



The cast of 'Comedy Works' include, left to right (back row) Mark Mikula, Rico Bruce Wade, Mike Gettigan, Gintin Hicks, Matthias Schneider, Margaret Edwadowski, Denise Swindell, Lauren Bickers and Diana Dye.

## 'Comedy Works' is impromptu humor, audience participation

BY NICOLE STAFFORD  
STAFF WRITER

There's something poignant about off-the-cuff jokes.

They're funnier than their contrived counterparts. In a nutshell, that's the beauty of improvisation shows like Comedy Works, showing Friday-Saturday through Saturday, June 28 at the Century Theatre in Detroit.

There's something about creation in the moment," said Kirk Hanley, a performer in Comedy Works and current director of The Second City Detroit Touring Company.

"If you try to re-create the moment, it's never as funny," said Hanley of Farmington.

"When improv works, it's a beautiful thing."

The show, which is presented by a group of 22 local comedy performers called The Guild, is similar to the ABC television hit 'Whose Line Is It Anyway?'

Nominated for an Emmy, the TV show stars host Drew Carey and four actor-comedi-

### PURE IMPROVISATION

What: Comedy Works, on-stage improvisation and games with audience feedback.

When: 8:30 p.m. Friday-Saturday through June 28.

Where: Century Theatre, 333 Madison, Detroit. Tickets: General, \$12.50, students, \$6, groups of 15 or more, \$10, call (313) 963-9800 or, for more information, visit [www.gemtheatre.com](http://www.gemtheatre.com).

ans improvising their way through a half-hour of games. Whose Line Is It Anyway?

The television show has drawn attention to improvisational comedy, a relatively new art form that grew out of a 1950s acting

technique, said Hanley. "It used to be that you had to explain what improvisation was all about. Whose Line Is It Anyway? is a wonderful shorthand for us."

Comedy Works breaks down into two sets, one comprised of short games and the other, longer, more character-driven scenes, said Margaret Edwadowski, founder of The Guild and an alumnus of The Second City Detroit.

The show's impromptu nature depends on audience participation. The cast asks audience members for specific references, such as a place or word, to work into each game.

"It's a roller coaster that the audience rides with you," said Edwadowski, who grew up in Auburn Hills.

"Everybody played some version of cowboys and Indians when they were a kid. That's what we basically do. It's kind of like 'hey, come play make-believe with us.'"

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## Producer uses Detroit area in first film

BY PAUL R. PACE  
STAFF WRITER

Sam Khaleghi of West Bloomfield knows that the Detroit area can hold its own in the movie business.

After all, metro Detroit is second to Hollywood in the amount of filmstock used. But that's because of the large amount of industry funds and commercials produced here.

Khaleghi, 20, said he'd like to put Detroit and Michigan on the map by producing quality films.

And what better way to move that dream along than produce, star and direct his own screenplay.

The young director/producer has been capturing his work. Approaching Midnight in and around the metro area, including Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield and Birmingham.

Khaleghi is a graduate of West Bloomfield High School and a student at Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus in Farmington Hills.

Armed with a crew of assistants, tech people and actors, Khaleghi is telling his story about several young friends and a three-day weekend where they reunite after a first year apart at different colleges. They discover what's changed and what decisions need to be made for their futures.

The producer said he's learning something new each day as his screenplay is captured on 35mm digital video camera.

Thanks to advances in digi-



Film director Sam Khaleghi (left) and cinematographer Jason Waugh look for shots for Khaleghi's upcoming film.

tal technology, producing a quality film without the backing of a studio is within reach to budding filmmakers like Khaleghi.

Juggling so many people and with a limited budget proves to be a challenge, he admitted.

"I'm learning you can't invite too many people to the set without anything to do," he said.

Khaleghi said Approaching Midnight is a comedy/drama/satire being shot in documentary style. The main character, Wesley Kent, played by Khaleghi,

faces decisions, both large and small and love interests—all in three days.

Khaleghi said the line, "Midnight knows what noon

didn't see coming," captures the message he's trying to express.

Two of the film's stars are Jenna Kramer and Marina DeMeyer.

Kramer said she's only known Khaleghi for a while but she's impressed with his vision.

"He's a nice guy, down to earth and reliable," she said.

DeMeyer of Farmington Hills said for his first movie, "he's got a lot together. He's a real people person."

Khaleghi plans to premier his movie locally and at film festivals statewide.

And if all goes well from there, the Cannes Film Festival, he said.

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## OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC GUIDE TO THE MOVIES

### National Amusements Showcase Cinemas

**Stephen Soderbergh: 14**  
The Untouchables (PG)  
12:00, 2:00, 4:00, 6:00, 8:00, 10:00  
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**Steve McQueen: 13**  
The Long Walk Home (PG)  
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