

Maria Bamford: My New Hero
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For Amusement
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For those of you unfamiliar with the off-beat and quirky humor of Maria Bamford, stop reading this article right now and go google that shiz. Then get back to reading.

Though I've always been a fan of this petite blonde's stand-up comedy, I've never had the opportunity to witness it firsthand.

Until last weekend, that is.

There I was at the Funny Bone in Bloomington, Ind., sitting in a dark corner much like a child molester would do. The club was packed with stand-up fans and live comedy appreciators, all waiting anxiously to see one of Bamford's hilarious alter egos up-close and personal.

She didn't disappoint.

After opener Dan Telfer got the crowd warmed up (and I mean warmed up as in all hot and bothered because this kid was HILARIOUS!) with his lengthy discussion of dinosaurs and the downward spiral scientists find themselves in, Maria took the stage.

And the laughter began. I don't mean giggles laughter, I mean hardcore, vomit up your kidneys laughter, pee your pants laughter. In fact, I don't think that many people have peed their pants at one time in one place. But don't quote me on that, I'll have to check Guinness World Records first ...

From her new children's character, Sid The Schizophrenic Squid, to her frenetic sister to her naïve mother, Bamford's set was more a cavalcade of colorful characters as opposed to a one-man show.

What makes Bamford's comedy so awesome is that she doesn't tell stories—she relives them. She takes you to the time and place that the joke happened, like when her evangelical neighbors try to slyly coerce her into joining their faith community by attending a poetry reading at a coffee house.

“What's the name of the coffee house?”

“... Crossroads.”

“COME ON! STOP HIDING BEHIND YOUR JIMMY HENDRIX FONTS!”

Or what about her newest character, the happy-go-lucky girl who is hiding her emo lifestyle beneath an L.A. valley girl façade?

“Yeah, you go out, I'll stay in and do a cross-hatch pattern on my arm with a curling iron. Long sleeves, am I right? LONG SLEEVES!”

And how could I forget her father's response to her newly purchased shirt?

“I got this shirt for, like, \$5 the other day. How do they do that?”

“Well, how they do that, Maria, is slavery ... They get these children and make them work as slaves.”

“... Hm ... It’s a nice shirt though, right?”

Bamford brings a new level to comedy that often isn’t seen in stand-up, and that level incorporates her astounding acting abilities with her wicked sense of humor. This 20-year veteran of live comedy makes her experience evident in her performance, which absolutely blew me away.

I mean, I knew she was funny, but I didn’t think my sides would ache for five days from laughing so hard, so often, during the best one hour of comedy I’ve ever experienced.

Maria Bamford, you are my hero.



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