

Packed house enjoy Convoy of great laughs

THEATRE REVIEW

Comedy Convoy
Regent on Broadway
Saturday 21 May
Reviewed by Rob Mildon

The Comedy Convoy rolled into town on Saturday night, and judging by the reaction of the packed house at the Regent on Broadway, still giggling as they made their way home, it was a stop well worth making.

MC Jarred Christmas immediately kicked the show into high gear, warming up the crowd effortlessly and ton-of-bricksing a vocal over-imbiber with a few well-chosen put-downs.

This chap provided a continuous stream of material for Christmas throughout the evening, most notably a gag about the mating call of the drunken Palmerstonian.

Rhys Mathewson was the first of the crew to take the stage, offering tales of awkwardness well complemented by his generous frame (at one point he got shirtless) and a slightly nerdy demeanour.

Although his story-based humour fell a bit flat at times, his physical comedy was absolutely spot on: his take on Jump Rope for Heart instantly recognisable by all

children of the late '80s.

Carey Marx's experience showed in everything he did: his casual stroll, his grip on the mike, and knowing when to change the topic. He lost a lot of people at one point, pushing the sexist joke envelope too far, but gained them back quickly with eye-watering material about the real purpose of crucifix necklaces and who's allowed to tell certain jokes.

The most consistent laughs of the night were from Felicity Ward. She was off with a whoosh and a roar from the get-go and never let up, even during a mystifying visit by a numerologist who perhaps found himself in the wrong theatre.

An allergy to alcohol and a bit of business with an iPhone app had the audience in hysterics from start to finish.

The Boy With Tape On His Face is really in a class of his own.

His completely non-verbal act is more than simple physical comedy; it's a finely crafted routine that combines the subversion of our own expectations with music, props and the gentle embarrassment of audience volunteers.

Full marks to that one gentleman in the front row, called upon repeatedly, for being such a good sport.

If the best of the Comedy Festival can provide a quality night out like this, it's definitely worth keeping an eye out for them next time they're in town.



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“I set a personal goal to be able to work one day a week from anywhere in the world and I've done it.”

GDN260511Serena

PASSION PUSHER: Serena Star-Leonard is retired at age 31 and has written a book to show how others can do the same.

Live the dream — retire young

By CHRISTEL PRICE

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Retirement. Are visions of wrinkled elderly dressed in white playing lawn bowls coming to mind? It seems retirement is a luxury only the super old or the uber-rich can afford. Meet Serena Star-Leonard — an entrepreneur and author who has come up with a way to retire in 12 months, no matter how many candles appear on your birthday cake.

Serena is the author of *How to Retire in 12 Months*. The book was born from her desire to develop a low-maintenance income she was passionate about and retire in 12 months.

To do so Serena built an online business called Grassroots Internet Strategy, a website to help small businesses make their websites more profitable. Blogging her 12-month experience online, she was approached by a publishing company, who asked her to turn her journey into a book.

How to Retire in 12 Months helps readers to discover what it is they love to do and shows them clearly how to profit from their passion to fund their retirement.

At 31-years-old Serena is now retired. “This whole experience has been life-changing for me. I set a personal goal to be able to work one day a week from anywhere in the world and I've done it.”

The author says the internet is the natural choice for a business. Serena says all that is needed to start a business is 10 hours a week and \$50. “Even if you don't have internet skills there is so much information on how to start.”

Serena grew up in Palmerston North

and at the age of 16 dropped out of school. Later she moved to Australia, ending up in Sydney where she lives now. For nine years Serena worked in IT but her true interest was charitable work.

The entrepreneur was keen to set up a non-profit charity but realised it wouldn't pay the bills. While continuing to work at her IT job Serena organised a charity concert at Bondi to promote racial harmony.

“I thought we'd get around 1,500 people at the concert but 8,000 people came. The next day I quit my job because I saw that if you do what you're passionate about great things happen!”

Serena says it wasn't easy. Leaving an income of over \$100,000 was a big adjustment.

“People thought I was crazy and it was hard, but I was happy. I've always been willing to work hard for what I wanted.”

The 31-year-old believes the world would be a better place if people did what they loved. Life is simpler for me now. It's about family and experiences. I have a different focus.”

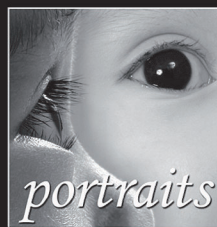
To prove she has achieved her goal, Serena and her husband are going travelling for three years. The author plans to search the globe in search of her dream house.

“All I need is internet access!”

Serena encourages everyone to give their dreams a go. “Nobody knows everything, we're all just learning. Make a move to live your passions. You might fail but you might succeed.”

How to Retire in 12 Months is available at Paperplus or online at www.retireyoung.com.au

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