

OCTOBER 2014

Dear Diary,

What a fun feminist mid-week adventure! After a train, a ferry, a cab, and a lot of Earl Grey tea, we arrived at the College of Staten Island! Oh man, is that campus beautiful. Fall foliage is finally happening!!!

At 10 am we led our classic poster making workshop with a group of theatre students. These young thinkers came up with a ton of creative themes for what "pisses them off". Go figure! Youth having opinions - - my favorite! After a lot of brainstorming and collaboration, they came up with some gripping posters addressing issues such as violence against women, animal abuse, corrupt cops, the media's obsession with Ebola, "sexy" Halloween costumes, and a topic that we really loveeeee, FEMINISM! These students were super smart! After this workshop, we knew we were in for a great audience for our evening show.

On our break, we discovered many things about the College of Staten Island. For example, there are large water fountains decorating the campus that apparently light up with different colors. Students are charged 10 cents for cutlery if it's being used for an item not purchased on campus -- what?! And they really like their hand sanitizer dispensers. Gotta keep those students healthy!

After sorting out a few sound cues, tech for the show went very smoothly. It seemed like it was the student volunteer's very first time on stage! Yay for courage Crystal!!! After we finished tech, we were treated like stars and enjoyed a delicious dinner in the green room. Then, we dolled ourselves up, donned our guerrilla masks and prepared to PERFORM. And, WHAT a performance! The audience was totally digging it from the get go! They especially loved the "Reclaiming Lesbian, Vagina, Feminist" song and the free bananas! Most importantly, I felt like we were able to really reach them with our message -- that raising awareness about feminism and violence against women is imperative but, that it can be done in a funny and informative way.

Riding the ferry back to our home island, we were tuckered out but all smiles. Thanks for a wonderful day, College of Staten Island! Keep rocking out and speaking up!

Love,
Azu(cena) Villaflor - 10/21/14

Dear Diary,

Why, hello! Long time no see. It was great fun to rise up out of the grave again after a little hiatus to visit The College of Staten Island with Azucena, Isadora, and Aphra on October 21st.

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with Azucena, Isadora, and Aphra on October 21st.

The day started early with the journey across land and sea to that far and distant borough. We kicked off our visit with a poster-making workshop. The group, all students in an acting class, were very engaged and got fired up about a wide variety of issues to make posters about: the Ebola media craze, parking issues at their school, domestic violence, misconceptions of feminism, animal abuse, and more. I think my favorite poster was one made about misrepresentations of feminism, and how gendered language – like, “you throw like a girl” or “man up!” - affects men AND women.

After the workshop, we had lunch and explored the College of Staten Island campus a little. Apparently, there is a law banning smoking anywhere on all CUNY campuses city-wide – and CSI will not have you forget it! There were so many foreboding signs reminding us that smoking was illegal, we ended up throwing some jokes about it into our performance later that evening. We also may have sneaked a photo or two of a student blatantly smoking a cigarette in front of one of those signs...but he’ll never know it was us! Mwahaha...the benefits of anonymity.

After lunch, we rehearsed in the beautiful theater at CSI and met our student volunteer, Crystal, who would be making her performance debut (first EVER!) with GGOT. I love working on “Silence is Violence” because in addition to interacting with the audience and dancing and singing like the feminist fools we are, we also get to play around with scenes and play characters in our segments depicting tactics for fighting date rape. I think Azucena’s performance of a frat boy is one of the most hilarious things I’ve ever seen – even Crystal had trouble keeping it together in rehearsal J

The performance was a hit. We and the audience all had great energy, and they were with us every step of the way. There was definitely a variety of opinions in the audience in response to our feminist spin - we could tell by their responses during the show as well as by their questions afterwards – but it was all in good spirits and overall, they were engaged and responsive and that’s the best we could ask for as performers. After the show, one student even came up and interviewed us so she could include us in a project she’s doing for a class. Cool!

Thanks College of Staten Island – it was a great day!
Lots o love,
Fanny Mendelssohn

Dearest Journal,

Oh! The Adventures of Staten Island!

It was such a treat to travel to the distant island of Staten. Well, maybe not too distant but we did take a boat! The College of Staten Island was a real change from the concrete isle of Manhattan. There were green lawns and a water works fountain which I found to be the perfect inspiration for a dance piece. Azucena, Fanny and me were introduced to CSI’s rowdy student body during our first task – the poster-making workshop. Students from Acting 201 took no time at all in tackling issues of sexism in Halloween costumes, corrupt police, domestic violence, ebola, and cruelty to animals. Everyone pushed

all in tackling issues of sexism in Halloween costumes, corrupt police, domestic violence, ebola, and cruelty to animals. Everyone pushed themselves to find clever and insightful ways to express their ideas via visual posters. There was so much to say we ran out of time. Students even proudly posted their work throughout the lobby of the Center of the Arts building where we would perform.

Speaking of which, our performance of Silence is Violence: College of Staten Island Edition was a smashing success. It was so much fun performing for an engaging and lively Staten Island crowd. The Williamson Theater is a big beautiful performance space that is perfect for throwing bananas. We told our favorite jokes about sexism, the wage gap, body image, Taylor Swift, and so much more. The audience reclaimed some female words when they sung their hearts out for our sing-a-long of our hit single, "Lesbian, Vagina, Feminist." Crystal, the Women's Center's intern, broke out from her normal role and joined us on stage for some "improvs" on bystander intervention. After the show, folks stuck around and bought posters and t-shirts, got autographs, and asked questions about standing up against sexism and violence in their own communities.

The audience was one which exuded enthusiasm and everyone, including myself, felt empowered by the end of it. Exhausted from long day of feminist fun we headed home. So tired, Cena fell asleep on the ferry so we left her there. Just kidding, we look out for each other and make sure everyone gets home safe and sound. Thanks so much College of Staten Island for great day!

Love, Peace, and Dance,

Isadora