

Comedian 'draws' laughter at MPL with Halloween-themed laser show



Comedian Chris Fair tells a Halloween-themed story as part of his Laser Comedy Show Thursday, Oct. 29, at the Mokena Community Public Library. Paul Bergstrom/22nd Century Media



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Before the lights went out and the laser pointers came on,

comedian Chris Fair addressed the crowd, but not for any joke, simply an inspirational message: “Don’t give up on your dreams.”

“I didn’t know I was going to be doing [comedy],” Fair told the children gathered for his show Thursday, Oct. 29, at the Mokena Community Public Library. “I didn’t know I was going to be a comedian until I was just out of high school.”

It was actually in high school that Fair would get his first stand-up gig – an improvised show in front of his entire class at the senior breakfast – something he forgot he even signed up for until he was introduced. Since then, he has not looked back, and that includes overcoming obstacles along the way.

“I grew up with a speech impediment,” he said. “I was horrified of public speaking, but look at me here talking to you guys not breaking a sweat... at least not yet.”

But this was not a typical stand-up show that Fair put on for the audience, rather an improv comedy showcase he has dubbed The Laser Comedy Show, which combines drawing, storytelling and comedy to create a unique world.

During the show, Fair animates characters and scenery on a glow-in-the-dark screen, which is similar to a large Etch A Sketch.

“I put together the screen, and my first frame was made out of PVC pipe, so I was just trying to figure this stuff out,” Fair said.

During the show at the Mokena library, Fair told a story that has been heard hundreds of times before about an evil mountain with a witch inside who gets out, can turn people into zombies, runs for president and in the end returns to the mountain where she is watched over by the trees, which came just in time for the Halloween season.

The journey to this point has been long though for Fair, as he said he started doing comedy in college before moving to

Chicago to perform stand-up. While in the city, he was laid off from work, and three days later, he signed up for an improv class.

“I’m just kind of thanking my company for laying me off,” he said, with a laugh.

In 2009, Fair started to develop his comedy craft, but it would be in 2011 when he would introduce The Laser Comedy Show, as his comedy preference turned to improv.

“I got better at stand-up, but I dropped stand-up because I liked improv much better,” he said. “That was more me just being naturally funny, and now [with The Laser Comedy Show] I just have to learn to use different muscles. Being real and doing a stage act are two different things.”

Fair said each show is different, as the comedy revolves around the idea of him improvising a “movie” and directing his own film.

“I’ve been drawing since I was 3 [years old],” he said. “When I start drawing something, it just comes naturally.”

Fair has now mainly been involved with comedy festivals, but said he can tailor the show to adults or children, which is one of the reasons the Mokena library brought him in to perform after meeting him at the American Library Association Conference.

“I asked him, and he said he could gear the show toward the kids’ age, as well as Halloween,” said Wendy Asbridge, director of young adults at the Mokena library.

And the show appeared to have a positive impression on the whole audience.

“It was so awesome,” attendee Ian Krasnodebski said.

- See more at:

<http://www.mokenamesseenger.com/comedian->

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