

## From the Editor

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I believe that kids who grow up today never having known the unedited antics of Bugs Bunny and Daffy Duck are seriously missing out on one of the funniest, most clever and imaginative cartoons ever created. Not only did Bugs surreptitiously introduce me to the classics of Opera and the Symphony, but he was my first exposure to Shakespeare and how entertaining a man in a dress could be. To this day, I can let a one liner rip from that wascally wabbit and have every one of my friends, family and work acquaintances rhyme off the follow-up as we all burst into uproarious laughter.

The same goes with Jim Henson's wonderful Muppets. Kermit the Frog and Miss Piggy were out and proud of their interspecies love, even if Piggy had a wandering eye for the sexy male guest stars. True to her French form, these flirtations would never last and always end with one of her super karate chops, capable of taking out anyone who got in the way of her passions and diva attitude.

I grew up giggling to Carol Burnet's outrageous antics and in recent years I was a huge fan of Patsy and Edina of *Ab Fab* fame—and really, were they not just a much more adult version of Bugs and Daffy? The first time I saw Margaret Cho live, she had me laughing so hard I could barely breathe.

So what makes us laugh? Why is it important for us to laugh and why does it always make us feel so good? Karen explores the science of the guffaw and makes some pretty interesting discoveries, learning that laughter is indeed the best medicine, while Shelley shares with us the blessing of a light heart.

As I worked on "The Very Funny Issue" I was reminded how we Canadians, with our easy-going, laid back politeness, have produced some of the

funniest comedians on the planet. Anyone who's watched *Kids in the Hall*, *This Hour has 22 Minutes*, or been to a Just for Laughs festival can attest to this. With icons like Scott Thompson, Rick Mercer and Elvira Kurt, our funny queers have been on the pioneering edge of the biting cleverness that is at the heart of our country's wit. And thanks to allies like Maggie Cassella and her We're Funny That Way festival, we've been continually discovering and nurturing fresh talent.

I think we excel at combining the in-your-face boldness of our neighbours to the south, with the dry satire of our British ancestors, into a rapid fire cleverness that keeps us ever ready to poke fun at ourselves. I believe it's an unspoken Canadian motto to never take ourselves too seriously. It's for that very reason that we have such a generally positive and open-minded world view, which in this day and age of radical global changes, makes a sense of humour all that more valuable.

With so many forms of humour out there, surely there is a brand out there to tickle everyone's funny bone, so grab our issue and a friend to share it with—because laughter is best enjoyed with company. And yes, I'll stop calling you Shirley.

**Jeffrey Harrison**

