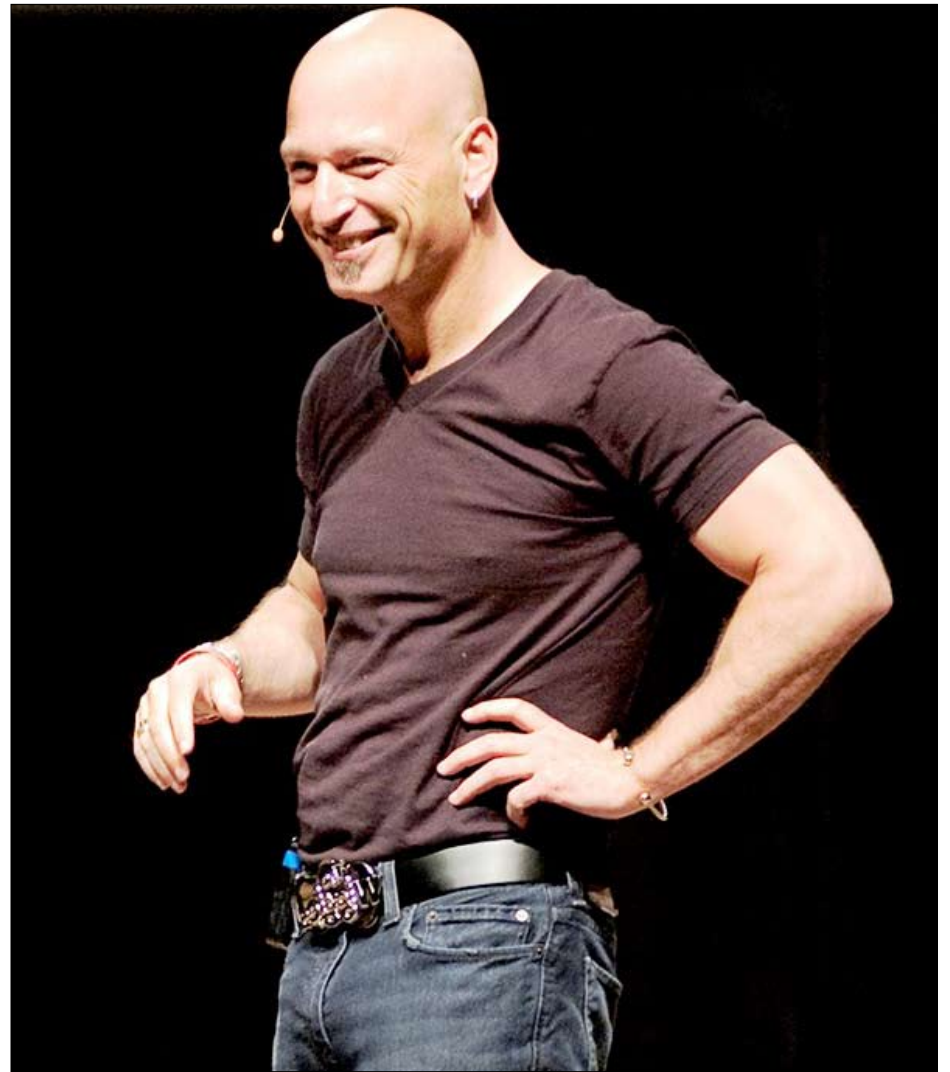


SERIOUS STUFF

“Comedy is simply a funny way of being serious.” Peter Ustinov



HOWIE MANDEL TO VISIT MISSISSAUGA

Brian Chiasson

Howie Mandel is coming to town, unless the event is cancelled. Gerry Dee is also scheduled, but who's he? Why would I think it might be cancelled? Most people can't afford it. It's \$500 to see the show (\$5,000 for a table of 10). Or \$750 for a VIP table seat (\$7,500 for a table).

After Party Fellowship

On the bright side, if you have \$125, you can attend what they call "The Official After Party".

In my mind, the after party will probably be better than the show (if the after party is substantial – not brief). Howie can be extremely funny, but schmoozing with him and other people is more interesting than just sitting at a table and being entertained.

It's like being at church: chatting with an assortment of people for an hour afterward (called fellowship) is far better than sitting and listening to a sermon (unless the sermon is life changing).

I can't imagine Howard or Gerry being a life changing experience, although I could be wrong.

With this in mind, I'm wondering how many people in Mississauga can afford the tickets. Will there be enough investors to fill the seats at The International Centre?

I'm also wondering how many people in the Greater Mississauga Area are willing to pay that much to see him.

After all, if you had \$125 or \$750 to spend on anything you want, would you buy a ticket, or would you

buy a new computer or big screen TV or drop it into your mortgage.

Howie is incredibly intelligent and transparent, although I don't like when he tweets corny sex jokes. I stopped following him on Twitter because of it.

After watching Gerry on YouTube, he seems mildly funny (like a story teller), although he deliberately steps into one off-color routine where he invites his imaginary friend for a coffee using an Italian accent.

Again, with this in mind, I'm wondering if it might be cancelled. It would be different if it was held in a smaller venue, like the Living Arts Centre, although it might be more expensive per capita.

Incredibly Intelligent

Now, perhaps those who buy tickets are not actually doing it to see the entertainment. They might, instead, be making a donation to the Credit Valley Hospital Foundation, which is organizing the event as a fund raiser.

Regarding the Credit Valley Hospital, I'm deeply grateful for the services they provide. In 2007, my mom lived there for 41 days (one day short of six weeks).

There were a few negative circumstances, like:

► Three of the nurses went out of their way to shirk their responsibilities – one of them even made my mom feel guilty because she was in too much pain to help herself, the nurse claiming that she didn't believe my mom.

► My mom got C. difficile (Clostridium difficile) after she was hospitalized and the nurses and doctors avoided her as much as possible over a few days, without completely

neglecting her. At the time, the media reported that there was one unidentified patient in a Mississauga hospital that contracted C. difficile.

► If I called the hospital to try to find out what was going on, the staff was not helpful. However, if you knew where to find her bed, or a family member could show you the way, all you had to do was visit to find out.

Positive Circumstances

On the positive side, and here's why I'm grateful:

► There were several exceptional nurses. One of them was off-the-charts, going way out of her way to meet the needs of all patients and to serve her fellow workers. She was awesome.

► My mom had a cyst and, after it took several days to discover it, they dealt with it effectively.

► I worked a 12-hour day at the time and the hospital allowed me to visit before work, at 1 p.m., and after work, at 2:30 a.m. Yes, I started at 2 p.m. each day and ended in the morning on the following day at 2 a.m.

And finally, with this in mind, if you can support the hospital, let me encourage you, even if just to volunteer. There are countless people who need you.

For Howie tickets or to volunteer: (905) 813-1100.

Good luck on getting a response – they didn't return my call or email before this paper went to print.

Please forgive me, usually my features are far more inspiring.

Perhaps I'm losing it and need hospitalization.

Brian Chiasson has 25 years in newspapers and radio.



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