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Live at the Orinda 2013By *Sophie Braccini*

You find all kinds of people in the moving world of stand-up comedy, and as comedian David Van Avermaete says, "It has changed a lot since the days guys were just telling bar jokes in front of an audience." This new creativity and diversity will be well represented at the 4th annual "Live at the Orinda" comedy night March 8 at the Orinda Theatre. The fundraising event for the Orinda Chamber of Commerce includes a diverse line-up of young and seasoned comedians bringing different vibes and a lot of energy to the historic theater.

Van Avermaete is new to the line-up this year. He is certainly a unique character on the comedy tour. A former business professional and CEO of Johnson & Johnson, a former pro-golfer, and father of four children ranging from age 9 to 27, he had many lives before heading back to school at the San Francisco Comedy College eight years ago.

"I always loved watching comedians and even used some of their lines to spice up my presentations," he said, "so when I retired, I decided to make it a profession."

He went to school, started getting gigs and got a big

professional push when he won second place at the San

Francisco Comedy Competition five years ago. "It is a very exciting and fun life," says the San Ramon resident, "but if one of my sons told me he wanted to do it for a living I would discourage him. It's like baseball: many try, but just a few get to be the big guys who really succeed." Van Avermaete draws his stories from his life - present and past - to create a performance that's contemporary, relevant to the audience and of course, very funny.

Returning to Orinda will be famous political humorist Will Durst who was a hit last year and will come with all new material. "We added some younger comedians to our mix this year, too," added Orinda Chamber of Commerce's Rick Kattenburg who produces the show. "We'll have for the first time Kabir 'Kabeezy' Singh, one of the fastest rising stand-up comedians in the U.S., and Arthur Gaus who seamlessly moves from machine-gun staccato punch lines to artfully told stories with richly crafted characters."

Calicraft Brewing Company from Walnut Creek is donating the beer that will be served, along with champagne and wine. Kattenburg added that this year the seats of the top three rows of the theater will be sold for \$25 to encourage younger viewers to come. "With our live video feed to the big screen, all seats are great ones," he added.

Advance discounted and VIP tickets may be reserved until March 7 on the Chamber website - www.OrindaChamber.org - or at First Republic Bank, 224 Brookwood Road. Tickets at the door (if available) will be \$40 per person.



Will Durst

Wayne Coy

Kabir Singh (Kabeezy)

Arthur Gaus

David Van Avermaete

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