much stinks if one is a “punk rocking, pot-smoking, Jewish, lesbian clown.”

Fortunately, the experience gave her ample material for her new one-woman show, *Calling America, Don't Hang Up*, which will make its New York premiere at the United Solo Theater Festival on Nov. 12 and Nov. 17 (Nov. 12 is sold out).

One to recognize emerging talent, LN caught up with Palkowitz for an exclusive interview.



LN: How did you negotiate your personal political beliefs with your professional duties?

SP: There were a couple of times I completely lost it after hanging up the phone. I would have to keep my composure speaking with them and everything inside me was fighting to scream: “No, you’re wrong!” The things they believe were often anti-gay. I remember one time when a woman was talking about having an out lesbian in the educational system and she was so upset. I thought, “If you had

any idea who you are talking to on the other end of the phone, you would flip out.” I thought that the only way I could therapeutically deal with this is to put it on stage.

Lesbian News: How did you come up with the idea for *Calling America*?

Sky Palkowitz: I took on a part-time job doing telefundraising for non-profits. Early on I was offered a specialized position for a very conservative think tank. I took the position. It was basically the greatest acting role of my life to be able to switch characters from who I am in everyday life -- which is a pot-smoking, lesbian, punk-rock Jew, very leftist and very avant garde -- while working very closely with this political think-tank that is very conservative in nature and goes against everything that I totally believe in. It’s just the irony of convincing these people and using an alias so that these people wouldn’t find out who I really was. is a story to be told.



LN: When you had to meet members of the think tank did you change your appearance?

SP: I take my nose rings out. I take my makeup off. At any given time during the year I could have purple or green or pink or blue hair and when they would send me to Washington, DC, I would wind up dying my hair one solid semi-normal color. I wore a business suit and got into full costume – blazers and suits and comfortable shoes. But as an actor that doesn’t faze me. One time I was at a meeting at the think tank and they were very specifically talking about gay issues and I literally had my nails in one of my coworker’s legs who was sitting next to me, gripping her for grounding so that I wouldn’t scream: “Are you people out of your mind?”

LN: What do you hope audiences get out of your show?

SP: It’s really a message of love and about dealing with adversity and embracing our differences, not just as a country or a culture but as a planet.

For tickets for the show, please visit <http://unitedsolo.org/us/2013-callingamerica/>

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