

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

October 9, 2023

The 6th Anniversary of the Vintage Improv Festival (VIF) was a weeklong celebration of comedy exploration and age diversity for comedy improvisers aged 50 and above. Held at the Ferry Beach Resort in Saco, ME from October 3-9, 2023, the festival brought together an international community of comedy improvisers, including participants from four continents.

Founded in 2018 by Michele "Miki" Manting, the Artistic Director of VIF and Founder of Vintage Improv Inc., the non-profit that presents the festival, the event aimed to create a supportive community for older improvisers who often felt excluded from diversity initiatives in performance spaces. Over the years, VIF grew into a global community, offering virtual classes and performances during the pandemic. Manting said, "I created the festival to bring about a community of people that are 50 and over so that they can be seen and feel strength and confidence while doing challenging things."

Over the last six years, VIF has welcomed over 500 participants from over 11 countries. Performer Paul Paice attended the festival for the first time, coming all the way from Auckland, New Zealand. "I saw this as a great opportunity to grow as an improviser because of the quality of the tutors and faculty that have [been] put together...it was something that I couldn't resist being a part of."

Internationally acclaimed instructors, including Jane Morris, Betse Green, Jeff Michalski, Tom Tollenaere, Jonathan Pitts, Diana Brown, Brian Palermo, Andrew Hefler, and Michael Gellman, enriched the festival with their expertise in various improv forms.

Tom Tollenaere, known for his musical direction, traveled from Belgium to teach at the festival. He said, "VIF is like a retreat Here, everybody is together, so after performances you get together to talk together and socialize. The human connection part is a lot stronger here than at most other festivals."

For performers like Caroline Cole and Elsa Kmiecik, VIF provided the opportunity to connect in person after performing together on Zoom. Cole commented, "We've become friends!". Jack Griffin, an 80-year-old attendee from Lebanon, Connecticut, said, " I'm 80 and I've been coming to Vintage since it started six years ago. I feel like I'm living longer because of it and I want to live longer so that I can attend more VIFs! It's the greatest experience of all!"

The Vintage Improv Festival continues its yearly tradition of being a vibrant celebration of age-diverse comedy improvisation, fostering connections and creativity among improvisers from around the world.

For more information, please visit [VintageImprov.org](http://VintageImprov.org).

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