

The Chris & Paul Show: Q&A with the Funny Sketch Comedy Duo - Nightlife

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ARTISTS & INTERVIEWS EVENTS NEWS

The Chris & Paul Show: Q&A with the Funny Sketch Comedy Duo

SUZANNE KOCH, JANUARY 13, 2020

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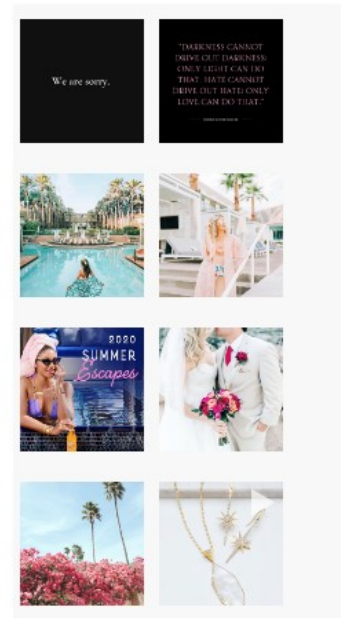


If you love laughing (and who doesn't?), then you've likely seen *Bring the Funny*, the NBC comedy show where *The Chris & Paul Show* were finalists. Comprised of Chris O'Neill and Paul Valenti, the duo has been perfecting their comedic act since 2000 when they formed *The Chris and Paul Show*. The two are known for their unexpected endings and hilarious sketch comedy and boast multiple awards.

Fans can catch the duo live on **Thursday, Jan. 16 at 7:30 p.m. at CB Live** at Desert Ridge. Tickets are \$25 but the funny pair is giving AZ Foothills readers a special deal. Use group code **FUNNY** when checking out to get tickets for just \$10. Click [here](#) for tickets.



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You incorporate a lot of silent acts and unexpected turns into your sketch comedy. How long did it take to perfect that?

I don't think you ever really perfect it. But it probably took us a good eight years until we found our voice. What we've learned along the way is that you need to cut the fat from a sketch. Every bit, every joke, every moment has to not only be important, but consistently tweaked and evaluated and progress the sketch. We've also learned the importance of a sketch's musicality. A lot of our inspiration comes from hearing a piece of music and allowing the sketch to take form. Which also explains why many of our sketches are silent. I think finding our voice has made those funny, dark, unexpected twists come to us more naturally and ultimately made us stronger performers.

It seems that you leave popular topics like politics etc. out of your sketches. Do you think that makes things more challenging for the two of you?

Not at all. Some people are experts of topical humor and they're great at it, but we've always been more drawn to day-to-day situational comedy. Relationships and human behavior are fascinating and very funny to us, as opposed to the humor of the day that has a shelf life. We want to create a timeless, relatable world through our sketches. We can appreciate all forms of comedy, but love that we're approachable to everyone.

You made it to the finale of NBC's *Bring the Funny*. Looking back, is there anything you would have done differently?

We're super proud of everything we accomplished on *Bring the Funny*. Of course it would've been fantastic to win, but we both can't think of a concrete example of something we would've changed. And ultimately we couldn't control the results, so it was all about enjoying the experience. And it really was the most exciting thing we've experienced in our careers - we enjoyed every second of it! We met amazing people who we still interact with on a daily basis - we're performing with the Valleyfolk at SF Sketchfest this week, we're flying to Utah to work on a project with JK Studios, we recently interviewed Randy Feltface for our *Chris and Paul Show: Podcast*. These are not only invaluable connections we've met through the show, but also lifelong friends we love and respect. And *BTF* has been the instrumental force behind our *Chris & Paul Show: Fun Tour* which is allowing us to see the whole country and meet the fans who supported us during the show. All and all we are very happy with our performances and experience on *Bring the Funny*.

What have been some of the highlights of your comedic career?

Besides *Bring the Funny*, there have been tons of highlights along the way! Going to Scotland and getting nominated for Best Newcomer at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival really sticks out. That entire experience of performing multiple shows a day for a month straight, roaming the streets and marketing our show among thousands of festival-goers, all while running on little to no sleep really challenged our endurance. It was a huge honor (and shock) to receive a Best Newcomer nomination! We went from two people in the crowd for our first show to sold out performances. People were like "who are these guys?!" It was awesome! We've loved the opportunity that our show has brought us to travel the world. We've met different comedians

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with different styles from all walks of life. It really enriches our show and our lives in general. But we're especially nostalgic of our shows in NYC. Hitting up small venues, supporting our closest comedian friends. We've been very lucky to have 20+ years of such great experiences.

Are there any comedians that you admire or look to for inspiration?

We are definitely inspired by Buster Keaton, Laurel and Hardy and Three Stooges. We gravitate towards the old style of comedy and its simplicity. It's no wonder we've been described as "modern-day vaudeville." We originally bonded over our love of Kids in the Hall. They were definitely instrumental in our decision to do sketch comedy. But honestly, we're big fans of every style of comedy. I think you need an appreciation of all the different avenues to find what your own comedy voice is.

What's something most people get wrong about the world of comedy?

The grind and the up and downs for sure. The work. I think it's easy to see all the fun in comedy, but people may not realize how exhausting it can be to get to the finished product. We're both working at our show full time. Not only on our sketches, but the production and marketing of the show. What's awesome about our community is that there are a lot of comedians out there who understand the work and ups and downs and are there to help each other out. They'll facilitate an introduction to a booker or listen to a set and help if you're stuck on a punchline. Some of our closest and longest friendships are with other working comedians.

What can fans expect from your Jan. 16 show?

FUN FUN FUN! We have a blast onstage! We're known for our signature twists in our sketches, so have fun trying to figure out what's going to happen! We like to think of our show as a living cartoon, so enjoy the escape from reality. And make sure to stick around afterwards for a selfie with our cookie costume!

For more information, visit chrisandpaulshow.com.

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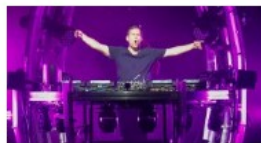
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