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Theatre Orangeville to host stand-up comedy night for first time

Written By **Constance Scrafield**

Greg Morton is the headliner at Theatre Orangeville's first-ever Comedy Show. Run, don't walk to buy your tickets is the advice ? this laugh-out-loud show is in the theatre for one night only on Saturday, Sept. 7 at 7:30 p.m.

We have Drew Gwilliams, head of the Orangeville Tourism Centre, to thank for dreaming up and making this comedy night possible here at Theatre Orangeville, as the comedy event coordinator.

During a Google Meet get-together with Drew Gwilliams, Theatre Orangeville's marketing strategist/content creator Amanda Doerrie and comedian Ray Anderson, Mr. Gwilliams admitted he is new to Theatre Orangeville, saying, ?If a comedy show like this came up, I would definitely go to it. If we bring in a show like this, people who have never been to the theatre might come to see it and then, want to keep coming to the theatre.?

Working in tourism, he commented, ?Last year's Panto [Cinderella - If the Shoe Fits...] was a beautiful thing.?

As head of tourism, Mr. Gwilliams wanted to help and he took an interest in the history of Theatre Orangeville. He worked with Much Music for 25 years.

Entertainment is in Drew Gwilliams' blood ? that's his story.

?I admire the genre of comedy,? he said simply. ?The guys and girls on the stage are really brave.?

Bringing in the stars of this show is Ray Anderson, a comic and magician himself and a part of the upcoming comedy show. He gave some insight into the perils of the comic crowd work.

?It's the most dangerous thing to do,? he said. ?It's the only genre where people think they can do anything ? the hecklers. I get to the place where I'm trying to make people have a good time.?

Greg Morton is the headliner of the show following his tremendous successes at America's Got Talent. His act there was a fabulous collection of voice imitations, beginning with several very identifiable, very funny clips from Star Wars.

?My company had Greg after his America's Got Talent,? Mr. Anderson commented. ?We work well together.?

Amanda Doerrie remarked on his high quality of talent as she has recently seen in a video of his. ?He keeps people captivated? was her praise.

While his voices are great, Mr. Anderson wanted us to know that these jokes are only a part of what Greg Morton is bringing with him to the Theatre Orangeville's Comedy Show.

Fiona O'Brien came to Canada from Dublin, Ireland in 2012, since when she ?has provided the world with three future taxpayers.? She has been featured in comedy festivals across Canada and is a much-loved participant on CBC's Because News.

Said Ray Anderson of her, ?Halifax [Comedy Festival] gave her an encore! She's a very bright, funny person.?

Jeff Elliott is the emcee of this fine event. He has been a favourite character comic, entertaining audiences at comedy festivals and other venues across Canada. Said to be ?funny in an unconventional way? [comment review following a private function], Jeff is full of surprises.

Anjelica Scannura is a comic and a dancer, a regular in the comedy festivals circuit. She has opened for a number of well-known comics and has appeared on Just for Laughs Toronto. She has performed at Massey Hall in Toronto.

A frequent performer on stages in Las Vegas, Greg Morton ?is called Mr. Standing Ovation by people in the business,? Mr. Anderson informed us. ?No one wants to come on after him.?

Although he is a Canadian, Greg Morton can be better paid in the US, which is why he has spent more time there.

He reflected on comedy in Canada during our conversation.

?We need to promote Canadian Stand-Up,? said Drew Gwilliams. ?Stand- up puts a mirror to society and that's important.?

Over a show, the comedy heats up and for this comedy show to come, as Ray Anderson told us, he heats up the stage for when Greg Morton comes on. The flow of the evening keeps the audience excited and laughing, amazed and astonished by Mr. Anderson's clever magic. Ray Anderson grew up in the theatre and so many people know him.

Comedians create these moments; they suspend these moments to help people forget their troubles for that short time. Every artist wants to be loved, he assured us, and give back.

This first-time new show, Mr. Gwilliams noted, puts Theatre Orangeville on the cutting edge, to see that it can bring such extraordinary talent, and such a great line-up.

Yet, Mr. Anderson wanted to add once more about Greg Morton's share of the show, that for America's Got Talent, Greg Morton just did voices. If people think he will just be doing voices, they will want to know ? no ? he is doing much more.

?He has a whole work to come,? we were told.

As for Amanda Doerrie, she is so excited to see this terrific line of talented comics wow the patrons. New patrons are going to see this is an amazing theatre.

Theatre Orangeville's first Comedy Show is one night only and that is Saturday, Sept. 7.

For tickets, go to www.theatreorangeville.ca or call the Box Office at 519-942-3423.