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Second City

Center for Performing Arts

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The Center for Performing Arts presents

The Second City

National Touring Company

Governors State University
University Park, Illinois
Taking its name from the title of A.J. Liebling’s derisive profile of Chicago in The New Yorker, The Second City opened on December 16, 1959. Success was almost instantaneous. Before the startled actors knew it, they were inundated with praise from the press, including Time Magazine, which called it “a temple of satire.”

The concept that is The Second City has always been translated by six or seven actors who enliven an empty stage with topical comedy sketches. Using few props and costumes, punctuating scenes with original music, the ensemble creates a slice-of-life environment, lampooning our modern lives, political, social, and cultural. The Second City develops all of its material in a performance situation, improvising on ideas suggested by the audience during improvisational sets held nightly after the regular show. Then, by refining, culling, and amplifying the ideas during rehearsals, the finished pieces become the next revue.

For over 35 years, The Second City National Touring Company has been delighting audiences all over the world with The Best of Second City.

The Second City’s National Touring company has always been something of a comedic “boot camp” for Second City’ resident stages in Chicago and Toronto. Performers such as Bill Murray, Betty Thomas, James Belushi, Chris Farley, Mike Myers, and Julia Louis-Dreyfus have all, at one time or another, completed a “tour of duty” with The Second City’s National Touring Company.

Today, The Second City operates four touring companies: three based in Chicago and an additional Canadian troupe based in Toronto. Providing a unique theatrical experience for audiences of all ages and backgrounds, The Second City’s National Touring Company has also become a first-rate training ground for some of North America’s best and brightest comedic performers.
KATIE CAUSSIN is thrilled to be a member of The Second City National Touring Company. She is native of Springfield, Virginia and received her degree in Theatre from Radford University. Her regional credits include Theatre IV, Richmond, and Busch Gardens, Williamsburg. Upon moving to Chicago in 1992 she quickly became ensconced in the world of improvisation by studying with The Second City and then performing with Chicago Comedy Sportz. She is a member of the WNEP Theatre Ensemble with whom she has performed in such original shows as Metaluna and The Amazing Science of the Mind Revue, The Wicked and the Sexed, as well as The Armageddon Radio Hour at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in Scotland. She has also had the pleasure of directing an adaptation for the stage of The Lost Weekend for WNEP. Other Chicago credits include Twenty Nothing at the Folio Theatre, and Balm in Gilead with Impact Theatre at the Neo-Futurarium.

DEBRA DOWNING is currently seeing the world with The Second City National Touring Company. A native Texan, Debra studied improvisation with Comedy Sportz Austin and The Velveeta Room’s in-house troupe, The Cheese Pistols. She moved to Chicago in order to attend The Second City’s Conservatory Program. While in Chicago, Debra has performed with the long form improvisation troupe Big Snaxx and is a founding member of The Caterpillars, a singing/comedy duo. Her hobbies include neurosurgery and tractor pulls.

MARTIN GARCIA comes to us from Austin, Tx. He is a graduate of University of Texas at Austin with a degree in History. In Austin he worked with Comedy Sportz, Tapestry Dance Company and did local theatre. He moved to Chicago and studied at the Second City Conservatory, ImprovOlympic and the Annoyance Theatre. He has been in The Second City National Touring Co. since November of 1995, and is proud to be a part of the BCW. A footnote: Martin worked for the IRS for 9 years, so be nice to him or else. Hola Mom!
KIDS!  KIDS!  KIDS!

PINOCCHIO
Saturday, Apr. 25
11:00 AM

WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE
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Sunday, May 3, 3:00 P.M.
Monday, May 4, 11:00 A.M.
(abbreviated show for schools)

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PETER GWINN began his acting career at age 8, when due to a shortage of theatre-minded girls in his hometown of Faribault, MN, he became the first boy in the nation to play the title role in Annie. He later trained at The Actors’ Centre in New York City with Roddy McDowell, who got him a supporting role in Fright Night Part II. He currently performs at ImprovOlympic in Chicago, as well as with The Second City National Touring Company. Peter aspires to one day join the cast of Mad TV.

KELLY HARAN recently had the privilege of playing Karen in David Mamet’s Speed The Plow. Kelly was part of the improv group the Luddies under the fine direction of Armando Diaz. Other recent shows include: DarkNite: Twisted Love, Joined at the Head, and Reckless. Kelly is a native Chicagoan and proud of her education from The Second City Training Center, the Annoyance Theatre and the Jesuits.

JOE JAMES is an Emmy award winning writer who studied all aspects of theater at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio. He’s toured professionally as a comedian and is also an ensemble member of What Now? Entertainment. Other shows he’s been in include: Klown, Prick Us and We Burst, Soiree Dada, The Armageddon Radio Hour, and Metaluna and the Amazing Science of the Mind Revue, which he also wrote. Metaluna will have its west coast debut premiere in Los Angeles this Spring. Joe’s latest play, A Hard Day’s Journey Into Night, opens May 15 in Donny’s Skybox Theatre here in Piper’s Alley. Joe is also a senior writer at Jellyvision, the makers of the CD-ROM game “You Don’t Know Jack” (which kicks butt). If you do know “Jack,” you might recognize his voice as being the cantankerous “Raul.”
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