

Summerside Journal- Pioneer

Edwards Brings Comedy to Forefront at Festival

Derek Edwards will close out the comedy portion of the East Coast Explosion 2005 Music and Comedy Festival at the King's Playhouse with a concert Tuesday, Aug. 16.

Edwards, who summers with his family every year in Seven Mile Bay, PEI, has become a favourite with Island audiences, notes a release.

"Derek was one of the first calls I made when I started putting together my season," says Ward MacDonald, producer of the festival. "It was a no-brainer - he's here on the Island, audiences just love him, and he's a really nice, humble guy to work with."

In 1995, Edwards was the winner of the Vail National Comedy Invitational in Vail, Colorado.

The release adds in 1996, he stole the show at the Molson Canadian Comedy Festival in Toronto, and, in 1997, knocked 'em dead at the Just For Laughs Comedy Festival in Montreal. His TV credits include A&E's Comedy on the Road, CBC's Comics!, the Comedy Network's Laugh-a-Thon, and Comedy Now and he has made guest appearances on The Red Green Show. He is also a favourite on CBC Radio's Madly Off In All Directions - a show that first introduced him to PEI audiences.

"He's about my favourite comic in the world," says Lorne Elliot, host of Madly Off. "He is such a master of the craft. I have yet to see an audience that Derek Edwards can't put into convulsions."

Nils Ling, who scheduled Edwards for a single show that turned into three sell-outs last summer in Stanley Bridge, agrees. "When Ward called me to talk about his season, the first name I gave him was Derek's," says Ling.

"He absolutely destroys audiences - people are limp with laughter. I had people coming to me afterwards thanking me for the best laugh they'd had in years."

The Aug. 16 show happens one year to the day since Edwards opened his series in Stanley Bridge. Ling expects the King's county audience to feel the same way about the lanky comic as those audiences did a year ago.

"When comics talk about who's the funniest stand-up in Canada, he's always at or near the top of the list," adds Elliot. "His humour is smart, it's clean, it's beautifully crafted, and you can't argue with the response he gets everywhere. Plus, he smells nice, which is a real bonus."

Excerpt from Summerside Journal-Pioneer