

Talented actress, singer's never too busy

by KEELY KALESKI
STAFF WRITER

Jelly thrives on overload. "If I don't have too much to do, it's not enough stuff," said the Redford resident currently appearing in Second City-Detroit's 24th revue.

When she's not on stage, she's busy working on her Black Fairy Clothing line, hosting CinemaShorts, an online International film festival, or singing with her band, Jelly's Pierced Tattoo.

Jelly - where did that come from?

"It's my nickname and people just started calling me that," she said. "When I was a baby I was fat - a belly full of jelly." She is a founding member of

Mosaic Youth Theatre of Detroit, and has been performing since she was 5.

In 1997 she auditioned for Second City-Detroit, but didn't make the cut. Last summer she took a job at the box office, auditioned again, and was cast in Woodward to your Mutha, which opened in March.

"I found out the day before Christmas," she said. "They said, 'OK, you got the job, here's the script.' Everybody was very supportive. I didn't feel too overwhelmed. I knew if I messed up they'd fall in. I wasn't too nervous."

Jelly has done ballet, choreography, acting and singing, but improv surprised her. "It's amazing how hard it is," she said. "You just make stuff

up. I'm lucky to work with a cast that's so talented."

Doing improv helps her stage presence, she says.

"Being a woman you have to be appealing, you have to be in charge. Improv has helped me get more comfortable without being mean. You can tell drunk people to shut up and it's funny."

When she sings with her band, Jelly uses a little improv sometimes to keep things interesting.

"We played a blues riff and made up a song on the spot," she said. "It went pretty well. You get suggestions and plug them into the equation. I couldn't have done that before."

The process of writing and

performing improv intrigues her.

"OK, let's write a scene. Hey, I've got this idea. It kind of goes like this and ends like that. Then you try it out in front of an audience," said Jelly. "After you run it you see what works and doesn't, transcribe and write it, trim it, and make it tight. Pen and paper is the last part."

The show evolves.

"Sometimes it's not completely written," she said, explaining how revues at Second City-Detroit are put together. "You see if people get it and make it as good as it's gonna be."

Woodward to your Mutha is a high-energy show.

"People are peeping through windows, bouncing on pogo

sticks. It looks crazy but it's organized," she said.

"The major points we hit are to have respect for Detroit locally and globally. We're here, we want to be here, we like Detroit. You gotta show a little respect for the 'D'."

To find out where Jelly and her band are performing, visit www.jellysound.com

WOODWARD TO YOUR MUTHA
What: Second City-Detroit's 24th revue
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