



5 Qs With Jayden Pfeifer

Local Comic On Hosting Late-Night's *Red Hot Riot*

ALEX J MACPHERSON

Regina's latest regular comedy show, *Red Hot Riot*, takes the form of a late-night talk show: an unpredictable — and unpredictably hilarious — series of sketches, interviews and amusing anecdotes hosted by local comic Jayden Pfeifer. After dabbling in improvisation, stand-up and sketch comedy, Pfeifer decided to blend them together into a single show; *Verb* caught up with the comedian to talk about the challenge of improv comedy, trying to be as mean as Letterman and what to do when livestock appears onstage.

Alex J MacPherson: First off, tell me a bit about what *Red Hot Riot* is. **Jayden Pfeifer:** We started in March, 2011. The show takes a couple of forms, blends a couple of styles. It's like a late night talk show that I host — an opening monologue, musical act, and most shows have a special guest interview segment in addition to a bunch of comedy acts.

AJM: How did you get started in comedy?

JP: I've been doing comedy in Regina for 13 years as an improv with General Fools. I got into doing comedy and everything and learning about it in high school. I worked as an actor but comedy was always the thing for me. I've also been doing stand-up. What I wanted to do was everything, to have access to everything and all of the content in one show.

AJM: Why is comedy so hard? **JP:** You can always tell somebody you're doing something dramatic, and they'll believe you. But if you can't make them laugh, you can't tell them that it was funny. It's hard to convince them that what you did was funny if they didn't laugh. Audiences are so quick to dismiss something that isn't funny. And everybody thinks they're funny, but everybody has funnier

friends than you.

AJM: So that's the appeal of the talk show format?

JP: It's just that I really love hosting, I love the job of being the ringmaster. It depends on the night but I'm not as mean as Letterman. Maybe that will come with age. But I love the idea of being in the middle of that. Selfishly, I also wanted another venue for me to perform in — I started thinking of a variety show I could be out front of as the host.

AJM: Is hosting a show really that difficult?

JP: Sometimes my job is to keep the show rolling if things go crazy, to find a bridge to the next thing. That's the thing I love — being on my toes, having my back against the wall. Even when a goat appears on stage. That's when you throw together a nativity scene.

Feedback? Text it to 306-881-8372.

"[W]hen a goat appears on stage ... [t]hat's when you throw together a nativity scene."

-Jayden Pfeifer

Globe Theatre To Stage Hilarious Mystery Play, *The 39 Steps*

ALEX J MACPHERSON

REGINA, SK — Making a farce of Alfred Hitchcock may seem a bit irreverent, but that doesn't mean it can't be hilarious.

The 39 Steps is an adaptation for the stage of the 1915 novel by John Buchan and subsequent film treatment by Hitchcock.

Written by Patrick Barlow, the play turns convention on its head, transforming cinematic tradition into theatrical hilarity. Once a serious tale of secrecy and espionage, *The 39 Steps* becomes a running joke as four cast members take on a multitude of roles — including some inanimate objects.

"It's having the fun of telling the mystery part of the story, but at the same time it's a spoof," explains

"All of us involved in this production, we just laugh and laugh and laugh."

-Marti Maraden

director Marti Maraden.

"It's tongue-in-cheek taken very seriously."

Maraden is an experienced actor and director, and has performed everything from classical Shakespeare to contemporary shows at Summer Stock, as well as being former artistic director of the National Arts Centre English Theatre.

"It's a farce," she says of the Tony Award-winning play.

"Let's put it this way: it has an entirely different feel, but the story still has mystery. I laughed my head off; it's really about sheer enjoyment."

Packed with jokes and allusions to Hitchcock's most famous works, *The 39 Steps* follows Richard Hannay as he investigates a clandestine organization known only as the 39 Steps.

And while managing a cast of four may seem easy, Maraden



explains that staging this production is anything but.

Performing in the round poses a number of significant difficulties, she says.

"The challenge is to make sure everyone in the audience is fairly treated and understands what's going on," Maraden states. "There are things we can't do that proscenium productions have done, but I think the virtues far outweigh the disadvantages. It's far more intimate and fun and creative."

Because three of the actors adopt dozens of different roles, orchestrating costume changes and ensuring each character is recognized as a distinct individual can be difficult.

But, she adds, "I get the most jealous watching the actors when they're having fun. Good actors know the difference between

hamming it up for the audience and what you don't want [them to do], playing themselves."

"You've got to keep the world you've [created] honest and engaged but within that there's so much flexibility," Maraden continues. "In doing a dramatic role you feel the audience holding their breath or sense that they're deeply involved, but with comedy you get

an instant response. And it's different every night, the audience finds something new."

Challenges aside, Maraden is eager to see the play performed — and hoping the rush won't ever subside.

"All of us involved in this production," she says, "we just laugh and laugh and laugh. It's a lot of fun."

Feedback? Text it to 306-881-8372.

Event Info

Hard Rock & Heavy Metal

Where: MacKenzie Art Gallery
When: Jan 25 - Feb 12
Cost: Free!

Red Hot Riot

Where: Artesian on 13
When: Jan 22
Cost: \$10 in advance at Paper Umbrella or tickets at the door

The 39 Steps

Where: Globe Theatre
When: Jan 25 - Feb 12
Cost: \$25+ (Box office: 525-6400)
Want some coverage for your upcoming event? Email layouts@verbnews.com ASAP!



\$25 ACTIVATION CREDIT

when you bring in this coupon

New activations only, some conditions apply. Offer Expires March 31, 2012.



Southland Mall
Cornwall Centre Ph: 306-653-4000

