

'12 Dates of Christmas' a quirky one-woman show

By Charles Culbertson

Dec. 14, 2011

Staunton Newsleader

Ginna Hoben, playwright, took a series of semi-autobiographical events and wove them into a 75-minute, one-woman show about life, love and the pursuit of meaningful relationships during the holidays.

Ginna Hoben, humorist, honed it to a quirky, sometimes profanity-laced edge designed to resonate with any woman who's ever been on a date or had her heart pulverized.

And finally, **Ginna Hoben, actress, got up on the Blackfriars Playhouse stage, put her talent and creative vision on the line and earned for herself yet a fourth title — Ginna Hoben, success.**

For “The Twelve Dates of Christmas” is just that, and so is its creator. It’s the story of Mary, a New York actress who catches her fiancé kissing a female co-worker on national television at the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day parade. Mary tosses her engagement ring into the nearest Salvation Army kettle and then embarks on a quirky, year-long, holiday-studded journey in pursuit of the elusive Mr. Right. She finds Mr. Right almost at once, but bewilderingly dumps him because she finds him too quickly. I say bewilderingly, because while women in the audience may understand this rationale, it will make absolutely no sense to men . . .

... **Hoben’s characterizations of everything from the men she dates to a 5-year-old boy are brilliantly executed.** This is not — repeat, not — the show for the younger members of your family. The language is raw in places and the material adult in nature. “The Twelve Dates of Christmas,” directed by Jim Warren, joins “The Santaland Diaries” and “A Christmas Carol” as part of the American Shakespeare Center’s holiday lineup through December.