

COMEDY HYPE

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# DULCE SLOAN

INTERVIEW WITH  
MELANIE ERNESTINA

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# THE ART OF BEING UNAPOLOGETIC

*Talking to Dulce Sloan is exactly what you would expect. If you're familiar with her comedy, she's honest, unwavering, and unapologetic. She's been in the comedy game for over 10 years and you can see her regularly as a correspondent on The Daily Show. This is my one-on-one with Dulce Sloan.*

**Melanie:** You did an interview article back in 2016 for Portland's *All Jane Comedy Festival*, sort of expressing your early start into comedy. From that early start of May 2009 to now, how do you feel about your trajectory in comedy and where are you hoping it will take you?

Dulce: I actually never wanted to be a stand up comic. I do want to progress and grow as a comic but I've been acting since I was a child, so I always think of my goals and my life in terms of acting. I grew up doing theater and I've done film and tv but if it wasn't for stand up, I wouldn't have all the amazing opportunities to even audition and be seen. A good friend of mine told me, "If acting is a club, standup is the back door that lets you in."

**M:** Oh, I can see that for sure.

D: Yea, being a comedian, you're seen as a performer and a writer and not just an actor. When you're an actor, they just sort of see you as putting on someone else's work but as a comedian, you've got like two jobs, almost. You're a writer and performer and you suddenly become more interesting. They'd rather talk to you.

**M:** You have what I like to call **Unbothered Comedy**. Your delivery is **deadpan, unapologetic, and unbothered**. Do you write your material as a persona of "Dulce" or is that just you being like, "Listen, I'm Dulce and I'm about to talk about some stuff."



D: *(She laughs)* That's just me. The same jokes I tell about hating New York are the same ones I'll tell in New York. Do I care? What are they gonna do?

**M:** You're on Comedy Central's *The Daily Show* with Trevor Noah and you've been there for about two years now with your start in 2017. How did that come about?

D: My manager called me and said that Comedy Central wants you to audition. I was like, "What?"



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D (cont): I don't see myself as a political comic but being a black woman talking about your experiences about being a black woman in America, it can be taken and perceived as political or at least social. So for my audition I had to write a piece for myself and Trevor and my manager and I recorded it on my phone and I sent it in. Actually it was sent in a day after the deadline because I was traveling and they even let me get an extra day to send it in. And then I got the callback, and I was like, "What?!" So they flew me out to New York with two other black female comics, one of them being Zainab Johnson.

**M: Oh ok! Wow. We got Zainab, too!**

D: She's amazing. And so we do the callback and a green screen and I meet Trevor. And he's like, "Ah, I love your stand up," and I'm like, "Thank you so much."

**M: (She said that "Thank you so much" in the weirdest way. It was worth a chuckle.)**

D: It's so funny because my friends are like, "He's so hot! How are you gonna be able to function?" I'm like, "It's a JOB INTERVIEW. I'm gonna figure it out." But also I didn't think he was hot. He was gonna be my boss. I had to turn that part of my brain off. I'm not tryna get caught up. He's a ken doll. I'm not tryna think about this man."

**M: (I hollered.)**

D: So I do the audition, read the teleprompters and all that and they told me to wait for a second and I'm like, "Ok..." and then I'm headed to the airport. But then two hours later and my manager and 12 other people were on the phone, agents and lawyers. Just a squad of people. And they're like, "You've got it!" And I'm just like, "Of course I got it...there's too many people on the phone for me to not get it."

**M: Like, "Duh, y'all. No shocker there."**

D: If I don't get something it's just my manager. But here, it's a squad of people on the phone. So my managers asks me what I think about I'm like, "Ah, crap. I gotta move to New York."

**M: (Me remembering that she hates New York) Oh. OH. Oh Yeah. Oooh, no.**

D: That was my first thought. I mean it was exciting but I couldn't even think about the job. All I could think about was moving across the country again. I moved from Atlanta to LA and I had only been in LA for a year.

**M: I'm guessing that's why people call you an LA comic? But I was pretty sure you're from the south. Is that when you got your start, while in LA?**

D: Nah, I'm at Atlanta comic. I got to LA because I won *StandUp NBC* in the fall of 2015 and I had a holding deal. People don't pay attention, they just talk. No, I'm not an LA comic. I don't even sound like I'm from LA.

**M: See, that's what I was confused about. A few articles were written up about you saying she's an LA comic—**

D: —and they also always say I'm a Miami comic because I was born in Miami but I grew up in Atlanta. I haven't lived in Miami since 1995. I am NOT a Miami comic. Nobody is—*(she sighs)* I don't know what happened to journalism. No one is fact checking. I have yet to find an article where everything about me is correct. I gotta call my manager and be like, "Can you get them to fix this?"

**M: So, to set the record straight, you are...**

D: I started in Atlanta.

**M: Great. I'll keep it just like that. Ok, so you get *The Daily Show* and you moved to New York. How is the city?**

D: *(She sings)* This city is tra-aaaa-sh. I've never had a city try to kill me. This city is out to destroy people. Some days you can't get to work. Some days you can't get home. Somedays its both in the same day. There's just too many people running around. It's a lot. People don't rep LA the way that people rep New York.

# C O N T .

**M: They're very die hard...I dated a dude from New York. They're just die hard and loud.**

**D: They're the WORST. They're always yelling. Lower your voice, please. Why are you clapping?**

**M: This actually leads me into these next few questions. I have a feeling what your answer is going to be for the first one but I want to get a Hot Take from Dulce and get your initial thoughts. Here we go: Hot Take- Food from the North vs Food from the South.**

**D: Well, since there isn't a specific cuisine from the north, that should tell you EVERYTHING.**

**M: I think they have seafood. I think that's their claim to fame?**

**D: Listen, we have all the boils. We have a shrimp boils. We have crawfish boils. Crab boils. We are seasoning EVERYTHING. Everything is coated in Old Bay.**

**M: Hot Take- Interracial Dating**

**D: I'm all for it. Because why not? The first guy I ever talked to was from El Salvador. I don't get why I'm not supposed to do this? There's so much pressure on black women especially to not do it. But black men can do whatever they want. A lot of time in our lives and in the media, black women are told that no one else will want you and you owe it to black men to always be there for them. They get to do whatever they want but black women are pressured to keep the black race going. Um, well it takes TWO of us to keep a race going! How is all of the responsibility of continuing a whole race of people only on the black woman? That's bullshit.**

**M: Hot Take: Tyler Perry Studios**

**D: I think it's great. This is actually his third studio. And the fact that it's his sole owned studio is amazing. Regardless of what people have to say about HOW Tyler Perry operates or about the products that he puts out, what he has done in terms of the visibility that he's given us...that's big. Lionsgate took a chance on him but I didn't know about Tyler Perry's plays until my friend told me about them and then me and my mom went to go see Madea: Goes to Jail.**

**M: That seems to be the main one people know about when they're first introduced to the plays.**

**D: I saw that play at the Fox Theater in Atlanta. I've only opened for Trevor one time and I heard he was coming down to Atlanta so I was like, "I'm gonna bother you." And he was like, "Do you wanna do a set with me?" And I was like, "Yea." So, I got to perform at the Fox. I mean Trevor had a whole arena and now Tyler Perry had it for this play. It's one of the biggest venues in the city and mainstream America got to know Tyler from performing at the Fox. Opening those studios is the result of a lot of hard work. The black dollars that went into supporting all of his plays and movies built those studios.**

**M: What do you hope for from his studios?**

**D: What I hope for more than anything, is that by having this, there will be more chances, of course for people of color in front of the camera, but also behind the camera and on crew. Usually there will be a black makeup crew or hair crew but I want black writers, black cameramen, black PA's. I wanna see that one dude that's always on the set standing there but you don't know what he's there for—**

**M: —but for some reason he needs to be there.**

**D: For some REASON he needs to be there but I want him to be black. Black sound guy. Black electricians and prop masters.**

**M: Do you want to get your hands into that and produce something there?**



# THANK YOU!

Words Melanie Ernestina  
Year 2019  
Comedy Hype

**D:** Of course. I feel like when it comes to stories that black independent films make, it's the same stories that are being told over and over. I grew up on PBS and Star Trek, very different things. I would love to see a black coming of age story where they are not in the hood. There are different types of black experiences.

**M:** What's coming up for Dulce?

**D:** Right now I'm writing new materials and working on a project with FOX that I'm excited about. It's called the Great North so I'm recording that right now.

**M:** Dulce, thank you so much for having this interview with me. You touched on a lot of deep and powerful topics giving insight to your comedy and your world view.

**D:** I'm glad I was able to convey my personality to you. A lot of times I'll go into meetings and then come out of them and my manager will come to me and say, "Oh, they thought you were really smart!" And I'm like, "Uhm, did they think that I wasn't?" And it's usually because they are expecting one thing and then they get something else.

Catch Dulce Sloan on Comedy Central's The Daily Show!

