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December 2016 | Rhode Island Edition | [RINaturalAwakenings.com](http://RINaturalAwakenings.com)

# Songs and Stories from Heaven

## Acclaimed Medium Shares Near-Death Story Through Musical Theater

by Wendy Lewis

**R**oland Comtois returned from death with a message he would share for the rest of his life. Comtois, a spiritual medium, inspirational speaker and author, collapsed suddenly 25 years ago at one of his events while seated with a group of family and friends. As they scrambled to revive him, Comtois realized he was dying. "I felt myself separating," he says. "I saw the light and I felt the energy."

Next, he felt himself passing through a kind of doorway and on to experience "the vastness and enormity of heaven." There, he saw his deceased grandmother and friend. Less than two minutes later, Comtois regained consciousness with a profound awareness that life continues beyond death. Doctors never found a medical reason for his collapse.

Comtois, who had his first psychic experience as a boy, is best known today for live events where he delivers messages to the living from the deceased. In his newest project, *Heaven: the Experience*, Comtois takes a departure from his usual event format to tell the story of his near-death experience through songs and storytelling. It took Comtois and a creative team three years to perfect the



Roland Comtois

one-man musical production, which debuts January 8, 2017 at Woonsocket's Stadium Theatre. "I've been waiting 25 years for the perfect time, the technology and the right people to help me tell the story," he says.

A former gerontology nurse, Comtois views his musical theater debut not as a new endeavor but another step along a lifelong path. "I've

stood with dying patients, I've stood in front of audiences of 800 people, and now I'll stand on the stage alone, but there's a common thread through it all—the experience of love and of remembering love."

Though his story is deeply personal, Comtois says its appeal is universal, citing the common questions thousands of clients and event attendees have asked over the course of his career: "Is there more?" "Is there love everlasting?" "Is there something beyond Earth?" Comtois says yes, but that people must seek the answers themselves. "I know that my near-death experience didn't just happen to me and for me," he says. "My stage show gives people the opportunity to consider the serious topic

of death and dying from another perspective, in a way that is less threatening or overwhelming, and maybe gives them an opportunity to assess what they really believe about the afterlife."

Though Comtois encounters many skeptics, he doesn't engage them in arguments. "Everyone is entitled to believe the way they need to believe, but I'll tell you, even the skeptics sometimes ask if I have a message for them because they, too, are searching for something." Through *Heaven: the Experience*, Comtois hopes to offer support and teachings to audience members that help them live their best lives. "They'll be entertained; they'll hopefully be enlightened by the story and inspired by the experience."

Comtois' stage show is also the realization of a personal dream. A native Rhode Islander, Comtois took voice lessons as a young man but his teacher discouraged him, saying he would never sing onstage. Comtois now laughs at the irony that his stage debut will be in the same theater where he enjoyed many movies and plays in his youth. "Now I'm doing a one-man production, telling a story that is so near to my soul that I have to tell it," he says. "It is my hope that the production inspires others to pursue their dreams as well."

Most of all, Comtois wishes for others to realize what he has learned from 30 years of experience as a nurse, reiki master, metaphysical teacher and grief specialist. "Heaven isn't upstairs somewhere, far beyond my grasp; it isn't 'out there' somewhere," he says. "Heaven is in the eyes of my daughter, in the relationships I have with the people I love, and in my life experience. Heaven is in the journey, in the ups and downs of life." From his near-death experience, Comtois says he learned that life is as beautiful as heaven and it is up to each of us to find heaven in everyday life.

For tickets, visit [StadiumTheater.com](http://StadiumTheater.com). Learn more about Roland Comtois at [RolandComtois.net](http://RolandComtois.net). **See ad on page 3.**

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