

Preview: Impulse Festival

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Learn the art of improv and see the masters do their best at The Impulse Festival at Toronto's Young Centre

Taking place at the [Young Centre for the Performing Arts](#) in Toronto's historic Distillery District, the [Impulse Festival](#) – presented by [Soulpepper](#) and [The National Theatre of the World](#) – will be offering up four days of world-class improvisational comedy.

This year's festival plays host to 8 troupes, hailing from 7 countries. They'll be performing 16 shows, 15 workshops as well as *Christmas at Choke-Poke Toys* – a 55-hour improvised soap opera marathon.

And true to its name, the [Impulse Festival](#) will be a celebration of whatever thoughts and impulses come to the performers' minds.

The Shows

Ranging from the exploration of the 16th century underground British arts scene to a witty take on plagiarism in the comedy world, the topics covered this [Impulse Festival](#) offer something for every improv aficionado. Take The Script Tease Project ([The National Theatre of the World](#)), for example. This production pushes the boundaries of what people expect from improv. Guest-starring Canada's own superstar, Colin Mochrie, the actors in this show must open a sealed envelope containing a secret plotline and then act out a plausible premise on the spot. For music lovers, *Three Songs – Three Stories* by [Die Gorillas](#) is a production where the show's three performers each request one word from the audience in order to create three parallel musical narratives that must then harmoniously intertwine by the end of the show. Whatever your improv inclination, you will definitely want to check out at least one of the great shows now playing at this year's festival.

The Workshops

Whether you're an improvising novice or you count on your wit to make a living, you're sure to learn new techniques and approaches at this year's workshops. Beginner- and advanced-level workshops are available for signup, and the topic offered are both random and eclectic. Acquire the capability to create believable and relatable personas on stage by signing up for Creating

Characters in Improv – a workshop presented by Thomas Chemnitz from [Die Gorillas](#). For advanced improvisers, Improv Cartography, led by Gordon's Big Bald Head will let you in on the tips and tricks the professionals use to create mental maps of where they want their scenes to go. You can even learn how to sing and dance Bollywood-style at *Improvised Dance and Music Indian Style*, presented by [Improv Comedy Mumbai](#).

The Improv Marathon

A major highlight of this year's Impulse Festival will be *Christmas at Choke-Poke Toys*. Starring household names in the comedy and improv industry like Colin Mochrie, George Stroumboulopoulos and Sean Cullen, this production will attempt to be the longest continuously improvised soap opera ever. The premise centres on the pre-holiday mayhem that arises at the headquarters of a large toy manufacturer, whose mandate is to make the world's cheapest and most hazardous play things. The marathon starts on Friday, December 13 at 3:00 p.m., with each show running one hour and 40 minutes.

Throughout the course of the festival, Mooney on Theatre will be posting reviews of several shows we have attended, so be sure to check back regularly for our updates.

Details:

- [The Impulse Festival](#) runs December 12th to the 15th at the [Young Centre for the Performing Arts](#) (55 Tank House Lane in the Distillery District)
- **Show Tickets:** Single tickets are available for \$20 each for general admission or \$15 for students. A 4-ticket package will cost you \$72 and includes rush access to the rest of the festival
- **Workshops:** The beginner level will set you back \$50, while advanced level workshops cost \$65. You can also book two or more workshops for \$40 each
- Tickets may be purchased [online](#) or by calling the box office at 416-866-8666
- For more information on each of the shows, workshops and the improv marathon, visit [Soulpepper's Festival Details page](#)

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