

Breath in Your Lungs

Written by: Lilly Burchfield

Performed by: Trent Carruth

Directed by: Chloe Tower

Inspired by and adapted from Franny and Zooey by J. D. Salinger

Zooey is a 25 year old child genius turned film actor. He's nobody big yet but he's got potential and he keeps getting booked so he's going somewhere. He's the second youngest of a family of a five children. He's just 5 years older than Franny who has just gotten back during the fall of her junior year due to mental breakdown sending her into a spiral. She, like Zooey, was a child genius and grew up in entertainment. She was studying theatre when she decided life and theatre had no purpose because of this book she's been reading. It's a russian religious piece about a pilgrim who finds enlightenment by chanting a prayer over and over until his breath and thoughts line up and he truly knows God (it's based on the verse about praying without ceasing).

The words and scenarios and characters are inspired by Franny and Zooey by J. D. Salinger

Zooey: You're such a bitch, you know that? Let me finish, buddy, it's not a bad thing. It's not your fault they made us this way. We had no agency in becoming what we are. You were always going to read those books because I read those books and Buddy read those books and Seymour read them. But the thing is these aren't going to get you *anywhere*. The chant does not work. There's no mystical alignment of breath and mantra that will make you one with god. If that helps you find purpose go for it but if it makes you forgo the breath in your lungs than why the fuck would you devote yourself to it? It's exposed your ego, but has it brought you pious humility? God, that's such a contradiction. All piety is, is ego because of your devotion to god. *Who has given up more of their earthly desire to appease god?* If your god is asking you to give up the one act on this earth that refreshes your will to live then why the hell would you worship the mother fucker, sorry that's probably going to get us both struck by a zeus style greco lightning bolt. So don't stand too close to me, I guess.

Silence

All I'm saying is why do you care what some goddam idiot in the third row is thinking of your performance or the script you're reciting. Everyone that matters already knows you're smarter than everyone else in that theatre. It comes with the territory so you don't have to worry about proving yourself. All you have to do with each show is *be*. Be the art. Be all you know to be. It's when you get into the intellect of it all that you become self aware and judgemental of your audience which *ultimately* fucks over your whole performance. You've been doing this all for yourself or for audiences while trying to devote yourself to a higher power and that's never going to work out. If you're going to seek enlightenment find it in the things you love. I know I just bitched over the idiocy of the tv I've been doing, but

I've gone through the religious track and realised I hate it. Life doesn't have some higher power I'm working for beyond myself. I get a pass to bitch because no method has worked. You, however, go off all superior about how the men in the english department are headass egotists and then you act the same way in the theatre department. If you ask me, buddy, at the rate you're going you'll wind up like Seymour. Burnt out and gone. No oxygen feeding flame or lung. And if I have the chance to get back that cycle, I will.