

# A Conversation with Tonya Ingram

Posted on Sep 14, 2012 in Blog, Featured, News

Tonya Ingram was at a church service when she heard her first spoken word performance. She had been writing lyrics for three years and connected what she had been doing to what was going on on stage. She describes those lyrics now as “poems to a tune”. Today, she has stayed true to where she started, speaking from the nexus of writing, song, and worship. These three threads keep bringing her back to thinking on humanity, widely and generously. She speaks of the bible with a musician’s language calling it a “chorus of pain, joy, doubt, faith, fear, death, and love. Every psalm, proverb or parable holds in it the power to relate to my situation, even though we are thousands of years apart.” Writing is a way to whisper back and out. “Without it,” she says, “I do not understand anything. With it, I am human.” Human is all over the place, she says and “this makes for the best kind of poem.” It’s the focusing of this far flung emotion that makes a person what they are. “The difference between a thought and a poem is editing,” is how she explains it. “We are all thoughts trying to become poems, editing out the nonsense.” Performance through her eyes is people making sense of themselves. Tonya describes herself as “an incredibly introverted individual and found it necessary to write down...thoughts, fears, wants, curiosities, in order to understand the world and my function in it.” A performance she says, “is heightened reality, therefore taking the work from the page to the stage should not feel odd, but rather the most natural form of expression. “‘just show up’, you are leaving whatever is going to happen to God, casting all fear aside and believing in your work, as is.” She’s wound herself a home out of people. “The honesty, the flaw, the smile, the comfort. I am always home.”

Watch out for this one. She’s currently working on a book to be published through Penmanship Books. If she had to listen to one album for the rest of her life it’d be the soundtrack to 8 mile. “Nuff said.”

<http://penmanshipbooks.com/a-conversation-with-tonya-ingram/>