

# CHARLESTON CITY PAPER

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## CP Stand Up: Gilson Lubin, Andy Haynes, and J. Reid

When: Fri., Jan. 21, 8 p.m. and Sat., Jan. 22, 10 p.m. 2011

Price: \$12.50

[www.charlestoncomedyfestival.com](http://www.charlestoncomedyfestival.com)

If the three stand-up comics on this bill look familiar, that's because you've probably seen them on the big or small screen. Canadian comedian Gilson Lubin has appeared on HBO and Comedy Central, Andy Haynes has rubbed shoulders with Jimmy Fallon, and J. Reid cropped up in the Kevin Spacey movie *21*. If that doesn't leave you feeling star-struck, don't worry — they're also bright sparks on the live comedy circuit.

### Gilson Lubin

St. Lucia native Gilson Lubin (*Premium Blend*) has a weird way of preparing for festivals. "I go really hard at working my ass off," he says, "doing some really good shows. Then, for the one before the festival, I find a small room with the most awkward environment and tank it. That makes me want to do extra well next time."

Lubin doesn't really need any strange preparation methods. The comedian's experiences living in the melting pot of Toronto have given him plenty of material, ranging from social issues to observational humor. "I try to write very broad topics," says the Canadian Comedy award-winner, "but my Caribbean perspective lets me tap into material Charleston audiences wouldn't regularly hear. The diversity in Canada is always funny — we have Asians, Africans, lot of Caribbeans, Chinese."

He compares himself to popular Canuck comic Russell Peters in the way he picks up on different accents. "I have to be a little versatile," he says. "I've done everything from corporate [gigs] to *Def Jam*. Depending on what the crowd is, I go from there, so I make sure I'm well prepared."

Lubin's path to fame has been slow but steady. "I don't pull tricks to get ahead; I'm patient. I've taken great advice from comedians, and I'm building a following." If Lubin delivers his trademark off-the-wall one liners, he'll soon add some satisfied Charlestonians to his fan base.

### Andy Haynes

New York resident Andy Haynes is a nit-picker. "I'm a social commentator, but a lot of my stuff is silly," he says. "I try to be on the side of progressive, but I'm pedantic." In his routine, he finds fault in his personal life, drugs, politics, and how New York City "beats the shit out of you."

Haynes has a wonderfully sick sense of humor that goes down well with New York audiences. "Nothing is off-limits there," he says, "while almost everything is taboo in other places. I'm originally from Seattle, a liberal, passive place. New York is the exact opposite — people have a chip on their shoulder, and they won't hesitate to tell you you're a fucking asshole."

The stand-up comedian got a gentler reception at Theatre 99 when he performed there in April 2010. "The South gets a bad reputation. Visitors expect to get off a plane and see a Klan rally. I did all of South Carolina telling jokes about religion and gay rights. No one said anything."

When he's not touring, appearing at festivals or on TV (he recently performed on *Late Night with Jimmy Fallon*), Haynes works as a mover. It's miserable, time-consuming labor — perfect comedy fodder. "You meet all kinds of people. Once you see past the job, you can see it would make a compelling narrative, a good serialized dramedy." That's what the hard-working everyman is best at: boiling personal situations and gripes down to common themes.

### J. Reid

Las Vegas comedian J. Reid is a good fit for our manners-minded city. He has the politest answering machine message we've ever heard. "I try to make sure everyone has a good day when they call my phone," he says. That's his philosophy when he's on stage, too — to make sure the entire audience has fun. "My plan is to come and try to make the whole city laugh."

The plan was hatched two years ago when Reid had a Stand Up Showdown with Kenny Z at the Charleston Comedy Festival. "A lot of people came out. They asked me to come back, so I guess I did something right."

Reid's act covers family humor, politics, commercials, domestic situations, and everyday experiences. "I try to make it more than just comedy, let them know where I come from and who I am."

While he admits that "Vegas is about gambling and parties," Reid is no hedonist. As soon as he left high school, he worked his way up through open mic nights and small stand-up gigs to become a polished comedian and impressionist. "I ground it out in front of four or five people, adjusted when I had bad shows. I never stop learning."

"It's totally different making your friends laugh from strangers you don't know," he adds. "You have to find out what triggers laughter with them, reading the crowd and seeing what type of material works for them." Reid has faced them all, from dirty crowds who want "all cussing" to Christian crowds who want "no cussing and all God," he says.

"You have to be a chameleon, adapting to different crowds and seeing what makes people tick. That's the whole way of comedy."

— Nick Smith

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