

Comedian Steve Mittleman



Stand Up Comedy At Its Best

EB: Hi Steve. So let's get to it. How long have you been doing stand-up?

SM: I started on December 16th, 40 years ago.

EB: You remember the very first day. Wow!

SM: I do. It meant a lot. I think I wanted to do stand-up right out of the womb.

EB: How did you get into this line of work?

SM: Line by line. Joke by joke. Stage time and more stage time. Back in the day there were the clubs in NY and I'd go on 10 – 15 times a week. You get pretty good after a few years. Back then that evolved into getting comedy club gigs. I went from not working to headlining after I won The Big Laff-Off on Showtime. It was a very exciting time. The goal back then was to do Carson. That took me a while. In the meantime I became a road warrior. I was also fortunate because as I was developing my stand-up and style I had done about 50 national commercials. That gave me the income to pick and choose where and when I wanted to go on the road. I was a real character and fell into all that TV and the exposure doesn't hurt.

EB: I see you do endless shows.

SM: Thousands. I still love it. I think comedy saved my life. Classic unaffectionate home and making my family laugh was a way of bonding with them. I was the youngest – many comics are the youngest. Lotta therapy. I seem to be much more at peace and have a lot more perspective of late. Maybe I'm maturing? Is that possible?

EB: Aside from the commercials you look so familiar. Where else have we seen you?

SM: I've been on over a hundred TV shows (Carson, Leno, Letterman, HBO, Showtime, etc.) and on a few sitcoms (ie. Mad About You), in some movies – most notably Roxanne with Steve Martin. I'm one of the rare comics that appeared on The Tonight Show with both Carson and Leno. I miss Johnny. My idol happened to also be a fan of mine. I also loved Jack Benny and Rodney. Jackie Mason too. There's too many great comics to count.

EB: It turns out Dangerfield got a lot of respect. What do you focus on lately?

SM: In addition to clubs, I travel the country doing corporate gigs and private parties. I'll do an awards show, an employee appreciation, a 50th anniversary, a 90th birthday – you get the idea... I've become very malleable. I can customize material. Even host and will do auctions. Always learning new things over the years. I've become a seasoned pro with I believe a great track record.

EB: I browsed some of your testimonials.

SM: I'm grateful for happy customers. There's good word of mouth. All I need is good lighting, good sound and an audience.

EB: What's coming up?

SM: Jeff Foxworthy just asked me to be part of the rotation on his XM Comedy Channel. That's great exposure.

EB: You know him?

SM: Started out together. I recently bumped into Jeff in Maui. I was there for a gig and he was at the same resort on vacation with his family. He's a true gentleman.

EB: TV coming up?

SM: I'm working on a set for Fallon. That means I'll have appeared on The Tonight Show with 3 of the hosts. It's a kick and great exposure. I remember watching it when I was so young. I think I was 10.

EB: What's the strangest thing you've done in your career?

SM: I had a makeover on ABC's Extreme Makeover.

EB: Your home?

SM: My face! Now I have a chin!

EB: Really? I thought that was some of your signature material. Chin was weak huh?

SM: Weak? It used to take me 3 - 4 hours to change a pillowcase!

EB: So funny. But you look handsome now and you're still funny?

SM: Yes, it made me better. Forced me to grow. I didn't just want to do self-deprecating material anymore.

EB: Can we see your makeover anywhere?

SM: It's online, on my web site, www.SteveMittleman.com.

EB: Now I'm curious.

SM: You can see me on YouTube on Larry King too talking about it. I'm with all the doctors from the show. I have a good dozen funny tapes on YouTube.

EB: Well, I hope to see you live sometime soon.

SM: Sounds like a plan. In the interim check out all my videos on YouTube. There's quite a few!

MITTLEMAN MATH

COMEDIAN FOR 40 YEARS

AVERAGE ABOUT 300 SHOWS PER YEAR

THAT'S 12,000 SHOWS

AVERAGE 45 MINUTES PER SHOW

FIGURE 5 JOKES PER MINUTE

PER PERSON THAT'S 225 LAUGHS PER SHOW

AVERAGE 100 PEOPLE PER SHOW

THAT'S 22,500 LAUGHS PER SHOW

TIMES 12,000 SHOWS

THAT'S 270,000,000 LAUGHS

www.SteveMittleman.com



By Ed Bertha

When LA's Comedy Store hosted auditions for Steve Martin's film 'Roxanne', dozens of great comics, Steve Mittleman included, faced a professional's worst enemy, lack of time to prepare. The Store also had a limited number of spots for auditions. Steve stopped by anyway, someone cancelled, and he got the shot. After the auditions, the film's producers asked for only one comedian they'd seen that evening. Before he knew it, Mittleman found himself hauling a fire hose around Canada playing the quirky fireman in Steve Martin's hit film.

Let's spend a few minutes with Steve Mittleman.