

Sailing with Salma

5.27.08: Black Book
Sailing With Salma
By Nick Haramis

“Well, well, well. You must be Mr. Julian Schnabel.” It’s a confident statement, made by a taxi driver in Boston. And it belies the fact that I’m, say, 100 pounds and 30 years short of the pajama man. “I’m Mr. Julian Schnabel,” bellows an assertive larynx from behind me. And he’s right. Schnabel is with one of his daughters and rock legend Lou Reed, and it’s slightly odd to see this slice of New York royalty clamoring for a cab in Massachusetts. In a way, though, it sets the tone for the weekend I went sailing with Salma Hayek.

Arriving at the Institute of Contemporary Art by Boston’s Fan Pier, I’m ushered into a makeshift showroom displaying the latest Puma Sailing Lifestyle Collection. There are hoodies, dock shoes, and light jackets, but I’m immediately drawn in by the hardcore sailing apparel – a collection of gear in Puma red, made specifically for sailors doing battle with wind, spray, and cold.

After a perfunctory look around the room, I beeline for the champagne, all the while waiting for Hayek to happen upon the scene. Some time passes before she does, and the sun sets in the interim. When she finally appears on the boardwalk, she’s welcomed by a group of surly seamen and press with cameras. She descends the walkway en route to Puma’s racing boat, *il mostro*, which will be used to race in this year’s Volvo Ocean Race.

There are few things working against its success, however. First, Hayek, the ship’s “godmother,” takes three goes at christening the boat before needing help breaking the bottle of champagne over its ballast or whatever. Second, last time we checked, sporting a black cat (courtesy of Puma) on the underside of the teetering device that separates you from nasty, uncharted waters isn’t the luckiest of things. Third, we watched a video of the boys in action, and found ourselves getting seasick while sitting in an auditorium. “Positively yar” Hamptons boating, this is not.

Says Antonio Bertone, Chief Marketing Officer for Puma, “We were really trying to be intimidating with this design – a fearful racing machine. That’s why it’s called *il mostro*-the monster.

A day later, still without sea-legs (and, thankfully, on land) we were meant to go sailing. The wind, however, was apparently too strong for our feeble editorial bodies. As such, we sat in a gazebo talking to sailors over tea. Mickey Boardman, Paper’s hilarious staple, wondered aloud, “So, when do you guys stop? Is it always in the clubby towns?” And, “What’s the showering situation like?” The whole thing devolved into talk of sex and nightlife. For the record, one sailor explained, “After two or three days, you’re thinking about sex. After about seven days, you just want food. And after that, you just want to win.