



# hollywood screen tests

*Interview by* BEVERLY HAMES *Photographed by* ANDREW KUYKENDALL *Creative Director* LYNN FURGE

Over the course of a few days in Los Angeles, the DDD shot six women in the same studio. These women are part of the constantly evolving community of female comic performers who prove that you don't have to have balls to be funny (although you can still make ball jokes regardless) and that women in comedy are about more than the bimbo, the pretty girlfriend, or that loveable quirky sidekick who is the eternal voice of reason and never gets laid. In my conversations with them, I was struck by the commonality of one theme: hopefulness. That

hopefulness stems from a new bounty of human and humorous roles for these women often written by their peers (or themselves) as well as the box office proof that a gnarly, gross, physical, and goofy female-dominated comedy like *Bridesmaids* can be hugely successful. The women I spoke to are the ones who aren't afraid to "go there", who aren't worried about the potential humiliations that come with commitment to a joke or a scene, and aren't intimidated by the boys club that has long been comedy. Not all

of them consider themselves to be risk-takers, but on stage or screen they are. And yes, they are all attractive, slim, and most of them blonde. Even as the studios and the networks allow more and more risky brave roles for women, there is still the harsh reality that to be a woman in the industry, one must still conform to a certain standard of appearance. But not one of these women is a beautiful person that just happens to be funny, they are hilarious women who just happen to be easy on the eyes, but more importantly, great to talk to.

# LESLIE BIBB

*The phone interview with Leslie Bibb started with her downing six vitamins simultaneously, which seems like some sort of record to me. The next day she was due to begin costume fittings for the new comedy GCB (formerly Good Christian Belles, initially Good Christian Bitches), which premieres mid-season on ABC. Open, thoughtful, and hilarious, she made me laugh within the first minute on the phone. I caught up with her right before she was due to become a slave to her TV filming schedule, "It's not like a movie, where in two months I'll have my life back. By no means am I complaining...from now until December you won't see me." I'm glad we got in touch when we could.*

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as a funny person?*

**LB:** Yes.

Silence...then laughter on my end of the phone. I already made you laugh, so there you go. Inherently as a human being I'm fucking funny. Meryl Streep, I'm sure, is funny and cracks jokes. Acting is acting, a part is a part.

**DDD:** *Is comedy based on craft or instinct for you?*

**LB:** I think it's both. I think that you have to cue up your listening in comedy, and then you have to—especially when it comes to improv—then you have to ride out your instinct and trust. Comedy demands of you to be very present in your moment. Even more with comedy, it has to be cued up, especially when you're improvising. It's a little bit of both.

**DDD:** *If the bulk of your work wasn't in L.A., where would be you be?*

**LB:** The bulk of my work isn't in L.A. There was three years where I was in my home for three months of the year. I have a place in L.A., I have a place in New York. I go between both places. If I had a third place I would live...in Austin, Texas. I love it. [At Barton Springs] I dove off that diving board, the bottom of my bathing suit ended up around my ankles. I love that place, it's so wild. My head can't grasp it, the water is crisp and clean it feels like a baptism. I will have a little house there one day.

**DDD:** *As a female comic performer, do you find the roles available to you limited?*

**LB:** I sort of do everything.

**DDD:** *The entertainment press seems to have a love affair with some sort of "pretty/funny" index. Do you feel there is a relationship between your looks and your ability to be taken seriously as a performer?*

**LB:** No. I don't think so. I mean, I think sometimes...it's easy for them to say they think you're one thing. It's easy for someone to look at you and think "that's what you're going to be like." When you get to know me you're going to be surprised by what's underneath the surface.

**DDD:** *Have you ever been mistaken for or told you look like someone else? If so, who?*

**LB:** I get that I look a lot like Jessica Lange all the time.

**DDD:** *Was there a defining moment when you knew you wanted to be a performer?*

**LB:** Yeah. I think it was a moment. I did a TV commercial; I was modeling in New York. I got this commercial for Lee Jeans. The whole ad campaign was 'Lee Jeans will make you look like a model, just not think like one'. We shot for a week. I got to pretend. I didn't know what I was doing, I was just pretending. I started playing this part of a nightmare model. I remember leaving that commercial and thinking, WOW. Then the commercial came out and getting called into movies...I grew up in Virginia, you go to college—being an artist, being an actor, it wasn't a job. It wasn't in my realm of thinking. You go into politics or become a lawyer, that's what you do. After that commercial came out I realized, Yes, yes this is what I'm supposed to do. I went in to do this summer intensive at William Esper Studios. I remember my first class and realizing I've met my tribe, I've found where I fit in. I've found what's meant for me. That commercial led me into my first acting class and I found my home. Modeling, I realized, I had a short window. I was such a goofball; I wasn't chic or cool.

**DDD:** *What was your first big break?*

**LB:** My first big break was probably Popular [the 1999-2001 series on the WB network]. I moved back to L.A. and I got the job.



**BILL BLASS** dress.  
**LOREE RODKIN AND CHOPARD** bracelets.  
**SWAROVSKI** watch.  
**GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI** shoes.

**DDD:** Which platform do you most prefer: television, film, or the stage?

**LB:** I'm about to start a TV show. I think film and television; I love both of them. I like the stage as well. I think the thing that's hardest about TV is the schedule. You have to move so fast. The consistency of TV I love, but the speed is scary. I love the diversity and how you change up with movies. I like aspects. There's something nice about going in and playing a part for three months and walking away. You do a scene a night in a movie. In TV you do like five scenes in a day. I love the consistency. I love going to work every day and flexing that muscle. There's a great conditioning that comes with television.

**DDD:** Do you consider yourself a risk taker?

**LB:** Yes. I have a quote on my desk that says "Do something every day that scares you." Do it, shake it up.

**DDD:** What's the bravest move you've made in your career?

**LB:** I think when I left college. I left UVA and moved to New York. Hands down, because everybody said 'don't do it'. Everybody said 'you're making the biggest mistake of your life'. I just knew, I just knew I had to leave; it wasn't the place for me. When you're 18 and everyone is saying you're making the biggest mistake in your life... All I wanted to do for my life was to go to UVA and then when I got there I felt like I didn't belong. I remember walking into the dean's office and asking for my leave of absence, and I was so scared. I was going so outside of the box—everyone wanted me to stay there, and I realized maybe I was fulfilling their dreams.

I still can remember that flight, January 5th I landed in New York City knowing that life was going to change in some way.

**DDD:** Biggest high in your career thus far?

**LB:** Umm...the biggest high? Golly, you know, I always feel like every time I get a job it's always fucking exciting. So, I don't know if there's a biggest high. There isn't one. Every time the phone rings and the answer is yes it's like I fucking won the lottery. Every time.

**DDD:** Biggest low? Were there points where you doubted whether or not you were going to make it or you were doing the right thing?

**LB:** It goes back to making the brave decision. People in life will try to pull you down. There was a group of people around me who were trying to convince me to not do it.

**DDD:** As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?

**LB:** I thought I would go into politics. My mom ran political campaigns. I thought I would go to law school and go into politics.

**DDD:** Do you ever feel your personal life has been compromised by your career path?

**LB:** There was a person who didn't want me to be an actor. The career was my dreams, it was what I wanted to fulfill with my life.

**DDD:** What performers do you look to for inspiration?

**LB:** Jessica Lange, I do, I love her. In all honesty, I am constantly watching people. I watch movies; I watch everything around me. There are so many amazing actors out there. I just saw a woman, Jessica Hecht, play Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire* and it was revelatory for me. Comedians like Carol Burnett, Lucille Ball, so many amazing people. I'm pulling in information at all times, watching people, watching movies, watching TV shows, watching reality shows. You can pull from everything; I constantly pull from everything. Zach Galifianakis is so funny and amazing to watch and inspiring. The arts in general and life in general is my fucking playground. It allows you to daydream, and in imagination and in a daydream anything can happen, that's where great things can happen. When you're an artist you have to be fearless, especially in comedy you have to be amazingly fearless. You have to risk someone [saying] 'that's not funny'. Adam McKay said, "Always play through. It may not work at all, but there's something in it that will work. It's not always gold from start to finish." You have to jump off the cliff. It's so easy the older you are to get scared. And to get scared, that's death for me. You have to remain curious your entire life.

---

*"I grew up in Virginia, you go to college—being an artist, being an actor, it wasn't a job. It wasn't in my realm of thinking. You go into politics or become a lawyer, that's what you do."*

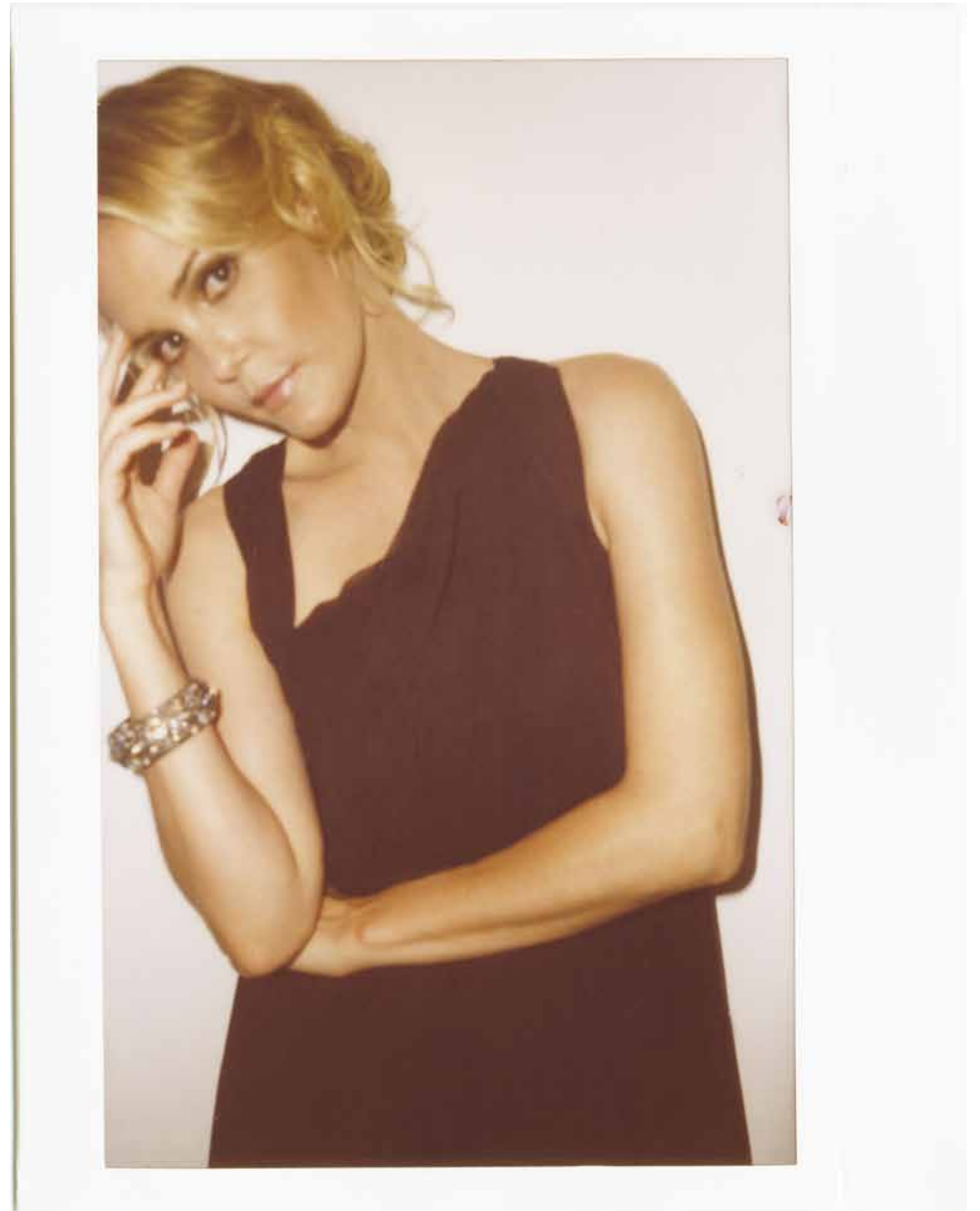
---



GIORGIO ARMANI coat; dress; pants.  
AMERICAN APPAREL stockings.  
MANOLO BLAHNIK shoes.



JULIEN MACDONALD *dress.*  
 AMERICAN APPAREL *stockings.*  
 GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI *shoes.*  
 DIOR *glasses.*



PAMELLA ROLAND *dress.*  
 LOREE RODKIN *all jewelry.*  
 ROGER VIVIER *shoes.*



CHAGOURY COUTURE dress.  
LOREE RODKIN rings.  
MANOLO BLAHNIK shoes.



GIORGIO ARMANI coat; dress; pants.  
AMERICAN APPAREL stockings.  
MANOLO BLAHNIK shoes.

Production Director: MAGGIE BENOIT.  
Stylist: CHRISTIAN CLASSEN for ARTISTS  
by TIMOTHY PRIANO.  
Hair: LONA VIGI at MANAGEMENT ARTISTS.  
Make Up: MATTHEW VANLEEUVEN  
at MANAGEMENT ARTISTS.  
Stylist Associates: MONIQUE VATINE & BRITTANNY TRAN.  
Stylist Assistants: DAGMARETTE YEN & NICOLE AYALA.  
Photography Assistant: GRAHAM DUNN.  
Thank you to Alexandra Schack & Shann Snow at SNOWStudio



VIVIENNE WESTWOOD blazer.  
CHRISTIAN COTA skirt.  
GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI shoes.  
AMERICAN APPAREL stockings.

# KATHRYN HAHN

*Kathryn Hahn is a familiar face that is about to get a lot more familiar when her comedy series with Hank Azaria, *Free Agents*, premieres on NBC this fall. She honed her acting skills at Yale, and from there immediately landed a role on *Crossing Jordan*—a show she points out is definitely not a comedy. A life-changing role in *Anchorman* led her to embrace the fearlessness of comedy and from there on she amassed a series of solid parts including roles in *Step Brothers*, *Our Idiot Brother*, and the upcoming *Wanderlust*. Married and a mother of two, she had just finished a riding lesson, a gift from her husband, before our chat.*

**DDD:** Do you think of yourself as an inherently funny person?

**KH:** No, I think of myself as an inherently clutzy person. I don't think of myself as inherently funny, I myself love to laugh, and I come from a family of very funny people...there was a lot of one-upmanship at the dinner table, so I always thought of myself as out-funnyed by my father and my mother. With my brothers it was mostly fart jokes, so that was easy.

**DDD:** Is comedy based on craft or instinct for you?

**KH:** It's definitely a blend of both. The parts that I've had the easiest time hooking into are those that have a well of need that they are trying to fill in some way, and that becomes funny. The bigger the emptiness, the bigger the loss. The bigger the hole, the crazier they appear on the surface. I found myself attracted to those on the margins of what we would call normalcy. Women left of center, on the verge. Formal training helps in terms of those questions, of what do I want, who am I?

If I try to do something, it's not funny; if I try to plan a fall, it never works, it always reads as trying too hard. It's always the happy accidents once I've done the other work—the accidents that happen when they are trying to reach their goal. There are some actors who are so beautifully effortless with their comedy. You start laughing before something happens, that kind of connection with a part is the dream. I'm not a sketch actor, I don't come from that background, that's something I'm really in awe of, it looks like so much freaking fun. They know exactly where the joke should be, they know how to get a button in there, and they know how to edit within the improv. I'm not good at the editing—I

could go on forever and ever.

**DDD:** If you weren't in L.A., where would be you be?

**KH:** New York City, without a question—I miss it desperately. I love it so much. I'm the type of person whose heart is beating a little faster than those around me. I love to walk, I love the access, I love the downtime, I love the constant stimulation. It's a different vibe for me, I've got great friends, my husband and kids have a great house in Silverlake, but I just love New York. I always get out of the cab into Manhattan and am like 'Ahh, I'm home'. L.A. is beautiful, topography-wise, but I miss the consolidation of New York.

**DDD:** As a female comic performer, do you find the roles available to you limited?

**KH:** [In my career] there's been a lot of "nos", and the "yesses" have been things I've been thrilled to do. I think that roles I try to play in these comedies are the crazy, on-the-periphery ones. I've been blessed that I've been trusted by the directors and the writers to go there in those parts. I think it's an exciting time for women and women comic actors. Everyone's been talking about *Bridesmaids*... I walked out with the biggest smile on my face. I was so excited about being a girl, so excited about the future, so fresh and filled with possibilities.

**DDD:** The entertainment press seems to have a love affair with some sort of "pretty/funny" index. Do you feel there is a relationship between your looks and your ability to be taken seriously as a performer?

**KH:** I've been able to not ever have to worry about it. In the films I've done, I have been able to not

worry about vanity at all, which I love because it gets in the way of comedy. I'll grow my hair out, my armpit hair out, my bush hair out. I really don't care. There's this weird image of a woman [having] to be maintained that is lame and plastic and boring and actually not sexy. Doing this NBC show, *Free Agents*, which starts in the fall, the network has certain needs for what a leading lady looks like. Being polished is this character's armor...she puts her Spanx on, that's her armor. It's a challenge to find the funny in that without it becoming bland. Finding what's human in someone with all this artifice, there's something that can be investigated within all. I don't want to diminish Melissa McCarthy's genius in *Bridesmaids*, but there's something awesome about her wearing that carpal tunnel bandage and those pants.

**DDD:** Have you ever been mistaken for or compared to someone else? If so, who?

**KH:** Always Ana Gasteyer. I get it so much.

**DDD:** Was there a defining moment when you knew you wanted to be a performer?

**KH:** Yes, when I was a kid. I grew up in Cleveland, Ohio. I was a Curtain Puller at the Cleveland Royale, which is what they called the acting program for the little kids. I did a play called *Sneakers* and it was the best experience. I got to hang out with 8th graders. I was in kindergarten. My mom would give me money when she would drop me off for lunch at the Burger King across the street. There was a vending machine in the rehearsal space and I would get a regular Pepsi and a Snickers every rehearsal. I can't believe that's what I ate, so much sugar. That was the best rehearsal. I love tech rehearsal—getting to know the theater without an audience. I'd get so slaphappy with the cast, go to Burger King and get a Snickers.

**DDD:** Why comedy? Why not something like period pieces or courtroom dramas?

**KH:** After Yale, I had a deal with NBC and I came to L.A. with a show called *Crossing Jordan* which lasted a very long time. I'd never done any TV before of note. It was kind of like a boot camp. It was a totally valuable experience, but it was not a comedy. But then I auditioned for Adam McKay for *Anchorman*, it was a very teeny part and it just kind of opened my world as far as what was possible. I'd never had so much fun in my life. There were no rules, there was a safety net, there was no failure. You could go as far as you could. I was in awe, I fell so in love with that way of working. Then I auditioned a bunch of times for



ABS dress.  
SWAROVSKI ring.  
GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI shoes.

Step Brothers and got that part, which cemented my confidence with being able to do it. It was fun to be able to jump off a cliff and know that you'd be caught. You didn't have to have any fear. That was the start of it.

**DDD:** *In comedies the roles for women seem to be the unreasonably hot girlfriend/wife, the bimbo, the crazy chick or the quirky sidekick. Do you ever worry about being typecast?*

**KH:** Again, I feel like I've been really lucky. It's been a little all over the map. I worked with Sam Mendes on Revolutionary Road. It was a departure from Step Brothers and I filmed them back-to-back. I feel like I love those parts, but I feel like I've been able to go all over the place. I just love playing dress-up. I'm still that girl. I did a recurring part on Lena Dunham's show, Girls. I was like, where do you spring from, this perfectly formed, so articulate, so young, so generous... She just blew my mind.

**DDD:** *What was your first big break?*

**KH:** Probably Anchorman, honestly. It was just a little break to me, I don't think that anything shifted seismically on the cultural plane, but it was a big

break for me. I cracked a door open. Getting in Yale was a big one, too.

**DDD:** *Which platform do you most prefer: television, film, or the stage?*

**KH:** The stage is where I fell in love with this. That's where I always feel the most myself. As terrifying as it is, that fear is so invigorating. That adrenaline, you can't replicate it. I love the communion between you and the audience. You're in charge of that story as a performer as soon as the curtain goes up. There's no editor; it's yours. Once people leave the theater at the end of the night there's no way to repeat it. I'm a mom now—I have two little kids, two and four. The last play I did was Boeing Boeing on Broadway. It's been a couple of years since I've been on stage, I've got a pit in my stomach I miss it so much. It's harder to do a play with kids than a movie.

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as a risk taker?*

**KH:** Yes. I do. I try to. I like to jump off.

**DDD:** *What's the bravest move you've made in your career?*

**KH:** The bravest move... I would say there were a couple of TV shows that I turned down that would have been lucrative, but would have destroyed my soul.

**DDD:** *Biggest high in your career thus far?*

**KH:** Biggest high was probably that summer of doing Revolutionary Road and Step Brothers back-to-back. There were a couple of performances of Boeing Boeing that were high.

**DDD:** *Have you experienced a low point where you were unsure if you were going to make it in the business?*

**KH:** For every high there are 15 lows—it's mostly rejection.

**DDD:** *As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*

**KH:** I'm one of those kids who totally wanted to be an actor. Before that I wanted to be a farm girl. When that became not as practical around 5 ½, I thought I was gonna be an actor.

**DDD:** *What performers do you look to for inspiration?*

**KH:** Maya Rudolph, Terri Garr, Laura Linney, Kate Blanchett, Kate Winslet, Gilda Radner.

**DDD:** *Do you ever feel your personal life has been compromised by your career path?*

**KH:** The trick is how to compartmentalize. How can I think fart jokes are hilarious but then not fart at the table? Those are the things you have to navigate as a mother. The greatest thing that has happened to me was having two kids. I'd give this up for them, but that I can provide for them [by] doing something I love is amazing.

*“[In my career] there's been a lot of “nos”, and the “yeses” have been things I've been thrilled to do. I think that roles I try to play in these comedies are the crazy, on-the-periphery ones. I've been blessed that I've been trusted by the directors and the writers to go there in those parts. I think it's an exciting time for women and women comic actors. Everyone's been talking about Bridesmaids... I walked out with the biggest smile on my face. I was so excited about being a girl, so excited about the future, so fresh and filled with possibilities.”*



MONIQUE LHUILLER dress.  
AMERICAN APPAREL stockings.  
SWAROVSKI ring.  
LA RARE shoes

Production Director: MAGGIE BENOIT.  
Stylist: CHRISTIAN CLASSEN for ARTISTS by TIMOTHY PRIANO.  
Hair: DANIEL HOWELL at TRACEY MATTINGLY.  
Make Up: VANESSA SCALI at TRACEY MATTINGLY.  
Stylist Associates: MONIQUE VATINE & BRITTANNY TRAN.  
Stylist Assistants: DAGMARETTE YEN & NICOLE AYALA.  
Photography Assistant: JEAN PIERRE CANER.  
Thank you to Lindsay Krug at ID PR & Shaun Snow from SNOWStudio

# GILLIAN JACOBS

*Raised in Pittsburgh, a town not exactly known for its theatrical flair, Gillian Jacobs left Pennsylvania for Julliard, where she was classically trained for the stage. Lucky for us, she found her way onto television in 2009 when we first saw her as Britta on NBC's Community. With the show now in its third season, Jacobs' position as a comedic fore has pretty much been cemented. The show has seen plenty of comic luminaries (including series regular Chevy Chase) make their way onto set, but it just may have created one of its own in Jacobs*

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as an inherently funny person?*

**GJ:** Hmm...hmm...not intentionally funny. Unintentionally. I find people laugh at me a lot and I'm not always sure why they are laughing, so I guess so.

**DDD:** *Is comedy based on craft or instinct for you?*

**GJ:** I think it's a combination of both, because sometimes it doesn't seem to come from a conscious place. Sometimes it comes from a very technical place like with scripted TV comedy. Sometimes training can get in the way of getting in touch with your instincts. You have to have a balance of both of those things.

**DDD:** *If the bulk of your work wasn't in L.A., where would be you be?*

**GJ:** I lived in New York before L.A. I moved to L.A. for *Community*, so if it didn't exist, I would still be in New York. I don't know if I prefer it—that's where I went to college, that's where all my friends were. Now L.A. feels like home, I'm happy to be in L.A., but it took a job to get me to permanently move.

**DDD:** *As a female comic performer, do you find the roles available to you limited?*

**GJ:** I think it's becoming less and less true. I think this has been an amazing year for women in

comedy. I think a lot of strong female performers are writing their own material which really helps the cause. I feel very optimistic about women in comedy right now.

**DDD:** *The entertainment press seems to have a love affair with some sort of "pretty/funny" index. Do you feel there is a relationship between your looks and your ability to be taken seriously as a performer?*

**GJ:** I feel it's interesting. I feel a lot of female stand-ups don't try to emphasize their looks too much. I think when you're a stand-up and on the road in such a man's world it's hard to emphasize your femininity. I didn't come up as a comic performer, but I think there is a lot of pressure as an actress to be attractive. I wish that was something you didn't have to think of as much as you do when you're a woman.

**DDD:** *Have you ever been mistaken for or compared to someone else, if so, who?*

**GJ:** The biggest compliment I got when someone said I reminded them of Gena Rowlands. I thought that was a huge, huge compliment. People think I look like Liv Tyler. I used to get that a lot, or a blonde Anne Hathaway.

**DDD:** *Was there a defining moment when you knew you wanted to be a performer?*

**GJ:** Probably the first time I was in an acting class. It was pretty immediate as soon as I was exposed to performing in front of an audience. I wanted to do it as much as I could, which was limited growing up in Pittsburgh [and] not being a Hollywood child performer.

**DDD:** *Why comedy? Do you want to explore more dramas and other genres of acting?*

**GJ:** I did everything but comedy before *Community*. It would be fun to do a part like that again. At this point it would be unexpected if I did it. It's always really fun to work with different voices in comedy, different actors, writers, directors...I feel like I keep learning. I still have a lot to learn about drama. I feel really lucky I've had a chance to work with a lot of people in my career that have taught me a lot.



PAMELLA ROLAND dress.  
SORRELLI NECKLACE bracelet.  
BCBG MAX AZARIA shoes.





**TADASHI SHOJI** dress.  
**IRADJ MOINI** ring.  
**HERVE LEGER** shoes.

Production Director: **MAGGIE BENOIT**.  
 Stylist: **CHRISTIAN CLASSEN** for ARTISTS by **TIMOTHY PRIANO**.  
 Hair: **DANIEL HOWELL** at **TRACEY MATTINGLY**.  
 Make Up: **VANESSA SCALI** at **TRACEY MATTINGLY**.  
 Stylist Associates: **MONIQUE VATINE** & **BRITTANNY TRAN**.  
 Stylist Assistants: **DAGMARETTE YEN** & **NICOLE AYALA**.  
 Photography Assistant: **JEAN PIERRE CANER**.  
 Thank you to **Lindsay Krug** at **ID PR** & **Shaun Snow** from **SNOWStudio**

**DDD:** *What was your first big break?*

**GJ:** I think the movie *Choke* was the first film that I did that actually made it into theaters and made it into Sundance. I wasn't the lead, but it was huge step for being in a film that people actually saw. I was in a bunch of movies before that, but they didn't get purchased. I was surrounded by a really amazing cast. I got to work with Sam Rockwell and Clark Gregg, who directed the film. I got to feel like I was a part of the business which you don't feel when you keep making movies that don't get released. And there's *Community*, as far as being known by the public. Being in people's homes, having a character that people identify with and see every week...to be seen by millions of people is an amazing experience. To be part of something that has fans is so satisfying.

**DDD:** *Which platform do you most prefer: television, film, or the stage?*

**GJ:** Once you've been doing a lot of one you start craving the other. Now that I'm doing TV for most of the year I get really excited to be part in front of a live audience. When I was doing mainly plays, all I wanted to do was something on camera. The grass is always greener. I'm really glad to have had the opportunity to do all three. *Community* is pretty ideal. You can't really ask for much more than that.

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as a risk taker?*

**GJ:** I definitely feel like working in comedy has made me feel like more of a risk taker. In real life I'm totally risk averse. My friends always joke my motto is "safety first". So I'm definitely not a risk taker in my life, but hopefully in my acting.

**DDD:** *What's the bravest move you've made in your career?*

**GJ:** I feel the first time I played a junkie runaway stripper and I had no idea what I was doing and I had no idea why they cast me as the part and I had to snort fake drugs and all that, that felt very brave. It was definitely not what I imagined my career to be.

**DDD:** *Biggest high?*

**GJ:** Going to Comic-Con last year and getting a standing ovation from the crowd there...having a completely packed room of people cheering and clapping. I started crying, it was so overwhelming, just the general celebration of the show. People like us, they respect us, they are excited to see us—you don't get to meet a large group of fans at one time, and to see them and have them show all that, that was pretty amazing.

**DDD:** *Was there every a point where you were really afraid you weren't going to make it?*

**GJ:** I didn't really earn a living wage at first. Worrying if you can afford a cup of coffee or trying to get as many free meals as you can from family and friends, sleeping in a chair that pulls out into a bed...I don't regret any of that. I definitely had times that I was worried if I would make it. The theater doesn't pay a living wage at all. I was

making 200 dollars a week doing this play while trying to live in Manhattan and trying to feed myself.

**DDD:** *As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*

**GJ:** An actress, I think to my mom's chagrin. I zeroed in on acting around the third or fourth grade. I liked academics: history and English and other areas of study, but I think I always knew I wanted to be an actor. You don't really know when you're a kid if you're good enough to do it professionally. You don't know if you have any talent. I was waiting to see if anyone else knew if I was any good.

---

*"I think the movie Choke was the first film that I did that actually made it into theaters and made it into Sundance. I wasn't the lead, but it was huge step for being in a film that people actually saw. I was in a bunch of movies before that, but they didn't get purchased. I was surrounded by a really amazing cast. I got to work with Sam Rockwell and Clark Gregg, who directed the film. I got to feel like I was a part of the business which you don't feel when you keep making movies that don't get released."*

---

**DDD:** *Do you ever feel your personal life has been compromised by your career path?*

**GJ:** There are definitely eight months out of the year when I can't see my friends, I can't hang out, I can't always take a phone call, I can't always call back right away. I had a lot of anxiety about even taking a trip because you're always afraid the minute you book a trip you're gonna get some big audition you're gonna miss. I always felt the Fourth of July was the only time I was able to take a trip. Every flight I ever [booked] I had to change because of an audition or a job. There's a joke among actors, the best way to get an acting job is to buy a plane ticket.

**DDD:** *What performers do you look to for inspiration?*

**GJ:** I love *The Comeback*, that Lisa Kudrow did on HBO. It's so incredible, one of the best performances and shows I've ever seen. As a kid it was Katherine Hepburn. I watched a lot of her movies as a child, although I don't know how much of a direct influence she had on me as an actor. I think Tina Fey is incredible. Larry David. There are a lot of people I love. I love Tilda Swinton, Samantha Morton... I could go on.



TADASHI SHOJI *dress.*  
 IRADJ MOINI *ring.*  
 HERVE LEGER *shoes.*



THOMAS WYLDE *dress.*  
 GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI *shoes.*

# ELIZA COUPE

*I spoke with Eliza Coupe on the phone right before she was going to get a tattoo of the New Hampshire state motto, Live Free or Die. Though trained in Shakespeare and avant-garde theatre at Cal Arts, she's definitely an East Coast girl at heart. We talked about working as a bathroom attendant in Times Square, being mistaken for a lesbian, and her early comedy defensives—"Why did I get into comedy? I was fat! I had to defend myself with jokes." In addition to her television show Happy Endings, which is now in its second season on ABC, Coupe can be seen on the big screen alongside Anna Faris in What's Your Number, out this month. The film Americatown, in which she plays an ex-pat living in Shanghai along with Bill Paxton and Alan Ruck, will be released in the U.S. this winter, following its debut in China.*

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as an inherently funny person?*

EC: I think I'm funny, but...I'm always convinced I'm more funny to myself, but clearly, given my career and that I'm on a comedy, I'm more funny than just to myself.

**DDD:** *Is comedy based on craft or instinct for you?*

EC: Instinct, I would say. But at the same time, I think that I learn through doing. I think that taking classes is vital for knowledge or understanding of timing. You either have timing or you don't. I learned through watching people who were better than me. I worked with Lily Tomlin and Gary Cole. Basically I'm just a thief.

**DDD:** *If weren't in L.A., where would you be?*

EC: I would live in New York City or New Hampshire. I love where I'm from.

**DDD:** *The entertainment press seems to have a love affair with some sort of "pretty/funny" index. Do you feel there is a relationship between your looks and your ability to be taken seriously as a performer?*

EC: I think what's funny is that I've always had a chip on my shoulder because I wouldn't be taken seriously because I'm rarely ever serious. It's like there are two things, you either have to be really unattractive and funny and you're cool or you have to be really beautiful and funny and everyone's like, this is so cool, this is impossible! There's a big shift going on with the boys club of comedy, especially with *Bridesmaids*. Knowing those girls and their work and how they are different. I'm also grateful for all the stuff Tina Fey and Amy Poehler have done.

Especially on the show that I'm on, there's always the pressure for them to accept that I'm just as funny as them, or sometimes funnier. It's always something that crosses my mind. They see me all dressed up as a glam girl and then when I open my mouth, I feel like I have to prove myself, that I'm just as funny as you.

Sex sells, and all that stuff sells, and if a girl is on the cover of a magazine and she can make you laugh, watch out. Look, Ryan Reynolds, he's super hot and really funny, he's like that for a guy, he can do all those crazy raunchy comedies and he's also super hot. He's really hot and funny, and I think "that's crazy" and I fall into it, too.

If you're funny and interesting it makes you hot. It's okay for Jonah Hill and Zach Galifianakis to look how they are. I've had so many people ask me if I'm a lesbian because I do comedy. Is it funny that I have to be less feminine to be funny? Women haven't been allowed to be as funny—it's been so dominated by men and male energy—but I think there's going to be a shift. You don't have to be hot, you don't have to be gay. There shouldn't even be a question of women being as funny as men. It shouldn't be an issue.

**DDD:** *Have you ever been mistaken for or compared to someone else? If so, who?*

EC: Back when I was a teenager I got compared



CHAGOURY COUTURE gown.  
LOREE RODKIN ring.  
AMERICAN APPAREL stockings.  
MANOLO BLAHNIK shoes.

to Elisha Cuthbert a lot, which is really funny because I play her sister on TV. Now we look very different, but when I was younger I got compared to her a lot. I got compared to Cameron Diaz a lot when I was younger, but not anymore.

**DDD:** *Was there a defining moment when you knew you wanted to be a performer?*

**EC:** I told my parents when I was four that I was going to be a movie star, and I never wanted to do anything else in my life. Ever since I saw *Ace Ventura Pet Detective*, I wanted to do comedy because of Jim Carrey. When he comes to that kind of humor, he really commits and that makes it funny.

**DDD:** *Why comedy? Why not something like period pieces or courtroom dramas?*

**EC:** I love all that stuff. I would love to do dramas. The pure joy that I find in making people laugh, I can't compare that to anything else. From a business standpoint, being a girl who can do comedy... I was a bathroom attendant in Times Square, I had to get out of there quick. Doing comedy as a young blonde girl is a quick and easy way to the middle. It's all a big master plan of getting to do my Charlize Theron *Monster* role.

**DDD:** *In comedies the roles for women seem to be the unreasonably hot girlfriend/wife, the bimbo, the crazy chick or the quirky sidekick. Do you ever worry about being typecast?*

**EC:** It's interesting, because I go out for a lot of different things. I've had a more difficult time because I don't fit into those things. I recently did the lead in a romantic comedy in China. It was the female lead, who wasn't the boring girl who was the set-up for the funny guy. She was really interesting. Once I get a chance to have those kinds of roles, I'll be fine. It's hard to cast you [if] you are not going to play some boring, pretty girl. There's a lot more parts that are open to girls who aren't threatening to the lead funny guy. Kristen Wiig is changing that, Tina Fey, Amy Poehler.

**DDD:** *What was your first big break?*

**EC:** I was living in New Hampshire because I had no money, and was getting ready to move back to New York from there. I was at the PIT [People's Improv Theater], I had no life, I'd bring my food and go to the PIT or UCB and watch shows from morning to night because I had no money. I found a flyer for a one-person show workshop, it was \$100, and I asked my dad. I took that workshop—the woman and I really clicked, and she wanted to help get my show together for Aspen. That woman is now my manager. That was the moment where it all started clicking, where I realized this is all going to happen. I had just been fired from my bathroom attendant/waiting jobs. I only worked at the Heartland Brewery because they had the

after-parties for SNL. I was a bathroom attendant in those gross bathrooms. I ended up writing my show in that bathroom.

**DDD:** *Which platform do you most prefer: television, film, or the stage?*

**EC:** Oh god, after my experience on film in China, I do prefer film. I don't have that much experience doing film, but to be able to carry one character through a transformation... We have that on TV, but it's different. We have a season to have an arc, but we can't change the character that much because people still need to relate. They are more fun, I like going on location.

I'm the most nervous person on the planet. When I think about doing stage, I get so nervous. I get stage fright.

*“There’s a big shift going on with the boys club of comedy, especially with Bridesmaids. Knowing those girls and their work and how they are different. I’m also grateful for all the stuff Tina Fey and Amy Poehler have done.”*

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as a risk taker?*

**EC:** I do. I do for sure.

**DDD:** *What's the bravest move you've made in your career?*

**EC:** I got a call that I was being offered this film, *Americatown*, and was told 'you need to make a decision [that] night'. The actress had just backed out and they came to me. I read 12 pages of it and I said yes and I had to be on a plane to Shanghai in a week. I was in a foreign country, I didn't really know anyone and I didn't know the film. I just liked the script and I liked the part. I literally just packed a bag—or two or three—and went to Shanghai and did the film. I had to learn Chinese, and my teacher was in L.A. and I was Skyping, and I had to do whole scenes in Chinese. It changed me as a person and it changed my acting. I was very humbled, and I'm very appreciative of where I'm from. This sounds cheesy, but I really do look at the whole world differently now as a person and as an artist.

**DDD:** *What has been the biggest high in your career thus far?*

**EC:** With every project there's a high for each one. It sounds so silly, but getting the Breakout Award at the Aspen Comedy Festival in 2006...I mean, the little girl who wanted to be a movie star in New Hampshire, that was as far as she dreamed. I wrote the show, I did the show, it was my character that came from me, and I was being awarded for it. I called my parents from Aspen saying I just performed in front of 5 people and won an award for it, I couldn't have been happier.

**DDD:** *Have you experienced a low point where you were unsure if you were going to make it in the business?*

**EC:** This is going to sound like an asshole comment, but I was never hopeless. I've always known, I was able to continue as it got dark. The dark side is dark, it's pitch black. I can go there, but I never lose hope. I attribute that to my parents, an unyielding if not delusional sense of hope.

My dad, when I was 11 years old, tried to call Lorne Michaels himself to try to get me as the youngest cast member on SNL. I was like 'Go for it, dad'. He really believed that was real and that could happen. When you're a kid and you get [that] instilled in you, you shoot for the stars.

**DDD:** *As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*

**EC:** An actress

**DDD:** *Do you ever feel your personal life has been compromised by your career path?*

**EC:** I was a party queen right out of college life. I had a super crazy social life; I was super boy crazy. I realized there would be a point in my life when I got there in my career where that would be waiting for me. I want to get to a point in my career where I can enjoy that now. I'm kind of a workaholic. Sometimes I think I'm too focused, but I think it will be waiting for me when I get to that point in my career.

**DDD:** *What performers do you look to for inspiration?*

**EC:** Jim Carrey in *Ace Ventura*. Johnny Depp—it sounds weird, and it's not because I want to have sex with him. There's something about the roles that he chooses that is really fascinating. I really admire Robert Downey, Jr. I do look to Kristen Wiig; I think she's talented and really smart. Lily Tomlin of course, Gilda Radner. Will Ferrell for sure, he's a big one for me. Eddie Izzard, I fucking love Eddie Izzard. And Robin Williams. And Sacha Baron Cohen, he's pretty brilliant. I got to meet him, I had an audition with him once—it was the best audition I've ever had, I got to improv with him for like 30 minutes. I didn't get the part, but it made my day, it made my year quite honestly.



JASON WU *dress*.  
PHILIP TREACY LONDON *hat*.  
SWAROVSKI *ring*.  
AMERICAN APPAREL *stockings*.  
MANOLO BLAHNIK *shoes*.



JEAN PAUL GAULTIER jumpsuit.  
LORENA SARBU fox fur.  
LOREE RODKIN ring.



JASON WU dress.  
PHILIP TREACY LONDON hat.  
SWAROVSKI ring.  
AMERICAN APPAREL stockings.  
MANOLO BLAHNIK shoes.

Production Director: MAGGIE BENOIT.  
Stylist: CHRISTIAN CLASSEN for ARTISTS by TIMOTHY PRIANO.  
Hair: JULIE FERRENTE for ARTISTS by TIMOTHY PRIANO.  
Make Up: JONNY SADDE using LANCÔME for ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM.  
Stylist Associates: MONIQUE VATINE & BRITTANNY TRAN.  
Stylist Assistants: DAGMARETTE YEN & NICOLE AYALA.  
Photography Assistant: GRAHAM DUNN.  
Thank you to Kristen Ames & SNOWStudio



BARBARA TFANK *dress*.  
 IRADJ MOINI *earrings*.  
 GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI *shoes*.

# ILIZA SHLESINGER

*Iliza Shlesinger literally out-funnied twelve other very funny people when she became the youngest-ever winner of NBC's Last Comic Standing at the age of 25. She was also the show's first and only female champion. The Texas native has headlined national comedy stages pretty much constantly ever since, recording specials for Comedy Central Presents and Comedy Central's Live at Gotham in addition to various other TV appearances. This month she steps off the stage and back onto our televisions as the ridiculously scathing host of the upcoming CBS-syndicated nightly dating show Excused.*

**DDD:** *Is comedy based on craft or instinct for you?*

**IS:** What a great question. Instinct. I'd have to say it's mostly instinct—some people just know what's funny, and that's what makes you a killer onstage. The craft comes in the more you do it, you pay more and more attention to how you say words, when you say them, what order you do your set—it's just polishing and it comes from practice. You can be the funniest of your friends, and even funny and raw onstage, but if you don't craft your act, it can't get better. Instincts are what get you to the top, crafting your act is what keeps you there.

**DDD:** *If the bulk of your work wasn't in L.A., where would be you be?*

**IS:** Anywhere I needed to be.

**DDD:** *As a female comic performer, do you find the roles available to you limited?*

**IS:** I do, yeah. In mainstream TV and movies—of course not counting indie films; that's uncharted territory...women are either total whores, hot and completely clueless—ingénues, or “you're the

quirky friend who's cute and has intimacy issues”... this brilliant role is the one most comedians audition for. You either have to be smoking hot or weird looking for a lot of TV stuff—and not much of it is appealing. Most shows and movies for women are about marriage, babies and sex. I don't know why Hollywood thinks that all women do is talk about babies and sex, but that's pretty much what most sitcoms are about. I've never had a baby or sex, but I hear they're a lot of work.

**DDD:** *The entertainment press seems to have a love affair with some sort of “pretty/funny” index. Do you feel there is a relationship between your looks and your ability to be taken seriously as a performer?*

**IS:** I think anyone who continues to use that phrase should be smacked for being hacky, first of all. Here's the deal—if you go onstage in a halter top and miniskirt, then yeah, people are gonna judge you. Women are gonna hate you and guys aren't really gonna listen. And that's fair. NOW, if you have a terrible body and aren't attractive and you do that, and are funny, then it's a brilliant act. At



GILLES MONTEZIN *jaacket*.  
JEAN PAUL GAULTIER *dress*.  
LOREE RODKIN *ring*.

Production Director: MAGGIE BENOIT.  
Stylist: CHRISTIAN CLASSEN *for ARTISTS by TIMOTHY PRIANO*.  
Hair: ERIC SEBAAG *for ARTISTS by TIMOTHY PRIANO*.  
Make Up: using NARS *for ARTISTS BY TIMOTHY PRIANO.COM*.  
Stylist Associates: MONIQUE VATINE & BRITTANNY TRAN.  
Stylist Assistants: DAGMARETTE YEN & NICOLE AYALA.  
Photography Assistant: GRAHAM DUNN.

the end of the day, if you are funny, it will shine through, but you will be creating more hurdles for yourself by dressing up onstage. Some people believe in dressing up to do stand-up—a lot of guys wear suits. I believe in being the exact same person I am on stage, off stage as well. So when you see me in jeans and a t-shirt on stage, it's probably because that's what I wore all day—and slept in, sometimes.

**DDD:** *Have you ever been mistaken for someone else? If so, who?*

**IS:** This is a tricky question because no matter who I say, it gives people reading this a chance to...be like "Uh, she's not that cute, who does she think she is?"...I've gotten Christina Applegate—but that's after hours of staring. No one's ever come running out of a restaurant after me, like "CHRISTINA! YOU FORGOT YOUR KEYS!" Ew, and in disgusting news, the other day someone told me I looked like Casey Anthony...the woman who murdered her kid and was recently acquitted. So that was...awesome...

**DDD:** *Was there a defining moment when you knew you wanted to be a performer?*

**IS:** My whole life I just knew. Never even entertained the idea of doing anything else.

**DDD:** *In comedies the roles for women seem to be the unreasonably hot girlfriend/wife, the bimbo, the crazy chick or the quirky sidekick. Do you ever worry about being typecast?*

**IS:** Ah! Look at that! I answered question #3 and then...this—see! I'm not wrong, haha. No, I never worry about being typecast... I think in order to be typecast, you have to be cast first. So I'll worry about that.

**DDD:** *What was your first big break?*

**IS:** Winning Last Comic Standing on NBC.

**DDD:** *Which platform do you most prefer: television, film, or the stage?*

**IS:** I've always loved the stage, and I like stand-up on stage better...I think each one is its own art form, I just love performing and being funny—so I'm happy wherever.

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as a risk taker?*

**IS:** Somewhat. I think I'm willing to try new jokes onstage and I'm not worried about it not getting a laugh—so some might consider that a risk. I jumped out of a plane once and I put most of my money in some sort of conservative investment, so those two might balance each other out.

**DDD:** *What's the bravest move you've made in your career?*

**IS:** In one of the televised rounds of Last Comic Standing I did all brand new, untested, jokes—I just

felt that it was something I had to do. I didn't do it to impress people, I just had some new jokes that I thought were great and that I thought the crowd would like—and they did. A lot of comics were freaked out but, as a comic, if you can't trust your instincts then...how are you a comic?

**DDD:** *Biggest high?*

**IS:** Squeezing my dog. I love her so much

**DDD:** *Biggest low?*

**IS:** When I have to wait on a yes from a project. Waiting to see if you get a show, showcase, part, et cetera—that's the worst ever, because there is literally nothing you can do but wait.

**DDD:** *As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*

**IS:** A cat.

---

*"I think I'm willing to try new jokes onstage and I'm not worried about it not getting a laugh—so some might consider that a risk. I jumped out of a plane once and I put most of my money in some sort of conservative investment, so those two might balance each other out."*

---

**DDD:** *Do you ever feel your personal life has been compromised by your career path?*

**IS:** I give up a lot to be this happy, haha. I definitely have been working on my career since the day I graduated college. My dedication to my career means for the last five years I have gone out almost every night to do sets, which doesn't leave much room for a huge social life. Because of my work ethic—which includes doing sets every night, working and or traveling most weeks out of the year—I have definitely lost touch with some older friends...I've missed many of my friends' birthday parties, special events, et cetera—but the friends who are really my friends support me and totally get it. After all, you can't get anywhere without sacrifice.

**DDD:** *What performers do you look to for inspiration?*

**IS:** I don't—I can find inspiration everywhere I look. People in general inspire me.

# ERIN GIBSON

*Erin Gibson is a writer as well as a performer, which is probably why she opted to speak with me via email. On Current TV's infoMania, Gibson played those dual roles: of writer and correspondent. The UCB alum is insanely active on stage, on the web, and on TV. She is a quick-witted, attractive brunette who has appeared as a panelist on Chelsea Lately but is definitely not the same person as Whitney Cummings. Gibson has adopted what is both the simplest and trickiest solution the dearth of quality female roles: writing her own. She and co-conspirator Bryan Safi have taken their hour-long show, How to Be a Woman and a Gay Person: A Feminist-y and Homosexual-ish Guide to Living in America on the road in order to "humorously dismantle the anti-gay & anti-female rhetoric in TV, movies, news and government initiatives." No big deal.*

**DDD:** *Is comedy based on craft or instinct for you?*

**EG:** Both. You have to be born funny, or made funny by a tragic existence. I come from a tragic, large, dysfunctional, sad Irish Catholic family who deals with life with large amounts of sarcasm and jokes. I remember when I was 4, my uncle Jimmy took my baby doll—or as far as I was concerned, my baby—cut her stomach open, filled her empty plastic abdomen with a red food coloring-soaked washcloth, and used her as part of his grim reaper costume. I did not have a sophisticated grasp on how to use jokes to deal with the situation, so I cried. But when I think about that story now, it makes me laugh. Laughter is the only way I know how to deal with awful life things. You have two choices in life, laugh about the horribleness of it all, or become Nancy Grace...and no one wants to be like Nancy Grace. I bet you not even Nancy Grace wants to be Nancy Grace.

**DDD:** *If the bulk of your work wasn't in L.A., where would be you be?*

**EG:** I dunno, I like L.A. Besides the fact that I'll never own a home, the muggings, the unbelievable amount of hot stupid people, and the crushing depression that hits me like a shovel when I'm between jobs, this town has great tacos!

**DDD:** *As a female comic performer, do you find the roles available to you limited?*

**EG:** Yes, so that's why I try and create some for myself. There's no use complaining about the dearth of funny female roles. If you think guys are gonna write tons of great jokes for women to say, please don't hold your breath. Cause you'll die. From lack of oxygen.

So what I do, is put my own stuff out there, in any form I can, and on top of that, I encourage ladies who are interested in writing to please, please, for the love of God, do that, please. I'm not sure how to find girls who want to be network and movie execs, but if you're out there, Google chat me and I will give you so much support, Spanx will be jealous.

**DDD:** *The entertainment press seems to have a love affair with some sort of "pretty/funny" index. Do you feel there is a relationship between your looks and your ability to be taken seriously as a performer?*

**EG:** Sure, looks matter for anyone in entertainment. And the better looking you are, the better your chances. It's like real life X 1000. When I first started to put out "Modern Lady" on infoMania, the fans of the show commented, in large number, that I slept my way into the job, or somehow my looks were a factor in me getting the job. I'm smart and I worked hard, that's how I got the job. And the fact that I gave some executives at Current some of my finest hand job work is a separate thing altogether.

**DDD:** *Have you ever been mistaken for someone else? If so, who?*

**EG:** Whitney Cummings is happening a lot now. If you saw us in person, there's no way you could mistake us for one another, but we're both brunette comedians, so I guess we're the same person? You know, just like how everyone always thinks that Tim Allen and Jeff Dunham are the same person.



THOMAS WYLDE dress.  
DOUGLAS HANNANT shoes.



**DDD:** *Was there a defining moment when you knew you wanted to be a performer?*

**EG:** I was always a loud, obnoxious person, but I remember in college, my boyfriend Paul and I were in the car and I was pretending to be dead against the passenger window. Glasses askew, holding my breath, eyes off-center and open. I had been doing it for 15 minutes and he said, “Not everything is a comedy bit”. I decided to prove him wrong. YOU HEAR THAT, PAUL?! HOPE YOUR LIFE IS FULFILLING SELLING CANCER DRUGS TO SICK PEOPLE! I’M MAKING JOKES ABOUT THE KARDASHIANS!

**DDD:** *In comedies, the roles for women seem to be the unreasonably hot girlfriend/wife, the bimbo, the crazy chick or the quirky sidekick. Do you ever worry about being typecast?*

**EG:** I don’t worry about being typecast because I turn things down. It’s hard, because I like eating and paying my rent, and pot, but it gives me some sort of power. As far as the roles for women, I think those characters can be fun to play, as long as they’re based in reality. We can’t get rid of all crazy chick roles. It’s fun to play crazy people. One of the pieces I did on my show is a fake entertainment gossip show, and it was my favorite thing because I could play this stupid, confident idiot who knew everything about celebrities. It’s when it’s all hot girlfriends/wives/crazy chick/quirky sidekick that we run into a problem in the entertainment industry. It’s not representative of all the wonderful female characters out there in the world. Like my neighbor, who one night told me about all the abortions and miscarriages she’s had without even stopping to say “Hello”.

**DDD:** *What was your first big break?*

**EG:** When I first moved to L.A. from Chicago, I got a one-line gig on the last season of *The King of Queens*. I was the most nervous I’ve ever been, and I’ve had major surgery. I sweated through a shirt, a sweater, AND a jacket. I played a part I was born for. The part of “Woman” and my line was “Excuse me, there’s a gap.” I still get checks from it. Very, very small checks. Under a dollar. THANK YOU, HOLLYWOOD!

**DDD:** *Which platform do you most prefer: television, film, or the stage?*

**EG:** They’re all fun! Stage is better because when you do a great job, the feedback is instant and so rewarding, but in TV and film, you get to do this thing which I call “fucking up your lines”. Other actors might call it that too, but I want it noted here that I came up with the term and want full credit for it.

**DDD:** *Do you think of yourself as a risk taker?*

**EG:** Yes. Bold choices are fun and more rewarding. Plus, what do I have to lose? My career, my self respect, maybe a leg. No big deal.

**DDD:** *What’s the bravest move you’ve made in your career?*

**EG:** I don’t think I have. But I’ll tell you this, the moment I pee on a floor ‘cause I think it’s funny AND it goes over well, I’ll call you guys.

**DDD:** *Biggest high in your career thus far?*

**EG:** Honestly? Every time I get paid to tell/write jokes. It makes me happy every single time.

**DDD:** *Have you experienced a low point where you doubted you were going to make it in the business?*

**EG:** Sure, anytime I’m awake I generally feel like I’m not going to make it. I think when I’m sleeping I feel pretty confident that things will work out.

**DDD:** *As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?*

---

*“There’s no use complaining about the dearth of funny female roles. If you think guys are gonna write tons of great jokes for women to say, please don’t hold your breath. Cause you’ll die. From lack of oxygen. So what I do, is put my own stuff out there, in any form I can, and on top of that, I encourage ladies who are interested in writing to please, please, for the love of God, do that, please.”*

---

**EG:** Steven Spielberg. I wanted to be a movie director. For a really long time. I think it all stopped when I started having sex with boys. Making a lot of dumb sexual moves with your life can eat up a lot of mental energy.

**DDD:** *Do you ever feel your personal life has been compromised by your career path?*

**EG:** Every Goddamned day. I’m answering these questions after a 12 hour day of writing, it’s 11PM, and I’ve not eaten dinner. I have to force myself to do social things, because I just like working so much. It will certainly result in me being the single, old, frail, broken woman in my complex who stands in the stairwell at night and scares people going to the laundry room.

**DDD:** *What performers do you look to for inspiration?*

**EG:** Gene Wilder, Tina Fey, Georgia O’Keefe vagina paintings, Amy Poehler, and Bryan Safi. Bryan and I met at Upright Citizens Brigade Theater and then both worked on infoMania. He has really encouraged me to be more honest and silly with my comedy. We’re also both from Texas, and despite our alternative, progressive comedy styles, we love AC/DC. We’re touring U.S. colleges this fall with a stage show mash-up of “Modern Lady” and “That’s Gay” and we’re doing lots of other comedy-related non-sexual things together.



Production Director: **MAGGIE BENOIT.**  
 Stylist: **CHRISTIAN CLASSEN** for ARTISTS by **TIMOTHY PRIANO.**  
 Hair: **CHRISTINA BUZAS** for ARTISTS by **TIMOTHY PRIANO.**  
 Make Up: **ANABEL DEHAVEN** using **NARS** for ARTISTS BY **TIMOTHY PRIANO.COM.**  
 Stylist Associates: **MONIQUE VATINE** & **BRITTANNY TRAN.**  
 Stylist Assistants: **DAGMARETTE YEN** & **NICOLE AYALA.**  
 Photography Assistant: **JEAN PIERRE CANER.**  
 Thank you to **Jennie Church-Cooper** & **Shawn Snow** at **SNOWStudio**