

"If you don't want it printed, don't let it happen."

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Tig Notaro discusses career moments, role as comedian

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Comedian Tig Notaro remembers growing up with laughter filling the walls of her house. Whether it be the TV shows, movies and stand-up acts blaring from the television screen amid the sticky Southern heat of her hometowns, or the funny people who raised her such as her single mother and elder brother, Notaro's childhood memories are steeped in humor.

Comedy — it was something Notaro said she always wanted to get into but never imagined it would take her to where she is now.

Today, Notaro is an Emmy- and Grammy-nominated stand-up comedian, writer, radio contributor and actor. She's known to be a favorite guest on numerous talk shows, including "Ellen," "The Late Show with Stephen Colbert" and "The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon." Notaro has written, directed and starred in numerous television shows, and she currently hosts the podcasts "Don't Ask Tig" and "Tig and Cheryl: True Story." Her 2016 memoir, "I'm Just a Person," is a New York Times bestseller.

Notaro is coming to The Arts Campus At Willits tonight to perform a stand-up comedy act in front of a Roaring Fork Valley



Tig Notaro, as seen in this ComicCon foto from 2019. Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

audience. The single-night comedy show marks a stop on Notaro's Hello Again Tour — which kicked off in January 2022 and will continue through spring 2023.

At 51 years old, the renowned comedian has performed at multiple venues across the country and world. While Aspen has been on the map several times throughout her career, tonight's show at TACAW will be a first for Notaro and the midvalley arts campus.

"I love Colorado in general, and I always enjoy going back," Notaro said. "It's certainly fun to step into a new and different venue — I'm always in search of what my favorite venues are, maybe this will be my

new favorite one."

Notaro's love for Colorado goes back to the beginning of her career; her entry to the entertainment industry started in Denver. When she was little, Notaro's family moved from Pass Christian, Mississippi, to a suburb on the outskirts of Houston, Texas, and school wasn't necessarily a priority for the young jokester.

"I was the typical class clown," Notaro said.

She decided to drop out of high school in the ninth grade and move to Denver, where she became involved in the music

industry as a band manager. Promoting bands quickly took her to Los Angeles — a city booming in comedy clubs in the 1990s — and it was then that Notaro plunged herself into the world of stand-up.

She recalls her first open mic experience at a club in LA as both “exhilarating and terrifying,” stating that she got laughs from people, but those laughs were somewhat startling at first. From there, Notaro said she worked her way up by booking numerous open-mic gigs at comedy clubs across LA for the next year or two. And the comedian’s relationship with her audiences transformed from that initial startling reaction to feeling as though she’s laughing with friends at a party.

“I feel like I look at all audiences just as friends at a party, and I’m not thinking too much beyond being in the exact moment — there isn’t time for me to be thinking about too much,” Notaro said. “My general sense on stage is, these people are all friends of mine and we’re at a party having a great time.”

While Notaro can think of many major moments she’s had at different points in her career — such as getting her first gig at a “legit” comedy club and appearing on television for the first time — the comedian said that one of the most obvious turning-point moments in both her career and life was on Aug. 3, 2012, when she addressed her cancer diagnosis during a live stand-up routine on the stage of her LA homebase club, Largo.

Notaro’s vulnerable set immediately went viral, and in

the years following, she discussed her journey with breast cancer on stages nationwide, including a show in 2014 at Town Hall in New York City where the comedian performed part of the act topless.

“I don’t tend to stir things up a lot with my material, unless people are uncomfortable with hearing about being gay or having had cancer,” she said.

When discussing her role as a comedian today, Notaro said that all of her material is informed by personal experience. She also mentioned how touring again since the pandemic has made her more appreciative of what she does — “what all comedians do for the public,” Notaro said, which is to fill a room with laughter.

“Whether it’s the silliest, most nonsensical thing I’m discussing on stage or whether I’m speaking out against or in support of someone or something, it’s all from a personal place — it’s always something real,” Notaro said. “There are some comedians who go up there and are detached from what they’re talking about, but whatever I’m talking about on stage, I’m very connected to.”

Notaro’s show tonight at TACAW is currently sold out with the option to join a waitlist. Doors open at 6 p.m.; the show starts at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$68. To check waitlist availability, visit tacaw.org.