

Comedy for a variety of tastes

From budding comedians to seasoned performers, there's plenty of variety at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, including many Jewish performers. **Danny Gocs reports.**

SINGER Jude Perl takes the audience on an entertaining journey from her embarrassing childhood to present-day Los Angeles in her new show, *Is It Just Me?* at The Butterfly Club from April 7-19.

She blends humour with catchy tunes as she presents a humorous, semi-autobiographical show.

Perl has been performing professionally for the past seven years as a singer and pianist. Last year she starred in the musical *Let's Get It On – The Life & Music Of Marvin Gaye* at the Athenaeum Theatre.

In 2013 she released her debut single *Girls & Boys* and spent much of last year in Los Angeles working on her debut album with Grammy Award-winning producer Brian Paturalski.

Lawyer Joshua Glanc is making his solo debut at the Melbourne International Comedy Festival with *99 Schnitzels (Veal Ain't One)* at The Butterfly Club (March 24 to April 5) and *The Tuxedo Cat* (April 9-19). The show combines sketches and music with social commentary.

Glanc has performed at the festival in 2013 and 2014, and appeared in the *Law Revue* last year.

This year's *Law Revue*, titled *No Regrets*, will be held at the Quilt Room, Trades Hall from March 26-28 and April 2-4, and sees lawyer Brett Taback making his comedy festival debut as he joins the team of six comics presenting witty sketches.

Michael Shafar started performing comedy as part of *Footy Couch*, which was staged at the festival from 2012-14. The show featured a group of commentators giving an irreverent twist to an AFL match in front of a live audience.

This year Shafar, who plays football with AJAX, has branched into stand-up comedy as part of the show *3 Little Gigs*, along with comics Simon Cumming and Kit Richards.

In 2013, Shafar also created a satirical news page called *Round Squares* which has more than 6000 followers.

Last year Steven Harris, 35, a former Bialik College student who goes under the stage name of Magic Steven, made his festival debut with a show about spiritual stories and observations.

This year he's back with a new show, *World of Feelings*, which tackles the themes of self-love, confidence and being true to yourself.

"I try to catch overlooked details and examine them in an attempt to understand life," he explains.

Brisbane comedians Aaron Gocs and Angus Gordon have teamed up to stage *Gold Jacket Comedy*, performing eight shows at the Spleen Bar in Bourke Street from April 7.

For Gocs, who has been performing comedy for the past eight years, the show marks his debut at the Melbourne festival.

"I'm very excited to be part of the festival," says Gocs, fresh from taking part in the Brisbane Comedy Festival earlier this month.

"My show talks about life as a suburban single dad as well as other topics."

American stand-up comedian and actor Ari Shaffir describes his comedy show *Do Mushrooms* as a puppet



Jude Perl blends humour with music in her show, *Is It Just Me?*

show, but dirtier and without the puppets.

Shaffir, who spent two years at a yeshiva in Israel, is performing his show at the Comic's Lounge in North Melbourne from April 16-18.

Shaffir has performed at leading American comedy clubs and frequently tours with Joe Rogan. He hosts the popular podcast *The Skeptic Tank*.

His stand-up album *Revenge for the Holocaust* was a hit on iTunes, and he played the role of the Amazing Racist in the film *InAPPROPRIATE Comedy* starring Rob Schneider and Adrian Brody.

American stand-up comedian Mike Goldstein has performed extensively in the US, Britain and Asia and now calls Australia home.

He performed at the 2009 Melbourne International Comedy Festival and returns this year with his *Transient Joke Monkey* show at Trades Hall in Carlton from March 26 to April 19.

Diary dates

The Melbourne International Comedy Festival runs from March 25 to April 19.

Ari Shaffir, *Do Mushrooms*, Comic's Lounge, 26 Errol St, North Melbourne, April 16-18 at 10.30pm.

Aaron Gocs and Angus Gordon, *Gold Jacket Comedy*, Spleen Bar, 41 Bourke St, Melbourne April 7-18 at 7.30pm.

Joshua Glanc, *99 Schnitzels (Veal Ain't One)*, The Butterfly Club (March 24-April 5) and *The Tuxedo Cat* (April 9-19).

Jude Perl, *Is It Just Me?* The Butterfly Club, 5 Carson Pl, Melbourne, April 7-19 at 9.30pm.

Magic Steven, *World of Feelings*, RMIT Kaleide Theatre, 360 Swanston St, Melbourne, March 26, April 2 and 9 at 9pm.

Michael Shafar, *3 Little Gigs*, The Imperial Hotel, Melbourne, March 25-31 at 7pm.

Mike Goldstein, *Transient Joke Monkey*, Trades Hall, Carlton, March 26 to April 19.

The *Law Revue*, *No Regrets*, Quilt Room, Trades Hall, March 26-28 and April 2-4 at 9.45pm.

Bookings: www.comedyfestival.com.au