

Sabes Jewish Community Center
Jay and Rose Phillips Building
Barry Family Campus
4330 S. Cedar Lake Rd.
Minneapolis, MN 55416



First Minneapolis Jewish Humor Festival brings local and national talent to the Sabes JCC for 11 days of funny

Minneapolis—Theatre Or at the Sabes Jewish Community Center in Minneapolis is thrilled to announce the first ever Minneapolis Jewish Humor Festival—from February 25–March 7, 2010—a 11-day Fringe-like festival of one-act plays, one-person shows, music performance, stand-up comedy, improv, visual art, workshops, story-telling, film, and special events will celebrate the Jewish contribution to the world of humor.

This amazing and eclectic group of presenters and performers features both local and national talent, including Joel Chasnoff, Rain Pryor, Amy Salloway, Ari Hoptman, Dylan Fresco, Flash Rosenberg, Alix Sobler, playwright Monica Raymond, and so much more! In addition to performances, the festival will host workshops on topics ranging from visual humor to laughter yoga. With the exception of Rain Pryor on March 6, all festival events will take place at the Sabes Jewish Community Center, 4330 S Cedar Lake Road in St. Louis Park, MN, 55416, and are open to the public with handicap accessibility. Tickets range from \$5–\$15, many events are free.

For a complete line-up, list of our sponsors and more, visit www.sabesjcc.org/arts_humor.htm.

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SCHEDULE OF ARTISTS:

Joel Chasnoff - The Jewish Comedian Who's Redefining Jewish Comedy

Thursday, February 25 at 7:30pm – OPENING NIGHT

In his one-man stand-up comedy act, favorite comedian Joel Chasnoff explores the quirks, foibles, and absurdities of Jewish life in America – all based on real Judaism and Jewish experiences, including Joel's nine years in Jewish Day School, his service in the Israel Defense Forces, and your family's Shabbat dinner. Unlike many Jewish comics, stereotypes play no role in Joel's act. Instead, he finds humor in the intricacies and details of Judaism and Jewish life. Joel will also introduce audiences to his humorous memoir, *The 188th Crybaby Brigade*, which will be published in January 2010 by Simon and Shuster. Rating: PG-13

The Mighty Mavens: Storytellers

Friday, February 26 at 12:30pm

Monday, March 1 at 7pm

Acclaimed storytellers, Carla Vogel and Joan Calof, and humorist, Faith Oremland, present an amusing and honest look at rites of passage, family relationships, finding love, and growing old in Jewish culture. Through original and traditional stories, monologues and songs, this trio explores the role that irony, satire, and wit have played in preserving Jewish life and culture. Rating: PG

Jason Neufeld is Impotent

Saturday, February 27 at 7pm

Sunday, February 28 at 9pm

Written and performed by award-winning New York native-turned-Winnipegger, Alix Sobler, *Jason Neufeld is Impotent* is a hilarious revenge comedy, originally written to get back at Jason Neufeld for breaking her heart. "Sobler is a delightfully brassy stage presence as she takes the audience through the stages of her grief, her Canadian culture shock and her need to be told she's beautiful. Sobler is wonderful at creating characters – her channeling of her Jewish mother and her auditions for bit parts on *Law & Order* are spot-on" (Winnipeg Free Press). In her multi-media one-woman show, Sobler addresses important issues facing the Jewish community: intermarriage and assimilation, "but don't think for a second that all that sappy, serious stuff makes this any less of a comedy! It's just a really smart, well-presented and worthwhile one" (The Winnipeg Sun). Rating: R

So Kiss Me Already, Herschel Gertz!

A one-woman comedy by Minneapolis actor/writer Amy Salloway

Saturday, February 27 at 8:30pm

Monday, March 1 at 8:30pm

1986. Amy has a plan for her 15th summer: Transform from total dorkwad to Material Girl. Build this city on rock and roll. And pine for Ross Buckman until he sees her True Colors shining through. Instead, her parents ship her off to "freakishly Jewish" Camp L'Chaim, where "even the mosquitoes wear yarmulkes!" How do you survive when you're the pork chop in an all-Kosher world? "Energetic and hilarious...you'll relate regardless of summer camp experience or religious persuasion" (CBC Manitoba). "A MUST SEE! Amy Salloway belongs to a rare and crafty class of clowns: she writes comedy as deftly and as perceptively as she performs it" (Cincinnati CityBeat). Rating: PG-13.

Laughter Yoga Workshop with Molly Dworsky

Sunday, February 28 at 11am in the Tychman Shapiro Gallery

Wake up Purim morning ready to stretch and laugh out loud. Featured on Oprah, Laughter Yoga is a health and wellness practice that combines gentle stretching, yogic breathing, and group laughter exercises to achieve total body wellness. Anyone can practice Laughter Yoga! You don't have to be happy, you don't have to have a sense of humor, and you don't have to have anything to laugh at to enjoy the experience of laughter. To be successful in Laughter Yoga, all you need is openness. Come laugh for the health of it!

Molly Dworsky has been leading Laughter Yoga sessions since January 2007, and received her advanced teacher certification in Switzerland in 2008, where she studied under Madan Kataria, the founder of Laughter Yoga. Molly loves this practice, and continues to be uplifted by the positivity created when people come together to play.

Film: Next Time Dear God, Please Choose Someone Else: The Legend of Jewish Humor

Sunday, February 28 at 3pm

Rex Bloomstein's wonderful but lesser known documentary takes a look at the development of traditional Jewish humor in America. Enjoy 90 minutes with fantastic stand-up comedians like Milton Berle, Billy Crystal, Jackie Mason, Lenny Bruce, the Marx Brothers, and more! And don't forget the Catskills... Rating: R

Hijab and Toast

Two Short Plays by Monica Raymond, directed by Cherie Anderson

Sunday, February 28 at 5pm – with post-show discussion

Tuesday, March 2 at 8:30pm

Sunday, March 7 at 2pm

In the mini-play, *Hijab*, a secular, ex-hippie mother suddenly realizes how “Jewish” she is when her teenage daughter decides to wear a hijab to high school. Very funny and poignant, *Hijab* was featured in the “Occupied Territories: Palestinian- and Jewish-American Playwrights on the Middle East” festival at Boston Playwrights’ Theatre. *Toast* follows a Jewish physics-prodigy-turned-restaurant-critic as he takes his mid-Western sister and her fiancé to Lower Manhattan in search of the luncheonette that once served perfect toast. Family expectations and wild dreams collide in this humorous and very human one-act play, which has had several staged readings and one performance at Davanaughn Theater in Boston. Rating: PG-13 (mild language).

Monica Raymond is a prize-winning poet and playwright. She is committed to writing plays which use humor, surprise, and deep feeling to make us question our preconceptions and move towards greater freedom, courage, and peace. She was a 2008-2009 Jerome Fellow at The Playwrights’ Center in Minneapolis, and hosted a “Making Theatre about Palestine/Israel Panel” at the 2005 Conference of the Association for Theater in Higher Education. Raymond holds degrees from the University of Chicago (BA Humanities), Columbia University (MA English) and Smith College (MFA Theatre/Playwriting) and has taught writing and literature at Harvard, CUNY, and the Boston Museum School.

Rimon Artist Salon Series: The Art of Shtick: Ari Hoptman Presents

Sunday, February 28 at 7pm

Don’t miss this opportunity to laugh out loud with versatile humorist, actor, and playwright Ari Hoptman as he delivers his wry brand of shtick. The Artist Salon offers its audience a chance to question the artist himself, learn how he develops his material, and even see a sampling of his Minneapolis Jewish Humor Festival piece, *Dial M for Comedy*, which performs March 2nd at 7pm. Presented in collaboration with Rimon: The Minnesota Jewish Arts Council. Rimon is an initiative of the Minneapolis Jewish Federation. The Artist Salon Series is funded in part by the Tychman-Shapiro Gallery of the Sabes JCC and individual donors.

The Anton Kissbougel Technique – Introductory Workshop

Monday, March 1 at 7pm in the Tychman Shapiro Gallery

Ever tried Yoga? Meditation? Some touchy-feely theater class? Well, come and experience the Anton Kissbougel Technique. In this 100% interactive theatrical event, Minneapolis theater artist Dylan Fresco leads a “workshop” in the newest of new-age health disciplines (which has a unique focus on the digestive process.) It’s a loving and comical ode to all those classes that ask you to connect with the floor and release. Please Note: all audience members will be expected to participate as students in the class. So, wear comfortable clothes and be prepared to laugh, learn, and “digest more of life today”!

Dial "M" for Comedy

One-man comedy with Ari Hoptman

Tuesday, March 2 at 7pm

A mashed collection of sketches, vignettes, songs, and awful poetry for your entertainment. Rating: PG-13

Ari Hoptman is a comedian, actor, and playwright who has performed with numerous theater groups in the Twin Cities, including Fifty Foot Penguin, the Illusion Theater, the Great American History Theater, and Park Square. He is a familiar face at Leslie Ball’s Balls Cabaret at the Southern Theater and has done extensive summer stock work. His first feature film, *A Serious Man*, came out this October. When not doing theater stuff, he can be found teaching German at the University of Minnesota, or to anyone who will listen.

Stevie Ray's Improv Company: Old Farts Improv Workshop

Wednesday, March 3 from 12:30-2pm in the Tychman Shapiro Gallery

Are you tired of comedy being only for the young? Those 55+ have the best sense of humor because they bring real life experiences to the stage. If you want to keep the old noggin sharp, have fun with your friends, and let your talents run free, give this low-key improvisation/acting workshop a shot! Let's show the kids what's really funny!

Satire in Song with Mark Bloom

Wednesday, March 3 at 6pm

Thursday, March 4 at 1pm

The Purim holiday and general song parodies aside, the musical side of Jewish humor has featured the likes of Mel Brooks, Micky Katz, Tom Lehr and Alan Sherman – all pushing the envelope while tickling our funny bones. Join Mark and his alter ego, Dr. Kula Portnoy, in a delightful romp through the land of loopy lyrics maniacal melody. Rating: PG

Photo-Humor Workshop with Flash Rosenberg

Wednesday, March 3 from 6-7pm in the Tychman Shapiro Gallery

Calling anyone who has ever taken a picture, had their picture taken, or has seen a picture – this workshop is for you! Every day we all see more funny things than we can say. This Photo-Humor workshop from New York's acclaimed cartoonist/photographer/performer, Flash Rosenberg, will help you think like a photographer and speak like a comedian. This is a workshop about ideas, with tangible exercises for how to 'think' and 'see' humorously. Participants are encouraged to bring a notepad and a camera, but these things are not required. Limited enrollment.

Laughing at the Speed of Light

Written, imaged and performed by Flash Rosenberg

Wednesday, March 3 at 7:30pm

Photographer/cartoonist Flash Rosenberg talks and walks through hundreds of original, projected images to challenge what we see with what we know. This is optical humor. Not jokes. And not just funny pictures, but funny ways of picturing what we think we know to be true in the world. Blending the logic of a scientist, the irreverence of a humorist, with the pith a sage, she shows how a slice of pizza can define infinity. She demonstrates how to make love archival, and how to laugh at the speed of light. She translates what's visible into verbal snapshots. This smart show is for anyone who has ever dreaded, taken, or been in a picture. Rating: PG-13

Flash Rosenberg is an "Attention Span for Hire" who works as a photographer, cartoonist, writer and performer. She has performed internationally and was a featured presenter in the 2009 International Jewish Festival of Ideas in New York. She uses photos, drawings, writings and performances to deliver pith, humor, interpretations and memories. Her public art mischief has aired daily on public radio, has been performed onstage internationally, and published in The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The New York Daily News, the Forward, The Funny Times and Lilith Magazine. She is a freelance photographer and currently, Artist-in-Residence for LIVE from the New York Public Library.

Star Wars... A Purim Spiel?

Thursday, March 4 at 4:30pm (possibly subject to change)

Friday, March 5 at 10am and 1:30pm – limited seating

Yes, that's right. The story of Purim told through universally recognized Star Wars characters, and performed by 7th and 8th grade drama students from the Amos & Celia Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School. A hilarious, entertaining, and unique experience for all ages! Rating: G

Artist Lecture with Andrey Feldshteyn

Thursday, March 4 at 6:15pm in the Tychman Shapiro Gallery

Award-winning cartoonist and illustrator, Andrey Feldshteyn, will have his cartoon exhibit – WALK, TALK, CRY, LOVE, LIVE – on display in the hallway and lobby exhibition areas throughout the Minneapolis Jewish Humor Festival. Originally from Leningrad, Russia, Andrey Feldshteyn was part of the early Leningrad Cartoon Club, which was a center for underground humoristic art. Feldshteyn currently lives in Minnesota. Lecture presented in Russian with English translation

Humor Across Cultures – Presented in Collaboration with Stevie Ray's Improv Company

Thursday, March 4 at 7:30pm

“What’s so funny?” Ever wonder what makes people laugh across the border? Join us for an evening of exploration of Russian, American, and “Jewish” humor, and take a peek at what makes people laugh. You might just find out how similar we all are! Enjoy comedy performance hosted by Stevie Ray, music performance from Russian folk group, Belozer’e, as well as readings and lively discussion. You can even bring your favorite joke to share!

THE PRYOR EXPERIENCE RAIN PRYOR

Performance benefitting the Robert & Janet Sabes Center for Jewish Arts & Humanities

Saturday, March 6 at 8pm at the Metropolitan

Rain Pryor, daughter of the late great comedian Richard Pryor, will perform excerpts from The Pryor Experience and share her love of comedy and music. Growing up Jewish and African-American gives Rain a unique perspective on race, religion, and spirituality, as she brings rare experiences alive through comedy and song.

Tickets may be purchased online at www.sabesjcc.org or by calling 952.381.3514.

The History of Jewish Humor with Rabbi Sim Glaser

Sunday, March 7 at 4pm

Why are Jews so funny? What’s humorous about being Jewish? Or, wait a moment... How is there enough “Jewish Humor” in the world to make an entire 10-day festival? Join Rabbi Sim Glaser for 90 minutes of learning and conversation. With loads of hilarious examples, Rabbi Glaser will explore the width, depth, mishegas and sheerchutzpah of Jewish humor. This history runs from Biblical origins through the Talmudic and Midrashic eras to the 20th century; humor born of oppression, exile, wisdom, foolishness and blessings. No one is spared – shlemiels, shlimazels, scholars, rabbis, cantors, the rich, the poor, the overly pious, the greedy, and the evil. Jewish humor has kept our people afloat through some tough times. Come hear why and how. At the very least you’ll come away with a few good jokes!

Closing Night Comedy Cabaret

Sunday, March 7 at 7pm

The Minneapolis Jewish Humor Festival will close with a casual and fun Comedy Cabaret featuring local Jewish improv stars, stand-up comics, and musicians such as Josh Awend, Molly Dworsky, Larry Greenstein, Annie Zimbel, David Harris, Dylan Fresco, Pablo and more! Presented in the style of an Open Mic Night, if you are interested in performing for this Comedy Cabaret, additional slots will be available for sign-up at the event! Hosted by Rabbi Sim Glaser of Temple Israel, this community-wide closing event is not to be missed! Rated: R