

Cunt wait for the revolution? Me neither.

Author Inga Muscio moves to Portland to raise some hell

BY MARIE FLEISCHMANN

The author of the increasingly popular 1998 feminist manifesto *Cunt: A Declaration of Independence* (with a 2002 second edition) has thousands of cunt-loving fans who certainly hope she keeps talking.

The fiery redhead moved from San Francisco to Stumptown in June and feels right at home. "I've spent most of my adult life in the Pacific Northwest. It is a good place for writers, in general," says Inga Muscio. "I chose Portland because it seems that, unlike Seattle, the people here have a bit of a tight rein on developers and Paul Allen-esque dick-heads.... People here really care about their community, about their neighborhoods.... I love how the Mount Tabor neighborhood responded to the totally vapid idea about covering the reservoirs."

The 37-year-old writer continues to be impressed with the way Portlanders respond to oppression. "People are not satisfied with the rote manner that the city deals with police brutality toward black folks and protesters.... If there was any major city that was ripe for revolution, it would have to be this one."

That's high praise from a woman with a vaginal manifesto. "I realized I would write a book called *Cunt* when I was sitting in the middle of my kitchen, surrounded by articles I had written in the past four years," Muscio says.

"A few years prior, I accidentally turned in an article with the second 'o' left out of 'word count.' My editor thought I had written 'word cunt' intentionally.... Regardless, I was quite delighted with this term when she pointed it out to me, so I stopped putting my name on my articles and started using 'word cunt' and then the number of words instead. So the word 'cunt' was literally on almost every article surrounding me."

Which is quite appropriate when you know that many of the articles had to do with cunts anyway. "These articles became the framework for the book. I bunched them into topics and saw a chapter on whores, periods, etc. All I had to do, really, was fill in the many, many blanks."

With the huge success of *Cunt* under her belt, Muscio's second edition responds to much of the feedback from the first, including what she delicately explains as "some right-wing pieces of shit in Pennsylvania [who] came to a Cuntfest at Penn State."

Apparently these, ahem, rather conservative folks, lobbied the Keystone State's governor to suspend funding for some school activities in response to Muscio's reading. "Pennsylvania is the most racist, fucked-up state I have ever been in, and I've been in most," she says. "By and large, I don't get much resistance. *Cunt* tends to slip under the radar, which is great. Gender-variant people have taken me to task, and I address that...but I wouldn't term that as resistance because it came from a general place of love."

Muscio says that her writing process has not changed "per se" since the first edition of *Cunt*. "I still have the same entirely schizophrenic reading and writing practices."

The survival tips are what makes both editions a full-fledged women's user's guide: putting rocks in your pocket before the late-night bike trip to



Inga Muscio reads from her work-in-progress, *Autobiography of a Blue-Eyed Devil: My Life and Times in a Racist, Imperialist Society*, Nov. 9 at In Other Words

the store, calling a friend prior to any solo departures, etc. And it's best to check the comprehensive "Cunt-lovin' Guide to the Universe" before choosing your next, well...just about anything.

Though the second printing of *Cunt* has been selling even better than the first edition, and its success may very well lead to a third printing, Muscio's new project will more than likely also be a pinnacle work. *Autobiography of a Blue-Eyed Devil: My Life and Times in a Racist, Imperialist Society*, due out next year, has been in the making for four years. In a critique of the faulty framework of modern America, the author explores everything from race relations to the political plundering of the people's goodwill.

"If our present dictator is re-power-played into office, my days as a U.S. citizen might, at least temporarily, be numbered.... I will finish this book here and then I will probably be traveling around a bit."

But she will stick around long enough to continue her research, finish the new book and become an active part of the Portland community, contributing to, she says, "the local anti-racist, pro-transgendered, pro-woman, pro-community revolution I see forming. If I can do my part to facilitate white people digging their heads out of their collective asses, that would be nice, too. I also have a number of really close friends here...and the roses, one mustn't forget the roses." ■

INGA MUSCIO will read from her book in progress 7 p.m. Nov. 9 at In Other Words, 3734 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd. Stay updated by visiting www.kalikunti.com.

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