

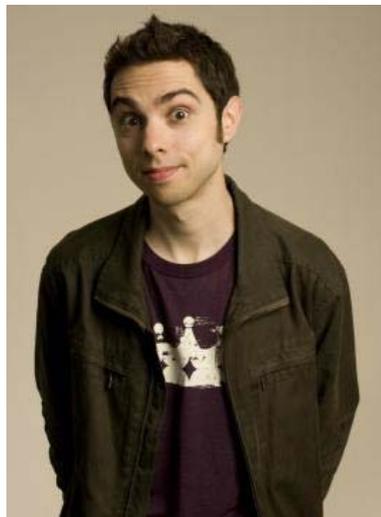
# Take in a show Just for Laughs

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## British edition of comedy showcase comes to the Capitol Theatre tomorrow night

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In Canada and throughout the world, the Just For Laughs name has earned itself a reputation for bringing the very best in comedy to audiences.



JUST FOR LAUGHS

British comic Matt Kirshen is among the featured performers in the Just for Laughs show.

And for the first time in the organization's history, Just For Laughs is hosting a Cross-Canada tour that features some of Britain's best comedians. Set to perform at the Moncton stop of the tour are Abandoman, Last Comic Standing finalist Matt Kirshen, Hal Cruttenden, Perrier Award-nominated Terry Alderton and Sean Meo, a former full-time snooker player turned comedian.

The Just For Laughs British Edition show to be held tomorrow night at Moncton's Capitol Theatre will be hosted by Steve Patterson, current host of The Debaters. Patterson has performed in three televised Just For Laughs galas and has performed throughout Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia.

Not only did Steve Patterson have the pleasure recently hosting the Canadian Comedy Awards in Toronto, he was also an award winner, taking home the prestigious Best Stand-Up Male Award for the first time.

"I have been fortunate enough to have been nominated for Canadian Comedy Awards in 2007 and 2008 so it appears as though the third time was indeed the charm," Steve laughs. "I don't care what anyone says, it feels much better to win than just be nominated."

Ironically, Steve had never set out for a career in comedy. Long before he was a celebrated comedian, Steve was enrolled in law school at Toronto's York University (on scholarship, no less) and then went on to earn his business degree from Western University before deciding to travel the comedy path.

"Comedy doesn't exactly have the highest success rate of occupations in the world," he deadpans. "After finishing at Western, I ended up working for an ad agency where I was able to leverage my humour for some of our work with clients."

But after one of the agency's clients failed to see Steve's humour in a suggested ad pitch, he decided that he didn't want to be restricted anymore and made the leap into comedy full-time. He acknowledges that his boss at the agency played a rather big part in encouraging him to follow his heart.

"My boss was fantastic," Steve says. "I was doing weekly sets at clubs and my boss would come out and see the shows. He was always very supportive and really encouraged me to pursue comedy. He definitely deserves a lot of the credit in giving me the gentle nudge into comedy."

While The Debaters started as a radio program in 2006, it has since evolved to become a television series as well. Steve credits his hosting job with The Debaters for helping to keep his skills sharp.

"I had to completely up my game when I started hosting The Debaters," he says. "Interacting with other stand-up comedians is not something that we typically have the chance to do; it really forces you to be on your game all of the time. And ultimately, working with those other comedians on the show has helped me get where I am with my own audience these days."

Matt Kirshen got his start in comedy when he was 21 years old, writing for and then becoming editor of a student newspaper that he says was semi-satirical in nature. After seeing a friend perform at a stand-up comedy gig, Matt decided that he would be a good candidate for the job of comedian as well.

And frankly, Kirshen hasn't done too badly for himself.

From a tour stop in Australia and fresh off a string of shows in faraway places including Singapore and Jakarta, Matt says that honing his comedy craft in the early days was made much easier because of the fact he lived in England.

"You can drive the length of England in six hours and pass 10 major cities while you do it," Matt says. "I had so many places to gig when I first started. In my first year alone, I performed 300 shows which translated to seven or eight gigs a week. But it was really the only way I could possibly get better. You

can write all you want in your bedroom and you can become really great in your bedroom but you can't be a great stand-up comedian without an audience."

Asked how he enjoyed his experience on NBC's Last Comic Standing in 2007, Matt says the experience was a great one overall but also says that he couldn't truly appreciate the full spectrum of what was going on around him until after the show was done.

"People ask me all the time how it felt to do the show and while you're in the thick of it, you really have no idea because you're so focused upon the task at hand. You can't really sit back and enjoy the experience because you're jumping from one thing to the next. It is not until the show was finished that you could have perspective on the experience of 8 million people seeing me dressed up as a court jester," he says.

"At the end of the day though, people all over the world know who I am because of the show so I am extremely glad I did it."

While the experience of visiting Moncton will be a new one for Matt, Steve is quick to profess his love for the Hub City.

"I've been to Moncton several times now and I have found the audiences to be so appreciative," he says. "The Debaters taped a show at last year's Hub Cap Comedy Festival, a festival which is always a great time. Every time I go to Moncton, I have old friends come out and I meet a bunch of new ones. I'm really looking forward to returning."

â- Ken Kelley is a Moncton-based writer, music fanatic and author of the entertainment blog [www.musicnerd.ca](http://www.musicnerd.ca)

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â- WHAT: Just For Laughs Comedy Tour, featuring Steve Patterson, Matt Kirshen, Hal Cruttenden, Terry Alderton and Abandoman featuring Rob Broderick

â- WHEN: Wednesday, 7 p.m.

â- WHERE: Capitol Theatre, 811 Main Street, Moncton

â- TICKETS: \$46 plus service charges. Advance tickets available from the Capitol Theatre Box Office and Frank's Music, 245 Carson Drive, Moncton.

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