

Spring 2009

University of Hawaii, Hilo Tour

Aloha Diary,

Sometimes flying is not about freedom. Sometimes it's about sleeping with your head on the tray table and moving so people can go to the bathroom in the appropriate locker-sized room in the back of a collection of steel vessels that somehow gets me from East Brooklyn to Northern Hawaii. Josephine Baker and I both elected to function on no sleep en route to the Big Island. We could have attached little anchors to our eyelids as we walked through the Phoenix airport, but we decided it would get in the way of the lost cities of Atlantis we were dragging from our eyelids, and we didn't want to mix our metaphors too early in the day. There's appropriate and then there's inappropriate, and Josephine Baker and Julia Child know the difference. (As if I really had to say that to YOU, diary.)

We made it to Hilo sans Aphra Behn, who was sitting on the tarmac in Atlanta. God was punishing her for being hopeful about an upgrade to business class. The stunning Myhraliza greeted us with leis and a ride to our glorious accommodations next door to Coconut Grove, where we drank Hawaiian beer and pretended to be awake in paradise.

Love,

Julia Child

April 5, 2009

Aloha Diary,

Today we gave a poster-making workshop to the folks in the Hilo Theatre Department, as well as to their radiant Chair, Jackie. They were masters at theatre warm-up games like the name game, which we re-titled "I'm Jumpin' Julia." (But of course.) They were also quite adept at silently granting one another permission to take each other's places in a game called "yes." Sadly, we had many false starts when we started to play Big Bootie, but I can't say I didn't contribute to our collective failure to have rhythm we could all be proud of.

Then we wrote down all of the issues we're extra passionate about in Hilo, and got down to the business of making posters. Three groups made brilliant, powerful collections of taglines and images about Drugs/Peer Pressure, Domestic Violence, and the ever-complicated Hawaiian Identity and its political implications. Applause to the

charismatic geniuses in the Hilo theatre department.

We also took a stab at rehearsing our show, "Silence is Violence," but we were pleasantly distracted by some traditional hula rehearsal in the outdoor halls on campus. We sat and watched the nuanced gesturing of 40 or so folks in sarongs for more than an hour. Could have been days. We were entranced.

Then we couldn't find any restaurants open past 8:00. Yummy!

Goodnight!

[Julia Child](#)

April 6. 2009

Aloha Diary,

Today we hung out in Downtown Hilo and I got the raddest airbrushed shirt from Auntie Beth's. She put a piece of lace over the shirt and airbrushed the pattern with purple paint. I keep trying to wear it in New York with flip flops, but every time I go outside it's absolutely frigid. So I put my Quebec sweatshirt on instead. (Remember what I said about appropriate?) I also patronized Bear's Coffee while I was downtown, and they made a fab soy latte. Though I have to say, it did out price a NYC soy latté at \$4.50. I must have looked like I would pay that much for a soy latte. I would and I did.

Then we performed for a nearly full-house in the Hilo cafetorium. The audience was so generous with their laughter and applause. Sometimes we weren't even saying funny things and they were in stitches. Mayhaps I was sporting a "kick me" sign I wasn't aware of? Lei'a was our student volunteer, and she was a fabulous improviser. Sure to be a force to reckon with in the world of political theatre in the future. Lola and Myhraliza kept bringing us the yummiest selections from the beautiful buffet, steamed buns with pork inside, fried tofu, the freshest pineapple this side of heaven, the works!

Then we went to the only bar open in Hilo, Shooters, and had the bartender make us the only touristy drink he could think of: The Rock Bottom. Karaoke was a dollar a song and even though it's a recession, 10 dollars pretended like it wasn't. I enjoy being a girl.

Mahalo and Aloha,

Julia Child

April 7, 2009

Day 1: April 5, 2009

Julia Child and I arrived on the Big Island today. I have to admit, I was a little taken aback by the very rainy weather. It wasn't cold, but a little chilly, and not really what I was expecting from Hawaii. But seriously, after the very unspring-like temperatures in New York, I'd take it!

Upon arriving, we found out that Aphra had been having trouble with her flight, and were instructed to meet up with Myhraliza instead. Aphra would be in later that evening.

Myhraliza was amazing from the beginning. She greeted us with beautiful lei's, drove us to our hotel, and made sure we got in safely. Needless to say, after a 12 hour flight, we were pretty exhausted, and thankful for her hospitality. Without it, we would have had to wait another 2 hours in the airport for Aphra!

We settled in, and the first thing I did was take a shower. I had to get that airplane funk off! Dinner was a salad from the hotel restaurant. And let me tell you, the bed was welcome!

Day 2: April 6, 2009

Today was workshop day! It went great. They were theater students! Theater students are full of great ideas, and aren't afraid to be silly and outgoing during warm-ups.

This group was pretty enthusiastic, although there were one or two who were having a hard time letting themselves go completely, and not over-thinking everything. It was also apparent that the group was having a hard time understanding the more internal and specific aspects of free association.

By the end, though, there were 3 great posters. After all of the ideas that were thought up, they were narrowed down to Domestic Violence, Peer Pressure, and Hawaiian Commercialization and Stereotypes. The domestic violence group did the best at collaboration and their poster had a fantastic and compelling image.

We were also able to find an amazing volunteer from this group! Her name is Lei'a. I could tell immediately that she would be great.

Day 3: April 7, 2009

Well, it's show day. I have to admit, I'm kind of nervous. I always am before donning the mask and taking on my Guerrilla Girl On Tour identity. Stay tuned....

The show went great! They loved us! There was no need for me to be nervous. They laughed where they were supposed to and we got in some awesome adlibs. The improvs turned out perfect. I'm glad we worked on them so much. I think that made all the difference. Lei'a was great, as predicted. She was an instant Guerrilla Girl On Tour, and slipped right in to the parts we gave her.

Now, I know I say this every tour, but this one was my favorite tours. OK, it was in Hawaii and I definitely needed to get away. But U of Hawaii at Hilo was so hospitable, and the audience was amazing. I had a fabulous time! Thanks Hawaii. I can't wait to return.

Mahalo,
[Josephine Baker](#)

Florida State University

Julia and I were anxious about performing in a place called Club Down Under especially since it was on the campus of FSU Tallahassee, far away from the real down under in Australia. But our fears quickly dissipated for two reasons. The first was the sight of the place...a cool underground club with a small stage, couches, balcony and bar. Secondly, we noticed a set list in our dressing room from the show the night before – evidence that the Ting Tings had been there. Our new version of "Feminists Are Funny" is partly inspired by the Ting Tings and so we saw it as a sign from Goddess. It was pouring cats and dogs outside which might explain why the tech crew were no where to be found. Little by little in dribs and drabs some fabulous "event crew" wearing t-shirted techies showed up and we went through our show just in the nick of time for a 9PM opening of the house. This was the latest we've ever performed the show and I was not sure I could stay awake past my bed time but Julia rallied me by forcing me to eat handfuls of sun chips and a ham and cheese sandwich which tasted mysteriously like a hot dog. Nicole and the board members of the FSU women's center were on hand to give us support and Diana Alvarez proved to be one of the best Chauvinisto's we've ever had. I guess you can tell where I'm heading...the Florida Feminists filled the house and took it down. We didn't go under in club down under, on the contrary, we floated to the top in spite of the pouring rain. I must say that Julia Child's ad libs were in rare form....my favorite was when she

body slammed me at the top of the show...this was her way of telling me my mike was off. It got a laugh which is all I ask for from fellow GGOT improv Goddesses like Ms. Child. After the show we found a cool bar that had 50 brands of great beer on tap and hung with the women and men from the Women's Studies department. A late night but a great show.

Good night from swampy blue state Florida,
Aphra

Penn State

March 19, 2009

Dear Old Book,

8 hours on the road and we finally arrive in PA and find a fantastic Italian restaurant (A Taste Of Italy) where Julia and I unwind and bed down for the night. Next day it's off to State College and our much anticipated return to Penn State. We are met by a great tech crew of Tom, Greg and Matt who take us smoothly through our now seamless show...well, except for the ad libs. Susan of the Women's Center shows up with dinner platters and smiles and we are all set to go for our show in Heritage Hall. Julia and I performed to a SRO crowd in Heritage Hall at Penn State. Fabulous feminist audience and the show rocks. Can't ask for more than that. Here is excerpts from our review.

FROM THE DAILY COLLEGIAN March 18, 2009-04-05

"Feminist performers wearing gorilla masks and wigs threw bananas and bread at a full house Thursday night. A slide show of the women in their masks at various locales around the world played as attendees filed in. The show opened with a routine announcement to turn off all cell phones that quickly became humorous, saying that the Guerrilla Girls On Tour would pause for hot flashes, menstrual cramps and contractions that are two minutes apart. When the show began, two women ran onto the stage, wearing bras and control tops over their clothing and dancing like King Kong. They then tore off the bras while making loud monkey sounds, eventually throwing the bananas at the audience. They introduced themselves as Child and Behn, giving a mini-biography for each woman and explaining why they wear the masks and use alternative names. During the performance, feminist topics were pulled out of a hat by the women and then discussed. They began with "memories," which involved the performers showing pictures of the Guerrilla Girls On Tour at places around the world and with people from around the world, including a doctored photograph of them drinking beer with the Pope. The women

asked the audience members if they considered themselves feminists. Both men and women alike raised their hands, proving the women's point that feminists come in all shapes, sizes and genders. Next, the performers read letters they had received over the years. Some letters complimented them; others were threatening. One was a letter from a boy who apologized for a fellow student who threatened to kill them. The performance took a more serious note during a discussion on rape. There was no laughter from the audience as the women displayed images of a marriage scene, a little girl holding someone's hand and a man's hand on a woman's thigh, all with the words "this is not an invitation to rape me" stamped across them. However, the moment didn't last long, as the women then put on President Barack Obama and Vice-president Joe Biden masks and blazers and danced to "Saturday Night Fever," ending it with a kiss. They also provided statistics about Obama's achievements for women, such as recently signing an act that now protects women from pay discrimination. The women also graded Pennsylvania and gave the state an F on its "reproductive rights report card" because 78 percent of communities in the state have no abortion providers, they said. They also informed the audience that only seven states guarantee a woman's right to birth control; pharmaceutical employees in the other states are allowed to refuse a prescription because of religious beliefs, they said. The performance ended with a skit about a woman who wanted to produce a play, but the theater owner only produced white men's plays. Penn State's own Serenity Ireland played the female playwright. "They're hilarious. I love it," said Ireland (freshman-theatre). "I might be a Guerrilla Girl On Tour in the summer."

XXXOOOO,
AB

Dear Deezer,

At Penn State there were crowds for days that stretched to the far corners of the ballroom. We gussied up our Guerrilla suits in an industrial kitchen while ambitious students put tupperwares of ziti in the fridge before the show. I thought about hanging out backstage the whole show and eating ziti, but then I remembered that only 12.6% of NYC theatre productions were written by women, so I combed my back hair and went onstage. I had a pretty big crush on the audience. They were cute and had good taste in entertainment, not to mention the fact that they were really into changing things round those parts. (and they gasped in a kind, concerned way when I tripped up the stage.) sweeties. We hurled bread and bananas at them to their and our delight.. Bombs over Baghdad!

I had a fabulous time and hope to return soon!

Rubber chickens,
Julia child

Bridgewater State College

March 17, 2009

Dear Old Book,

Driving to Boston early Tuesday morning Julia and I go over the news. AIG bonus disaster and what's going on with the US banking system. We try to figure out how to work that into future shows. We eventually resort to our old driving game of making up short musicals about impromptu topics....like the hotel we'll be checking into soon. At Bridgewater State College we are greeted by a group of students assigned to help tech our performance and we are glad that most are theatre savvy techies. The tech goes smoothly and we pour ourselves into the corsets, girdles and bras we've added to the beginning of the show. The enthusiastic audience claps and cheers us on and we end on a high note. Now off to Pennsylvania!

Love,
Aphra

Dear Deezers,

This week Aphra Behn and I went to Bridgewater, MA and Penn State. I learned that the folks in Bridgewater would rather be identified as Bostonians. Or at least the vocally aggressive ones in the front row would. We were happy to be amongst the Irish catholic 'mericans of "Boston" on St. Paddy's day. I'm pretty sure all the sober alcoholics of the town showed up as we were the only thing to do that didn't involve pints! (intoxicating as I'm sure we were. ;)) The luck o' the Irish was with us as we had a stellar collection of student volunteers, some of whom learned all of our choreography despite the fact that they would be sitting in chairs running sound for the entirety of the show. That's dedication. Thanks, DJ mike.

Corned beef `n cabbage,

Julia Child

http://www.collegian.psu.edu/archive/2009/03/19/video_guerilla_girls.aspx

Julia and I performed to a SRO crowd in Heritage Hall at Penn State. Fabulous feminist audience and the show rocks. Can't ask for more than that. Here is our review.

Love,
Aphra

Eastern Michigan University

March 13, 2009

The dozen students who participated in our street theatre workshop were all energized by the end of the day and created engaging 3 minute musicals about sexual assault, transgender issues and the destruction of art. There was a lovely reception at the art gallery on campus after (currently full of women artists in a show called "Women's Work").

Julia Child and I tweaked the new version of "Feminists Are Funny" the next morning and we were both pleasantly surprised when we stepped onto the Sponberg Theatre stage. It's an intimate house with about 250 seats and a savvy tech crew of students...thanks to Josh and Lorenzo for a great tech. And to Michelle Hartung – pictured at right – who spent a year organizing our tour.

We played to a SRO house and the audience was rockin' as Julia and I went through the issues – feminism, rape, Obama, "Saturday Night Fever" (you had to be there to get this). Engaging questions from the audience post show. We both felt very satisfied and welcomed for our Midwest tour and leave with warm memories of the funny feminists in Ohio and Michigan that we will carry in our hearts as we head east.

See us in "Feminists Are Funny" at Bridgewater State College and Penn State next. It's not a performance, it's a party!

Aphra Behn

University of Akron

March 10, 2009

For some reason the theatre at the Student Union at U of Akron where we performed last night had no idea of our tech needs or equipment even though we were booked by the women's studies department last fall. Hence, our tech rehearsal was a combination of Julia Child and I going over the show with just props and people running in and out asking what we needed. We arrived at 1:30 in the pouring rain and didn't really get started until 4:30PM.

Prior to that we had a lovely visit at the Akron Art Museum with Barbara Tannenbaum and the staff of the Akron Art Museum (www.akronartmuseum.org). They gave us a tour of the gorgeous and spacious new museum. My favorite was sculpture by La Wilson and standing in front of a painting by Alma Thomas and having our picture taken.

We finished our tech at 6:30, went up at 7:15 and I must say out of disaster came a fabulous show with an even more fabulous audience. Julia's wig flew off at the end but other than that the two of us were in top improv form. On to Eastern Michigan University.

Aphra Behn

