

Beer Bottles, Hookers and an Electrical Socket

Comedian, Alysia Wood, to perform in the 7th Street Underground
By Nicole DeToye, Editor-in-Chief



What do you get when

you mix a large helping of A.D.D., hours of laughs and stories about brothels, bar fights and a strange location for an electrical socket?

You get comedian Alysia Wood. Wood, a new face to the Seattle comedy scene, liked comedy from a young age. Her

father introduced her to it, telling dirty jokes he made Alysia promise to keep from her mother. Unlike many comedians, though, Wood wasn't born funny.

"I wasn't always funny, but I was always a comedy mimic and fan," Wood said. "As a teen and latchkey kid, I had a lot of free, unsupervised time. When I wasn't getting into trouble, I was renting standup videos and memorizing them, pulling them apart and putting them back together the same way my brother dissected the household electronics."

Wood used those videos to prepare herself for her first open mic night.

"I over prepared," she said. "I read joke-writing books and wrote for six months. I rehearsed my set, timed it, revised it and mastered it. Then

I went to the club and signed up. I was ready to kill when the club owner

came up and said, 'You're next!'"

Wood wasn't next.

"I (waited) for six comics to go up," Wood explained. "Once the vast majority of the audience left, the owner finally said, 'This next comic - well, she's not a comic, she's never told jokes before and being a girl she probably won't be funny. Here she is...'"

"Next thing I knew I was alone with eight people, three of which were comics. The laughs I got were a mix of nervous, pity laughs."

From there, Wood's career quickly progressed.

"It's a lot like any other work force, except that it's almost 100 percent on-the-job training," Wood said. "There was a demand 'on the road' for funny women. So at open mics, I showed dedication and worked hard."

The dedication paid off. Soon, Wood got the attention of local bookers.

The Sting of Defeat

Even after all that practice, she still wasn't perfect.

"I'm still 'walking off' the sting of every show I ever did in Jersey," Wood said. "At one point, I bombed five shows a week for more than three weeks. After the third week, I gave up. I realized they just didn't like me. I was standing on stage when I realized that I hated their guts. I started screaming at them, telling them how much I hated them...why I hated them... and then they laughed for the first time ever. Oddly enough, after I stood up for myself, we saw eye to eye, which makes it okay to laugh."

Wood explained she isn't the only comedian to ever bomb on stage.

"I screw up every night. Every performer does," she said. "Some people are just better at hiding it than others. Any live performer

knows live shows are like snow flakes, in that you screw them all up uniquely. That's why live shows are exciting for me. I don't know what'll happen next."

Screwing up on stage is one of the biggest fears that keep people from trying comedy. Wood had advice for those who still haven't gotten up the nerve.

"It's sort of like sexual experimentation," she said. "You'll either hate it and never do it again or you'll like it and do it over and over and over... but you may as well hurry up and try it before you're too old and responsible to blame it on being young and drunk."

More seriously, Wood said to read the Gene Peret's books, "Zen and the Art of Standup Comedy."

She also added, "Don't get a comedy coach. It's cheaper and faster to bomb. Believe me - you'll need the \$300 registration fee later for bankruptcy fees. If you don't need it, then donate to a nonprofit organization - like paypal@alysiawood.com."

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Aside from bombing on stage in New Jersey, Wood had other interesting experiences on the road.

"(While I was performing) a woman kept heckling me," Wood said. "Another woman said to the heckler, 'Would you shut up? We are trying to hear what she's saying!' The heckler started calling her names, so she told the heckler to shut up."

"I'm watching all of this, bewildered when the heckler picked up a beer bottle and cracked it over the woman's head. At that

point, a full-blown riot broke out around the stage. I couldn't even get off stage. An 80-something year old woman finally broke it up by saying, 'Okay, okay that's enough!'"

The night before that, Wood decided to visit a brothel.

"Comics were always talking about a brothel at a road gig. I thought, I have got to see that next time I do that gig."

"So after the show I asked for directions and I found out that all women - unless they were 'working girls' - had been banned since the 1970s due to wives constantly shooting their husbands. I argued and argued that it couldn't be constitutional until they finally gave in hours later and sent me to the brothel - with escorts. The next day the booker called me (and said), 'Alysia, could you at least try to not get arrested?'"

Yet none of that compares to when Wood almost died.


"I stayed in a motel that had an open, active light socket in the shower."

To hear more interesting stories and see Wood's live performance, be sure to check out Wood's show:

"Show up ready to have a good time," Wood said.

"With A.D.D., even I don't know what to expect. It will be interesting to see how the night plays out."

For more information on Alysia Wood, visit www.alysiawood.com or www.myspace.com/alysiawood.



November 10
9 p.m.
7th St. Underground