



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

USC Improv Festival Attracts Nation's Students and Top Comedians

4th Annual Fracas! Improv Festival hosts performances by 15 college troupes, workshops and panels with top names from LA comedy scene

LOS ANGELES, CA March 22, 2007 — **The Fracas! Improv Festival** announced the official programming today for the 4th annual festival, which returns to the **University of Southern California**, from **April 12 – April 14, 2007**. Celebrity improvisers will interact with young comedians centered around a shared appreciation for the art of improvisational theatre. Fracas! is the only festival in the nation where all performers must be college students. This year, Fracas! continues its tradition of honoring the art of improvisation with discussion panels featuring appearances by some of the biggest names in comedy. The three day festival is hosted by USC's **Second Nature Improv**, and sponsored by *The Onion*. All performances and panels are free and open to the public. More information can be found at www.2nimprov.com/Fracas.

CELEBRITY WORKSHOPS AND PANELS

Professional workshops and discussion panels provide a venue for college improvisers to learn from their more experienced peers. This year's Fracas! will also host three discussion panels. Each panel will focus on a specific topic where professional comedians and actors from TV, stage, and film, will discuss their training in improvisational theatre.

A "Long and Short Form" panel will compare and contrast two dominant styles of improvisational theatre. Scheduled to speak at this panel will be **James Thomas Bailey** (artistic director, ComedySportz LA), **Eric Hunicutt** (training center director, ImprovOlympic), **Seth Morris** (artistic director, Upright Citizen's Brigade Theatre), and **Brian Palermo** (The Groundlings).

"Improv in the Entertainment Industry" will discuss the growing use of improv within film and television. Scheduled to appear: **Jordan Black** (Halfway Home, For Your Consideration), **Michael Bunin** (My Boys), **Andrew Friedman** (Studio 60, It's Always Sunny in Philadelphia), **Angela Kinsey** (NBC's *The Office*), **Melora Hardin** (NBC's *The Office*), .

An additional panel, "Improv and Sketch Comedy" will focus on the relationship between improvisational theatre and scripted sketch comedy. Scheduled to appear: **Frank Caeti** (MadTV, Second City), **Heather Anne Campbell** (Boom Chicago, The Groundlings), **Sean Conroy** (NBC's Late Night with Conan O'Brien), **Megan Kellie** (Karla, The Great Sketch Experiment), and **Keegan-Michael Key** (MadTV, Second City).

For more information on the dates and times of each panel, please visit www.2nimprov.com/Fracas/schedule

Ten workshops will be offered to all college students participating in the festival. Workshops cover a variety of subjects ranging from character and relationships, advanced long form techniques, theatre genres, all the way to special workshops focusing on shakespearean and musical improvisation. The instructors of the workshops are senior members of the nation's top comedy troupes, including professionals from **The Upright Citizen's Brigade**, **ImprovOlympic**, **The Groundlings** and **ComedySportz**.

ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

The Fracas! Improv Festival was conceived shortly after the creation of Second Nature when the USC troupe learned that while several improv festivals in the country would allow college troupes to participate, no event existed to focus purely on college improv. Second Nature set out to found the first ever purely collegiate improv festival - and Fracas! was born.

The first Fracas! occurred in 2004 and featured two nights of performances from 6 troupes. As word spread, the festival grew. The 2nd Annual Fracas! introduced professional workshops, where college improvisers from cities without a strong improv community could benefit from the resources of LA's improv scene. This year, the 4th Annual Fracas! will be introducing a third night of performances, sponsorship by *The Onion*, and discussion panels in which current television and film personalities will share their experiences with improvisational theatre.

The vision of the Fracas! Improv Festival is three-fold: to foster a network of college improv troupes, focusing on the communal exploration of the art of improvisation; to share the resources of Los Angeles' improv instruction via professional workshops; and to offer USC and the Los Angeles community some great entertainment from the nation's top college improv troupes.

ABOUT THE TROUPES PERFORMING

This year, a record 15 troupes will be attending Fracas! Each evening of the three day festival features performances by five troupes, and closes with an Improv Jam featuring members of all troupes.

Thursday April 12th will feature **Birdstrike Theatre**, from UC Davis; **BUICK**, from UCLA; **M.R.S. Degree**, an all female ensemble from USC; **Improvability**, from UCSB; and **Comedy Corner** from the University of Arizona.

Performing **Saturday April 13th** will be **Vidushak**, an all Indian troupe that performs in both Hindi and English; **Laser Squad Bravo!** from Loyola Marymount University; **The Charles Darwin Experience** from the University of Arizona; S.A.D. (Someone Always Dies) from UC Santa Cruz; and **Commedus Interruptus**, from USC.

The closing night of the festival, **Saturday April 15th**, will include performances from **jericho!**, a troupe from UC Berkeley; **Live Nude People**, from UC Irvine; **Barren Mind Improv**, from ASU; **Humor Force V**, from UC Santa Cruz; and finally, the closing performance will be by USC's **Second Nature**, who created and host the festival.

Bios of all troupes can be found at www.2nimprov.com/Fracas/schedule

ABOUT SECOND NATURE

Second Nature has been around USC for 4 1/2 years. Seven members strong, the troupe is committed to constantly challenging themselves to reach new levels of improv zen. Their goals are to perform as a team, to play at the top of their intelligence, and to have fun with each other and their audience. During the school year, Second Nature performs weekly at USC's Ground Zero Performance Cafe. In addition to their regular shows, the troupe is known throughout campus for special format shows which include "The Facebook Show" (a show based entirely on the facebook profiles of audience volunteers) and "Your Drunken Night: As Told By William Shakespeare" (an improvised Shakespearean play based on stories from the audience).

Second Nature is passionate about improv comedy. Though young, the troupe has performed throughout Los Angeles and the United States including at ImprovOlympic, The West Side Eclectic, The Dirty South Improv Festival, and at several Universities. Their location in Los Angeles, along with their reputation for being a driven, talented young troupe, has enabled Second Nature to work directly with some of the top improvisers in the country including professionals from The Upright Citizen's Brigade, The Groundlings, ImprovOlympic, MadTV, and members of the legendary improv troupes The Swarm, and The Reckoning.

ABOUT THE ONION

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If you'd like more information regarding the 4th Annual Fracas! Improv Festival, please contact Jacqueline Gabardy at 619.251.8528 or e-mail fracas@2nimprov.com

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Relevant websites:
www.2nimprov.com/Fracas
www.usc.edu
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