



# Galloway corners comedy

JO GALLOWAY has carved a fine reputation for herself as an actress, dancer and choreographer. She has teamed up with comedian Alan Committie for *Happily Ever Laughter!* at the Theatre on the Bay.

**YOU'VE previously co-starred with Alan. It must be fun working together, hence another round – or are you a sucker for punishment?**

We first worked together in the farce *Boeing Boeing* last year. We really enjoyed the experience and he helped me find confidence in a genre I knew little about. Subsequently, when asked to join his show *Dick and I*, it gave me an opportunity to throw out some of my own suggestions and grow even further in the mad world of comedy. I love working with him because he is such a fearless performer and it gives me a great sense of security on stage. He allows me to step out of my comfort zone and take risks. I suppose I am a bit of a sucker for punishment – he won't let me give up, no matter how terrified I am.

**I believe you are harsh on the *Harry Potter* series in the show. Is nothing sacred?**

Ha, yes we take a look at all the topical, fantastical movies and books at the

moment. *Harry Potter* and *Twilight* are two of the ones we chat about. And when I say "chat about", I mean, "unpack", and when I say "unpack", I mean "rip off", completely. But with charm and fun of course. And no, nothing in comedy is sacred. Except for estate agents. There is no comedy to be had with estate agents. It's just too obvious.

**To what extent is the material co-created?**

This show was a great opportunity for me to test some of my

own writing skills and ideas. We sat for ages hashing out and workshopping topics that explored the idea of *Happily Ever Laughter!* The project has been a fantastic collaborative effort and has given me a chance to try my hand at writing under the umbrella of Alan's existing brand. He's teaching me how scary and challenging stand-up can be, and I'm teaching him how scary and challenging singing and dancing can be.

**You have a strong musical background, with roles in shows such as *Cats*, *Fangs* and *Hairspray*. Is it very different doing comedy?**

Musical theatre has been my life for a long time. I love it and find it incredibly fulfilling. I knew I wanted to branch out and try to create a name for myself in other areas of the industry, and I was fortunate enough to perform in various productions over the years, which have led me, in baby steps, to this show. From playing the comic role of Amber in *Hairspray*, to doing the comedy review *Does My Bum Wobble?* to the farces *Boeing Boeing* and *Perfect Wedding* – I

## Backstage

KAREN RUTTER



have managed to slowly build up confidence in the area of comedy. That said, it's very different to musical theatre, and doing a farce is very different to stand-up. I can't say I am a stand-up comedienne just yet, but I am working hard towards it. Comedy really is a serious business.

**You have also worked in TV, and as a cabaret singer, you choreograph, and have performed in dramas. Is there anything you won't do?**

There are plenty of things I can't do. Maths is one of them, I can really only count 5... 6... 7... 8. As for things I won't do – well, I can honestly say I will never coach the Springbok rugby side. It's been offered to me twice already but, seriously, I don't have the moustache or a high enough voice to do the job justice. One has to draw a line somewhere. (And then cross over that line with the ball. That's called a try. And it's one way in which you can win a game. This would be one of my first pep talks I would give the Springboks...)

**You are the daughter of well-known theatre couple Keith Galloway and Delia Sainsbury, who founded the**

**Waterfront Theatre School. Did you want to be in theatre from an early age, as well? I mean, what would have happened if you wanted to be an accountant? Or a truck driver?**

Ha! Yes, well I didn't have much choice, being part of my mad family. I was watching my mum teach dance class as soon as I could sit up. I couldn't have had a more fantastic upbringing. I always wanted to perform and honestly don't know what else I would do with my life. I wanted to be a lawyer at one stage, but realised I wanted to be a lawyer like on the TV show *LA Law*. I then wanted to be a forensic entomologist (I know!) but then realised I just wanted to act on *CSI*, so being an actress was the answer.

If I had decided to become a truck driver, my parents would have supported me 100 percent. Although I'd probably be a truck driver with show tunes playing in the truck, or one who'd choreograph a quick number at the truck stop.

**What do you like to do to relax?**

I spend time at the gym, or lying by my pool, reading, with my sister, going out with my friends, or just curled up on the couch with season upon season of *The Tudors*, *Grey's Anatomy* and *Brothers & Sisters*.

● *Happily Ever Laughter!* is at the Theatre on the Bay until November 19. To book, call 021 438 3300.



JO GALLOWAY:  
In *Happily Ever Laughter!* with Alan Committie.