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On the scene: Desperate at Gorilla Tango Theatre

Posted in [Comedy](#) by [Jason Heidemann](#) on September 21st, 2009 at 2:08 pm

Desperate isn't exactly the right word to describe Lucy Bauer's new one-woman sketch show at [Gorilla Tango](#). Likable might be a better adjective, or perhaps adorable, if it's not too offensive. But if you're born and raised in New York, attended college in sun-kissed Honolulu, studied improvisation with two of the finest improv schools in the world ([iO](#) and the [Second City Conservatory](#)) and are in your midtwenties, what exactly about your life thus far screams desperation? Not much, as we learn in Bauer's short show in which the able performer mixes sketch and improvisation to generally desirable effects.

In the show's first full sketch, Bauer vaunts her abilities as a comedian by playing multiple characters in a classic romcom love scene. Bauer shows tremendous physical chops as she leaps back and forth between playing a couple canoodling over a romantic dinner while a third (presumably Bauer's alter ego) looks on in envy. At one point, her hapless character is even held up at gunpoint while the two lovers continue to ogle one another inside the restaurant. It's a thrill to watch comics jump from one roll to another, and Bauer handles this effortlessly. Ditto a compelling improvised segment where Bauer plays her own doting mother yakking it up with a member of the audience over cream puffs and 2% milk. Bauer shows tremendous listening skills and great commitment to character. Almost the entire scene was brimming with laughs.

But there's some filler there, to be sure. In one scene, the comedian wanders through the audience encouraging us to give to the United Lucy Fund but misses an opportunity here to really satirize the nonprofit world or the art of asking for donations. Likewise, Bauer's ultimate act of desperation, a long and windy monologue about a shady character she stalked in her youth, ends the show on an anti-climactic note. But overall Bauer proves that she's loose-limbed and enjoyable to watch, if not—at least not yet—actually desperate.

Desperate plays Saturdays at 6pm at Gorilla Tango through October 3. Tickets are \$10.