

KITCHEN DOOR, from page 8

S.J.: Extreme fear of being fired. Also just how busy people are. People are working 70-to 80-hour work weeks. There's a lot of turnover. We've managed to organize workers despite all of these things.

M.W.: *Are there divisions that show up between different groups?*

S.J.: There's severe racial segregation. In fine dining and casual restaurants, white workers in the front, and workers of color in lower-paid busser, runner, back-of-the-house positions. A waiter generally considers himself to be better than people in the back. I think we're able to overcome that by having people come together and see how they can work.

M.W.: *Restaurants seem to have become the first point of arrival for immigrants, like sweatshops used to be.*

S.J.: We very much think of ourselves in this century as the manufacturing sector of a hundred years ago. It's the most visible industry, setting standards for the rest of the economy, and it will be intervention in

this industry that will ultimately lift standards for the rest of the economy, same as manufacturing a hundred years ago. Those manufacturing jobs were bad jobs a hundred years ago. It was union efforts that lifted them. The unions of a hundred years ago looked very much like what Restaurant Opportunities Center is today, using all kinds of different innovative strategies, organizing consumers. You've heard of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire — there was a march in New York City of very wealthy women who used the shirtwaists (a popular button-down blouse) that were produced in these factories. So there's plenty of examples of consumers standing by workers.

Right now we have a campaign against Darden, which is the world's largest full-service restaurant company. It owns all of Darden restaurants including Red Lobster, Capitol Grille steak houses. A few months ago when ACA was ruled constitutional, they announced that they were going to reduce all of their workers' hours to part-time to evade ACA. We were part of organizing consumer outrage on the issue. Their Standard & Poor's rating went down because consumers were outraged and Darden clarified their stance. They said they're not reducing anybody's hours. It was

a big victory, and it showed consumers have tremendous power.

M.W.: *Did you ever work a restaurant job?*

S.J.: Only in Colors (Restaurant Opportunities Center's cooperative and training restaurant).

M.W.: *Did you like restaurant work?*

S.J.: Yeah. It's hard, hard work. That's what people don't realize. People take great pride in it. There are people who are much better at it than me. It's not a job that people are in because they just can't find anything else. People take great pride in hospitality, and we want to make it a profession, not just a job.

M.W.: *Were there experiences that contributed to your passion for social justice?*

S.J.: My parents are immigrants. I grew up in a working-class community in East L.A. My parents struggled a lot as immigrants, faced a lot of discrimination. I had a lot of anger as a child and tried to channel it into something positive.

M.W.: *What made you angry?*

S.J.: During the first Gulf War being screamed at by kids, "go back to Iraq," and we're not Iraqi. Even if we were ... Driving through Utah, and our car broke down, there were seven different mechanics, and nobody would help us.

The thing that's so infuriating is the mythology about being this country where anybody's welcome and anybody can make it, everybody has opportunity, when it's just, in my experience, so not true. It boggles the mind how there are some things that are true for half the country that are just completely not true for the other half. So, restaurant workers, people have no idea what's happening behind the kitchen door.

Before I helped found ROC, I was organizing factory workers and custodial workers. But it's funny, even as a labor organizer I would go out to eat every evening and never think about the people touching my food. So it wasn't until I really got to know restaurant workers and their lives that my dining experience changed, which is why I decided to write the book.

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LIV WARFIELD, from page 1

write. See, writing is a freedom. We forget that. It's a luxury that most of my ancestors fought for. Because I can use my voice as well as a "Freedom" but what I do with it, it's important to me. What you speak and put out into the world is defiantly energy and I want my voice to paint love, peace and awareness to what's around us. Gosh, Marvin Gaye did it. Sam Cooke too. They sang all these beautiful songs but there was a message! Our voice in this day and age should carry a message. Music can inspire change, that what I hope to do!

S.Z.: *What social issues are important to you?*

L.W.: Literacy and mental health, gun control and learning to survive off the land. I need to become better at that. I also support Girls, Inc. and ReBuild the Dream, an organization that focuses on redefining the American dream and works on building up communities. Portland is a beautiful city in that way. I would love to bring the Portland energy to my hometown Peoria, IL. We need it!

S.Z.: *What or who are some of the local*

influences on your work?

L.W.: First and foremost (soul singer) Linda Hornbuckle, Andy Stokes, Storm Large, Brian Foxworth, LaRohnda Steele, Janice Scroggins, Patrick Lamb, to name a few. But Linda, she is the catalyst to my beginnings as a singer. I love her so much. I'm truly grateful to a lot of people who've been extremely instrumental to my growth. My bandmates (Sedell Jones, Tyrone Hendrix, Sean Foote, AG Donalioia, Ashley, Saeeda) over the years. Paul of Rumblefish, Todd Rouse, JD & Jimmy from Jimmy Moks, Joey Porter, Willamette Week and you too! I could name so many people that will fill this page up. They know who they are! I was influenced by them in so many ways. I'm so thankful.

S.Z.: *As you travel the world on tour, what do you notice about the state we, as humans, are in?*

L.W.: Good question. We are walking around like we are dreaming. Our heads are down in iPhones and laptops now, that we don't have the time to say hello to each other anymore. It's sad sometimes. We are slowly becoming programmed or we already are. We are lacking social skills. People are

forgetting how to be genuine people.

S.Z.: *Can you explain the energy exchange that happens for you when you perform?*

L.W.: It's like a wave that comes over me, a light and a love that washes over my spirit. I see everyone who is engaged in my show and it overwhelms me. I quickly get filled up! You know, I had surgery on my thyroid last year. My doctor, Dr. Aliabadi, changed my life. That surgery was so close to my vocal chords. She told me she wasn't sure if I was going to be singing anymore. I broke down. I prayed and I prayed to God to watch over me. If it was meant for me to be singing, then let it be! But I vowed to always give my heart and soul at every performance, because "of much is given, much is required." I'm Free when I perform! I do what my soul tells me.

S.Z.: *And BD503 Handbags? You have your own line of purses. Tell me about working with Bianca Pettinari and what inspires your handbag designs.*

Bianca is the greatest! I met her at Portland FashionXt Event. She is a genius and so talented. We immediately clicked when I saw her handbags. They were

different and looked so edgy. I mean these handbags were made out of re-purposed leather! How awesome is that! In creating the handbag line we thought about music icons and what kind of handbag they carry. Like what would Chaka Khan carry or even Joni Mitchell? After that we launched an exclusive "Liv Warfield" by BD503 collection! Next up, look out for my T-shirt line. I love to stay busy and stay creative!

S.Z.: *Share a story that exemplifies life in the studio, on the road or on the stage with your friend, boss and mentor, Prince.*

L.W.: Hmm. Just know that it's such a beautiful surprise to work with him. I recently wrote the single to "Live Out Loud" for this upcoming tour. I was so excited he wanted to use my lyrics.. I was shocked. I'm so elated because he believes in me.

Just be in the moment with him. Everyone tries to figure him out. It's quite funny.

S.Z.: *The music never seems to stop for you. Where do you go from here?*

L.W.: Just expect the unexpected.




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