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Jason Stuart talks about coming out, his new movies and a trip to Austin

Feature by Steven Lindsey

Jason Stuart just might be the hardest-working gay man in show business—at least among those who are actually out of the closet. From constant tours at colleges and popular comedy clubs to guest-starring roles in some of the hottest TV shows and movies—and a column on Gaywired.com, to boot—I was amazed that I was able to pin him down for an early morning chat.

Born and raised in the Bronx by his crazy, yet-lovable Jewish family, he has lots of experiences from which to mine some rare comedy gems. In his act he always puts a unique spin on conventional comedy topics, and breaks ground with stories most comedians wouldn't dare touch. But daring and unconventional go hand in hand when describing Stuart.

“I came out on Geraldo in 1993. It was a show called “Unconventional Comedians,”” Stuart explains as he relives some of the emotions of that day “It was actually very scary I didn't know what was really going to happen.”

Of course, his family and friends already knew he was gay but this was his chance to come out professionally and carve his own niche in the world of comedy. But even people he didn't know weren't that surprised.

““Oh, we knew you were gay” they would say. But that's not the point,” he stresses. “The truth shall set you free—and it did.”

Ever since then, his act has incorporated many decidedly non-traditional gay topics that could make Margie Middle America quite uneasy. But he does it with tactful humor that isn't exclusive to any one group. And he's never had any problems with crowds that often contain a straight majority.

“I think most people know that I'm gay when they come to see me. But the tour and the album are called Gay Comedy without a Dress, so I know they know.”

Wow. I've got to give this guy credit. He lasted an amazingly long (believe me) 10 minutes into the interview before he had a clean opportunity to plug his CD, which, by the way is for sale on his web site, Jasonstuart.com.

Much of the material from that album is included during his current visit to the Bad Dog Comedy Club in Austin. But expect plenty of political humor to work its way into the routine, in honor of Austin's former governor-in-residence.

"I'm not a big George (W.) Bush fan," he readily admits.

However, Ann Richards is another story

"I love Ann. She's great," he says with a laugh.

She's definitely more fun than Bush, but perhaps not as much fun as the Clintons.

"When Bill and Hillary left the White House, it was like they were leaving a hotel. They took everything that wasn't nailed down. "Oh, that painting looks like a towel!" he laughs before focusing on his fondness for Austin.

"This is my second time to the Bad Dog. It's a really gorgeous theater. Austin's a very artsy and creative town and the people are very nice," he says.

And just in case you don't catch him this weekend in his beloved Austin, he'll be back in one form or another in September with his new film, 10 Attitudes, which will be a part of the Austin Gay and Lesbian International Film Festival. The completely improvised film stars Stuart along with pals Alexandra Paul, Judy Tenuta, David Faustino, Sean Kanan and Jim J. Bullock.

"It's about an average thirtysomething gay guy trying to find love in Los Angeles and

how difficult it is. It's a romantic comedy," he explains.

It doesn't sound too groundbreaking from that description, but if it has the same flair and wit as Stuart's other work, expect an outrageously funny film.

As excited as he is about performing in Austin and bringing his film there in the fall, Stuart's big gig, however, is this summer in Provincetown.

“And I know a lot of Texans like to go to P-Town for the summer,” he says, hoping we’ll all come see him when we flock north.

“Provincetown is going to be really exciting. I’m going to be one of the only guys there . . . not wearing a dress, that is. PTown’s always filled with drag queens, lesbians and straight people in really bad thongs. I thought it would be cool to add a new element to what goes on in Provincetown.”

So now can you see how he stays so busy? Between the CD, his appearance in Austin this weekend, his summer in P-Town and his triumphant return to the Lone Star State via digital video, there’s no missing Stuart. And in this case, too much of a good thing isn’t bad at all.

And speaking of getting more of Stuart, he’s looking for a boyfriend, too.

“I just want a guy who has a car. And doesn’t live in it,” he specifies Picky, picky.

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