



Registry of Interpreters for the Deaf, Inc.

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A Rare In-Depth Glimpse Into the World of a Deaf Gay Man

February 23, 2009, Alexandria, VA - Raymond Luczak, renowned author, playwright and director, provides an intimate portrait of coming to grips with two identities, Deaf and gay, in his new release, *Assembly Required: Notes from a Deaf Gay Life*.

In *Assembly Required*, Luczak shares stories from his days growing up as a deaf gay man in Michigan's Upper Peninsula and learning signs in secret, trying to follow the music on the radio in order to be cool like his hearing classmates, and feeling clueless whenever gay cultural icons like the Village People, Queen, and Bette Midler were promoted in his small hometown. After Luczak enrolled at Gallaudet University, he discovered gay literature and came out soon after. He eventually got involved with Deaf theater collaborators, educators and sign language interpreters, from which his worldview has substantially reshaped on issues of identity, literacy, technology, and family.

Luczak recalls, "Growing up, I was exposed to books, movies, and attitudes that instructed me how to be a heterosexual hearing man. I instinctively knew the role didn't fit me, but I tried memorizing my lines anyway. I yearned to win everyone's acceptance. But I was a bumbling actor who couldn't quite get the character of what I was supposed to be. Then I began to notice banged-up scripts left by others hidden away; in its margins were scribbled notes about what it meant to be different. It didn't matter what caused their character's 'differentness,' because I'd come to understand that I was different. I was a character actor in need of typecasting, and much to my shock and amazement, casting directors didn't have anything for me. I had to write my own show. But I couldn't figure out what kind of character was I supposed to be. Once I realized that there were other Deaf gay men like me out there, I knew I'd found my Hollywood. Each one of us was a star."

Luczak provides the opportunity for the reader to "walk in his shoes" as he opens the door to the thoughts, feelings, memories, emotions, and challenges he faced and faces in being true to himself – a Deaf gay man who lives between the Deaf and hearing worlds. It is, indeed, an experience to embrace for all readers.

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***Assembly Required: Notes from a Deaf Gay Life*, by Raymond Luczak, 160 pages, 6 x 9 trade paperback \$14.95 (\$11.95 for RID members) at www.rid.org ISBN: 978-0-916883-49-2**

Raymond Luczak is the author and editor of ten books, including *Eyes of Desire 2: A Deaf GLBT Reader*, *St. Michael's Fall: Poems*, and the forthcoming *Playing it by Eye: Stage Plays about the Deaf American Experience*. His work has appeared in over ten anthologies and many periodicals. Fifteen of his stage plays, including the award-winning comedy *Snooty*, have been performed in three countries. Luczak has directed the full-length documentaries *Guy Wonder: Stories & Artwork* and *Nathie: No Hand-Me-Downs*, as well as his debut feature film *Ghosted*. He has collaborated with the renowned storyteller Manny Hernandez on his first two DVDs *Manny ASL: Stories in American Sign Language* and *Manny: ASL for a Better Life*. Luczak's Deaf gay novel *Men with Their Hands* won first place in the Project: QueerLit 2006 Contest. He resides in Minneapolis, MN. www.raymondluczak.com

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