

The Suggestibles at The Stand

A review of comedy troupe The Suggestibles at The Stand, March 2012



The Suggestibles have been entertaining Geordies since 2003 when founding members Bev Fox and Ian McLaughlin returned to their native North East.

Over the years, the group has had various line-ups as new faces join and old faces reappear. Monday's show at The Stand saw the comeback of 'fan favourite' Chris Price. A Suggestible since 2006, but as of last year touring the world as supervillain, The Riddler, in the critically acclaimed Batman Live stage show.

The Suggestibles have a very simple formula for every show. With no script, they rely on audience suggestions for plots, characters, places and objects which they then turn into hilarious comedy sketches.

Five players made up the line up at the Stand. Bev, Ian and Chris were joined by veteran Carl Kennedy and pianist Alex Ross, who provides an improvised

musical accompaniment to the show. For an hour and a half (minus a brief interval) you are taken on a journey through the audience's weird imagination. This included a heavy metal musical about a taxi journey to North Korea. And a hat contest in Kent, where Ann Widdecombe stuffs a pregnant Labrador into an empty sherbet fountain.

It's the player's ability to switch from one idea to the next that impresses the most. Although the audience feels like they're directing the group, you sense an element of control is somehow being cleverly orchestrated. This level of understanding between the different personalities on stage can only have been achieved through working together for so many years.

The ever-polished performance, regardless of the line-up, has gained The Suggestibles a national and international reputation for brilliant improvised comedy. In 2008, they won a TV Society Award and are building a loyal online fan base. A [great website](#) links to Facebook and Twitter pages, where the show continues with fans and followers contributing responses to various questions and scenarios.

At the start of the show, you're promised each performance is different and I'm curious to find out if this is true. If you're interested, I would suggest you join me at the next Suggestibles show at the Cumberland Arms on 30th March. Forthcoming shows are also planned for April and May. Full details are online at www.thesuggestibles.co.uk.

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