

Latin Comedy Jam draws crowd for Shuler

Tim Keller — For the Comet | Posted: Thursday, March 26, 2015 12:00 am

RATON — After a packed house of comedy fans laughed until it hurt Saturday night, a pair of statements in the lobby highlighted the success of the night's Latin Comedy Jam. Shuler Theater impresario Bill Fegan revealed that the night of stand-up comedy was apparently the first in the Shuler's history; at least, Fegan's never seen one and he's been there almost non-stop since 1963.

Then Mike Acquisto-Gotti, the producer of Latin Comedy Jam and, as Mike G., its on-stage host, said that he was so pleased with the event that he will bring the show back in the fall with an entirely new program of different comics. Gotti draws on a stable of 21 Latin comedians to present three per night in shows throughout the southwest. The show played Pueblo, CO, Friday night and continued to Tucumcari and Clovis, NM, after leaving Raton.

El Paso comic Iggy made his Latin Comedy Jam debut as a late replacement for ailing Dillon Garcia. Iggy opened the show with extended riffs on his stereotypical

gangbanger appearance and the notice it gets from police wherever he goes. He especially finds it difficult to go jogging because the police always assume he's running from a crime. "No, I'm just jogging, officer."

"Well, what's that TV under your arm?"

"That's resistance training."

Iggy said he first joined a gang after watching "West Side Story," thinking gangs like to dance.

He said that dogs can be trained to find drugs but that no one can find drugs faster than a drug addict. He suggested that police departments hire addicts to find drugs, drawing huge laughter at the vision of police entering a crime scene with a crack head on a leash.

Next up was Jerry Garcia, a single father of two in his adopted town of Pueblo, CO. "I thought I was a Mexican. Then I moved to Pueblo. Man, those are real Mexicans there!" Continuously pacing the stage from left to right and back, he plumbed the humor of fatherhood. "My kids are five and six. They've



Jerry Garcia came from Pueblo, CO, site of the previous night's Latin Comedy Jam, to entertain at the Shuler Saturday night. The single father of two joked about fatherhood and Pueblo: "I thought I was Mexican. Then I moved to Pueblo. Man, those are real Mexicans there!"

started bringing me homework from school. They asked me to help them learn to spell ‘spaghetti.’ I said, ‘Let’s save that one for later.’”

He kidded the many white people in the audience about how they name their children, citing someone with a kid named Hashtag. “I’m going to name my next kid Wi-Fi so when he’s arrested I can hold up a sign saying ‘Free Wi-Fi.’” He complained that someone recently said he’s a metrosexual. “I ain’t no metrosexual! I’ve only had sex on a bus one time.”

The best was saved for last when Tucson native Roberto Rodriguez gave a 40-minute set of often-physical comedy using elastic facial expressions to spin extended stories, many of which focused on sexuality and his own abundant body. Grabbing a hunk of his own stomach, he said, “We Mexicans have worked hard for this! It’s a sign of opulence.”

Rodriguez travels Thursdays through Sundays entertaining audiences throughout the U.S. with his stand-up comedy. “I go to work at 9 p.m. I work 40 minutes straight through without a lunch break. It’s hard.” When he’s home in Los Angeles, he said his wife chides him when she comes home from work and finds him sleeping during the day. “How can I chase my dreams,” he replies, “if I don’t know where they’re at?”

Saturday night’s 90-minute show started at 8:15—late for the Shuler. Hispanics outnumbered Anglos in the packed auditorium and all seemed to enjoy the comedy equally. Appropriately, the audience was almost entirely adult, except for one infant that arrived in a stroller—duly noted by each comic.

Latin Comedy Jam usually plays venues where alcohol is served and each comic riffed on playing for an audience that wasn’t drinking. The DJ/soundman in the loge box hanging over the stage interrupted host Mike G. once to apologize for laughing so disruptively. “I’ve never heard this show sober before.”

As he closed the show, Mike G. said, “You guys have been so great that we’re not going to allow drinking anymore at any of our shows.”

Minutes later, in the lobby after the show, he promised to come back to the Shuler in the fall with an entirely new show and three different comics. Judging by the laughing crowd, most of them will happily return for the second show of stand-up comedy in the Shuler Theater’s history.