

Women rock this Saturday

Music-rich Houston Women's Festival expected to draw crowd to Garden in the Heights

Editor's Note: This is the last of several articles introducing some of the performers who will take the stage at the Houston Women's Festival on Saturday, Sept. 28th.

By SHARMAN PETRI



Comedienne Slim Bloodworth hosts the nighttime stage at the eighth annual Houston Women's Festival this Saturday, helping wrap up a music and entertainment-filled day.

With her laid-back Southern style, Bloodworth draws humor from "the odd things humanity does. We all have the same fears," she says. "We've all made the same mistakes and it's funny."

By the age of 4, Bloodworth had already begun to observe the "absurdities of life." At six feet tall and 129 pounds, Bloodworth herself is of unique stature.

"I've been tall and lanky all my life," she says. "I never quite fit in with the other kids. I found that a sense of humor was a way to get my foot in the door. It wasn't about getting attention. It was about easing the tension. People warm up to you when they realize you're not a threat."

After reading Kathleen Tracey's book, "Ellen: The real Ellen DeGeneres Story," Bloodworth was inspired to give comedy a try. Her first attempt at stand-up was at an open mic at the Laff Stop. She says she bombed so terribly that "an emcee actually yanked me off the stage. It didn't matter," she continues. "There was something there. I thought 'Oh, this is fun. Imagine what I could do with this. This is where I'm supposed to be.'"

Bloodworth regrouped and continued pursuing open mic opportunities, getting more comfortable in front of an audience. She

says she worked diligently on fundamentals like how to deliver a joke, how to deal with a crowd and how to set up a joke so that the audience doesn't see the punch line coming.

She also found that what made her funny was her being herself and letting her personality take off. "I don't take another personality to the stage," she says. It's me with just a little something extra and a little more ego."

She says she loves working off her own personality and wits. "There's a thrill that comes from being able to see your own creativity – to give it wings and give it life. There's an incredible power that comes with that," Bloodworth explains. "The stage is the safest place in the world for me because I have complete freedom to say whatever I want, however I want and people realize I'm joking. It's just me venting."

Bloodworth does indeed have something to say. "I'm so disappointed that humanity finds it necessary hurt one another in order to be better than someone else. You're never going to be better. You're just different," she says. "Different is real. Better is an illusion. If I can help someone in the crowd think about something and laugh about it at the same time, then maybe that someone won't take things so seriously and will handle a difficult situation without hurting someone else. Everything is serious but everything is seriously funny."

The Houston Women's Festival is produced by the Athena Art Project, a non-profit organization supporting the artistic endeavors of women. The event includes a full day of music on two stages, a multi-media art show, and a market place of vendors.

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