

Hot list

Oct. 16 – Oct. 29

- 1) **Eva Avila** for winning Canadian Idol. Country star Martina McBride has invited Avila to join her on the Canadian leg of her tour next summer.
- 2) **David Alpay** The Toronto-born actor and U of T student stars in *Man of the Year*, with Robin Williams, Christopher Walken and Laura Linney.
- 3) **Edison Chen** This multilingual Vancouver actor plays Eason in *The Grudge 2*, with Sarah Michelle Gellar.
- 4) **The Tragically Hip** Kingston's (and Canada's) most famous export comes out with *World Container* on Oct. 17, with the first single, *In View*.
- 5) **Holly McNarland** The wee-but-mighty Vancouver singer/songwriter is selling her new six-track acoustic EP *The Komrade Sessions* on iTunes.

Do it!

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

October

- 13 to 16 Toronto International Art Fair tiafair.com
- 18 to 22 Accented Cinema Film Festival (416) 573-1780
- 18 to 23 ImagineNative Film & Media Arts Festival (416) 585-2333
- 18 to 28 International Festival of Authors reading.org
- 20 to 23 15th Annual Orillia Jazz Festival (705) 326-4424
- 25 to 28 Stratford Book Festival (800) 461-8500
- 27 to 29 Port Hope Vintage Film Festival vintagefilmfestival.ca



"Yuk Yuk's is not a place for polite society," Breslin says.

— Laura Gallella photo

"We used to lose one-third of our audience every single night. And as they would walk out I'd throw things at them," says Yuk Yuk's founder Mark Breslin of the early years at his first comedy club.

Sit down for stand up

Jenny Yuen

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Mark Breslin is in the hot seat. But the founding owner of comedy club Yuk Yuk's is used to it.

Breslin, proprietor of the largest chain of comedy venues across North America, jokingly confesses to ICON his "dirty little secrets," including why he got into the funny biz in the first place.

"I wanted to meet girls, I wanted to cause trouble," he says, laughing. "I thought, 'What a great way to do that if you had your own place.'"

Breslin achieved his desire in his first location, the basement of a Toronto community centre, in 1976. Since then the Toronto Yuk Yuk's has moved around, finally landing on Richmond Street West.

The comedy scene in the '70s, the club owner says tactfully, was very stuffy. Breslin thought Second City was a bit too polished for his style of punk-rock, uncensored comedy, and to this day, he caters to the crowds who appreciate a little un-PC humour.

"We used to lose one-third of our audience every single night. And as they would walk

"We always say that we can't make people funny, but we can make people funnier."

— Mark Breslin

out I'd throw things at them," Breslin says. "Especially in Canada, you're not supposed to express your anger, and we do here. Yuk Yuk's is not a place for polite society." Famous Yuk Yuk's alumni

include Toronto's Harland Williams and Howie Mandel, and Newmarket's Jim Carrey, who allegedly wasn't very funny at all when he first performed at amateur night at the age of 14.

"Jim Carrey is probably our most famous alumni and most famous success," Breslin says. "We had to give him the hook to get him off (the stage). But the fact that he's even onstage in a club full of adults, shows how much gumption he had. After three years of licking his wounds, he came back. He was 17 and he was funny then."

When he's not managing his business, Breslin coordinates programming at the Humber College School of Comedy, where students get hands-on training from SCTV personality Joe Flaherty and New York comedian Larry Horowitz.

"We always say that we can't make people funny, but we can make people funnier," Breslin says.

After 30 years of comedy, Breslin says he just wants to keep going. "I don't think I would retire. I love the game too much."

FULL STORY: icononline.ca



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SECOND CITY SENDS 'EM ONWARD AND UPWARD

Second City proves second to none when it comes to turning out Canadian comics, actors and writers. Originating in Chicago in the 1950s, a Toronto base opened in the '70s, establishing itself as a launch pad for national talent onto the small screen, the big screen and behind the scenes.

Here are some of the more recognizable faces.

- 1) **Elvira Kurt** – actress, writer, producer
Fame: Host, writer and producer of CTV's *Popcultured*
- 2) **Dan Aykroyd** – actor, writer, producer
Fame: *The Blues Brothers*, *Ghost Busters*, *Grosse Pointe Blank*
- 3) **John Candy** – actor, writer
Fame: *Wagons East*, *Canadian Bacon*, *Cool Runnings*, *Spaceballs*, *Home Alone*
- 4) **Eugene Levy** – actor, writer, director
Fame: *American Pie*, *A Mighty Wind*, *Best In Show*
- 5) **Catherine O'Hara** – actress, writer
Fame: *Beetlejuice*, *Best In Show*, *Home Alone*, *Over The Hedge*, *Monster House*

— Nina Dragicevic



— Martinshortthemusical.com
Martin Short, actor and producer. Famous for *Mars Attacks*.

Debbie Travis on sexy list

From *The Ground Up*'s Debbie Travis has made *TV Guide*'s top-14 list of sexy Canadian stars on the small screen.

Her secret to sexiness? "Stay happy and enthusiastic for life; it's much cheaper than surgery," she tells the magazine.

And, on the topic of lifelong happiness and enthusiasm, the Toronto resident adds, "I would give up everything for a kiss from Clive Owen."

Home decorating mavens across the country hope the British leading man stays out of Travis's way.

— Nina Dragicevic



— www.debbietravis.com

Feral & furious

Move over Charlton Heston. Toronto is the new Planet of the Apes, with a king named George.

George Diabolitsis designs the infamous Furious George T-shirts made by his company, Brand-O.

A-list celebs such as Woody Harrelson, Russell Crowe, Scarlett Johanssen and Canadian Kim Cattrall all sport the angry-chimp print.

But it took more than monkeying around for Diabolitsis to arrive on the scene.

"My number-one angle was to get as many shirts to celebrities as I possibly could," he says. "I used what network connections I had and quickly did a flood of all the people I

could get them to.

"And I continue to look for ways to get the shirts to celebrities, because I think they're the best endorsement."

The Furious George line came from Diabolitsis's idea to counteract the cuteness of the Curious George monkey character so beloved by women.

So he made a bunch of angry-monkey T-shirts for men. Then women got into them, too.

"I think everyone is angry, deep down inside. It's better to wear an angry expression on your shirt than on your face," he says.

— Jenny Yuen

FULL STORY: icononline.ca



— Laura Gallella photo

Celebs such as A-listers Woody Harrelson, Russell Crowe, Scarlett Johanssen and Canadian Kim Cattrall all sport George Diabolitsis's angry-chimp T-shirts.