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That Canadian Guy tours province

Sean Ridgeley

The comedy scene is certainly picking up in Newfoundland.

Since last year, the province has seen the founding of an annual comedy festival of its own, hosted a competition (Newfoundland's Best Comic), and is set to get its own Yuk Yuk's comedy club in May.

Now, That Canadian Guy (a.k.a. Glen Foster - "the plan is working," he says pseudo-manically when verifying both names will make it into the article) is doing a provincewide tour.

Foster's adopted moniker is a jab at comedy audiences who, in general, seem not to remember the names of comedians they see on TV. He may not be nationally renowned, but next year will mark a special occasion for him - 25 years without a day job.

Self-described as "intelligent, topical, political and occasionally politically incorrect" material, the perspective is distinctly Canadian, as well ("because I can't help that," he says).

Foster offers a mix of material.

"I'll be doing some of that (familiar) ma-

terial, some of the Comedy Network stuff and whatnot with a mix of new things, and some that couldn't be broadcast on TV," says Foster in a phone interview. "I always thought once you've heard the joke you've heard the joke. Apparently, I've been wrong on that, but hey, it saves me from having to come up with all new material," he laughs.

As he's doing a lot of political stuff, Foster acknowledges the comedians who came before him who had a somewhat similar approach - George Carlin, Bill Hicks, Richard Pryor, Lenny Bruce, etc.

"I guess we follow," he remarks

For the aspiring comedians who may come after, his advice is to craft material that "if someone else did it, it would not be as funny to you. Make it personality based, in other words, and ask, 'why is this punchline unique to me?'"

He also encourages freedom of speech in comedy.

"I basically get to do what I want. I mean, I'm not going to do material that's going to offend someone out the door, but it's all in how you do it. As long as it's in jest and it's just good fun, and

Glen Foster.

there's obviously no malice there or intent to hurt people, you should be able to say whatever you want."

When the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre contacted him about a tour he jumped at the chance. Having not been here for about 15 years, a tour of arts and culture centres instead of bars was a big appeal.

"The focus is on you (in theatre venues) as opposed to just being some guy there amongst the regulars").

Foster will tour with comedian Peter White and musical comedians The nefarious Black Roses starting Wednesday at the St. John's Arts and Culture Centre. Visit www.thatcanadianguy.com or www.artsandculturecentre.com for ticket information.