

Surrey Civic Theatres Presents *New-Fangled Fibs: Tall Tales* by Paul Strickland

Surrey, BC—IN BRIEF: Join Surrey Civic Theatres for *New Fangled Fibs: Tall Tales* by Paul Strickland. A collection of hilarious tall tales from Kentuckian, and award-winning comedic storyteller, Paul Strickland. These online performances and shows are designed to help people staying home connect with the performing arts.

June 18–30, 2021.

Premiere performance on June 18 at 7pm includes post-show chat with Paul Strickland.

[Tickets](#) are Pay What You Want, with a suggested price of \$15.



Paul Strickland. Photo credit Kristin Wheeler

“Through Strickland’s pitch perfect storytelling and verbal acrobatics (oh boy, can this man spin a yarn), we’re transported to a magical place where common sense may be in short supply, but wisdom abounds.”—CBC

June 2021—Take an imagination vacation, and delight in the magical world of a storytelling master. Kentucky comedic storyteller Paul Strickland makes meticulously hand-crafted lies (for your entertainment!) and his wonderous wordplay, will have you beaming with joy. Drawing on the tall tale traditions of his deep south upbringing, and told in Strickland’s delightful southern drawl, allow him to whisk you off on hilariously impossible journeys filled with such whimsy and delight, that you will wish they were true!

New Fangled Fibs are a collection of tall tales that come from the magical realist storytelling tradition of lying for entertainment purposes. Usually in storytelling, people share yarns from their own life. Strickland says that on the circuit, spinning ‘fictional fibs’ is quite unusual. “There aren’t many of us that tell tall tales. To be honest, it makes more sense to a lot of people if you compare what I do to Mark Twain. I often say that my work is a bit like the love child of Mark Twain and David Lynch.”

Strickland, who started his creative career on the singer-songwriter-stand-up circuit, quickly realized what he was most interested in was the storytelling aspect of his craft but said he didn’t really want to tell true personal stories. “I found myself wanting to talk about some things that were happening in my life, but I wanted to find a way to talk about them on stage in a way that gave my life anonymity. Inevitably whenever you’re

talking about something on stage, even if you're saying it's 100 per cent factual, there are still ways you are shading the composition of that story, there are ways you are taking liberties with what actually occurred. So instead of doing that in little bits and pieces, I decided to go the whole hog and make it all up."

He says that even though his stories are set in a fictional world he has been able to talk about big life events like his divorce, or grandfather's death, in a way that feels fresh and new for him and hopefully for the audience.

Strickland says that being slightly removed from his own life by relaying almost in the third person, helps him discover a sincere authenticity to his work. "If I can see through my materials in one of my characters, a place in the story where they went bone-headedly wrong, then I can be much more comfortable admitting it to myself."

Strickland will share several stories in his show for Surrey Civic Theatres, something he is delighted to do, especially as his show at Centre Stage was cancelled last March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. His stories feature a collection of whimsical characters such as Ain't True and Uncle False, as well as a whole host of other fabulous folk from the Big Fib Trailer Park. Strickland says the characters are a collage, composites of people he has met throughout his life. He said, "In the show that I'm performing for y'all, I'm performing a story called *Origin of Rest Areas*, and the main character, Winifred Restarea, comes from an idea, based on a lady I met right after a show. I've never seen her since. I don't know her name. She was just a lovely older lady that came up to me who was just a fascinating human being."

Strickland says that while listening to tall tales is usually a leap of faith reserved for children, he says how he gets his adult audiences to transcend reality is easy. "You have to trick 'em. You have to trick 'em right. You have to make 'em laugh a lot and you have to throw a song or two in there. The fact of the matter is, coming from an entertainment background like stand-up and singing, I have a real appreciation for a reticent audience. You have to give them a spoonful of sugar. I think that's why my stories lead so much with strong imagery, jokes and music, because it makes for an enjoyable ride—even if you don't know where the ride is going."

The show premieres online on the Digital Stage on June 18th and will be available to watch for two weeks. Premiere performance includes post-show chat with Paul Strickland.

Interviews with Paul Strickland and additional images are available on request.

Media contact:

Nic Enright-Morin

Publicist

604-501-5189 | Nicola.Enright-Morin@surrey.ca

About Paul Strickland

[Paul Strickland's](#) collections of stories have won "Best of Fest" honours on 13 different occasions at Fringe Theatre Festivals across the U.S. and in Canada. He was an Exchange Place Teller at the National Storytelling Festival in 2018 and in November of 2018 he made his New York stage debut Off-Broadway at the SoHo Playhouse, with his shadow and flashlight ghost story play *13 Dead Dreams of Eugene*.

He was a featured teller at the Timpanogos Storytelling Festival in September of 2020 and will be a featured teller at several upcoming events, including the *Cave Run Storytelling Festival*, in September 2021. Paul has hours of unique family-friendly stories in his repertoire, and he has told stories in every imaginable environment, from comedy clubs to elementary and middle schools, corporate events, and even two prisons—where he was NOT an inmate at the time. Selections from his comedy performance *Levels of Difficulty* can be heard regularly on SiriusXM radio.

Teaser Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XY9J6iBkmF4>

About Surrey Civic Theatres (surrey.ca/theatre)

Surrey Civic Theatres presents a curated mix of professional performances ranging from theatre, music, dance, stand-up comedy, and puppetry with an invitation to connect, laugh, dance, have thought-provoking conversations, and be inspired.