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Headliners Announced for 2023 TC Comedy Fest

All-star lineup to bring nationally recognized talent to Traverse City in February

The 2023 Traverse City Comedy Fest will feature an all-star lineup of national headliners including **Maria Bamford, Tom Papa, ISMO, Dean Edwards, and Jackie Kashian**, festival organizer the Downtown Traverse City Association announced today. Tickets for the headlining shows go on sale Tuesday, November 1 at 9am at TCComedyFest.com. Dozens of additional performers and events will be announced in the coming weeks for the inaugural festival, which will take place February 2-4, 2023 at venues across the downtown Traverse City area.

Comedy legend **Maria Bamford** was the first female comic to have two half-hour “Comedy Central Presents” specials and starred alongside Patton Oswalt, Zach Galifianakis, and Brian Posehn in the Comedy Central series “The Comedians of Comedy” and Netflix’s “Comedians of Comedy: The Movie.” She also created and starred in the cult web series “The Maria Bamford Show,” in which she plays all the characters. The 2014 winner of the American Comedy Award for Best Club Comic, Bamford is also known for her prolific voiceover work on shows including “Big Mouth,” “BoJack Horseman,” “Bob’s Burgers,” “Adventure Time,” and PBS’s Emmy-winning series “Word Girl.” She played DeBrie Bardeaux on Netflix’s “Arrested Development” and had a recurring role on the ABC hit series “Fresh Off the Boat.”

Bamford is revered for her deeply personal and experimental comedy about mental illness, including the Netflix comedy series “Lady Dynamite” and three hour-long stand-up specials: “Weakness is the Brand,” “Old Baby,” and “Maria Bamford: The Special, Special, Special.” Stephen Colbert called her his “favorite comedian on earth,” and Judd Apatow said she is “the funniest woman in the world.” Bamford has appeared on “CONAN,” “The Tonight Show,” “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert,” and “Late Night with Seth Meyers.”

With more than 20 years as a stand-up comedian, **Tom Papa** is one of the top comedic voices in the country. Papa has had four hour-long stand-up specials, including the wildly successful Netflix Original “Tom Papa: You’re Doing Great!” His other critically acclaimed specials include “Human Mule,” “Freaked Out” and “Tom Papa Live in New York City,” two of which were directed by Rob Zombie. He’s a regular guest on “The Joe Rogan Experience” podcast and hosts his own podcast series, “Breaking Bread with Tom Papa.” Papa hosts the daily Netflix radio show “What A Joke With Papa And Fortune” on SiriusXM’s Netflix Channel. He also hosts the hit SiriusXM show “Come to Papa,” with residencies at Largo in Los Angeles and The Village Underground in NYC.

A contributing writer to New Yorker Magazine, Papa has released two books and has been a recurring performer on “Live From Here” (formerly “A Prairie Home Companion”) and NPR’s “Wait, Wait...Don’t Tell Me!” He hosted his own Food Network TV series, “Baked,” and starred opposite Lily Taylor in the film “Paper Spiders” and opposite Matt Damon in “The Informant.” He appeared alongside Michael Douglas and Matt Damon in the HBO film “Behind the Candelabra,” hosted the NBC series “The Marriage Ref,” and had a recurring role opposite Julia Louis-Dreyfus on the CBS series “The New Adventures of Old Christine.” Papa also starred in his own NBC series, “Come to Papa.”

Called “the most insightful comic in Finland,” **ISMO** immediately made a splash with his U.S. debut in 2014 at the Laugh Factory in Hollywood, where he won the title of “The Funniest Person in the World.” He has performed to sold-out crowds around the world, including the U.S., Canada, Australia, Mexico, and Europe. Known for his unique observational comedy that makes people see familiar things differently through his new-to-America perspective, ISMO was the first Finnish comedian to perform on “CONAN,” with his clip becoming one of the most-viewed late-night sets of all time at over 106 million views. He was handpicked by Gabriel Iglesias to open for Iglesias’ groundbreaking special at Dodger Stadium in front of 60,000 fans, and wrote and starred in two seasons of his own sitcom, “ISMO.” He wrote the best-selling book “US & us: Surviving Hollywood with Comedy” – which became one of Finland’s most popular audiobooks – and is writing a second book set to debut in 2023. He has filmed four specials and appeared on “The Late Late Show with James Corden,” NBC’s “Bring the Funny,” and NBC’s “Last Call with Carson Daly.” In 2019, ISMO teamed up with Merriam Webster to release a digital comedy series of videos roasting the English language.

Dean Edwards is an American actor, comedian, and writer best known for his two-year tenure as a cast member of “Saturday Night Live.” Celebrated for his numerous remarkable celebrity impressions including Denzel Washington, Dave Chappelle, Jay-Z, Mo’Nique, Chris Rock, 50

Cent, and Eddie Murphy, Edwards recently showed off his talents in his first comedy special, Netflix's "Tiffany Haddish Presents: THEY READY, Season 2." Edwards had supporting roles in "Top Five," Spiderman 3," and "Tony 'n' Tina's Wedding" and has had guest appearances on "The Sopranos" and "Deadbeat." Edwards helped workshop and create the character of Donkey for two years in the DreamWorks Broadway production of "Shrek the Musical," leading him to be selected as Eddie Murphy's vocal double as Donkey in other DreamWorks projects. He has voiced multiple roles on Showtime's "Our Cartoon President" and appeared on Robert Smigel's new FOX series "Let's Be Real." In February 2020, he launched his own podcast called "The Dean Edwards Show," chosen as the flagship show for the new Digital Podcast Network.

Jackie Kashian has been performing stand-up for over 35 years. Last seen on the "Late Late Show with James Corden," her new special (and album of the same title) "Stay-Kashian" was #1 on Amazon and iTunes and debuted at #3 on Billboard's Comedy Chart. Kashian has over 75 million listens on Spotify and Pandora. She has two podcasts, including "The Dork Forest," where since 2006 she's talked with people about what they love to do, think about, and collect. She also has a podcast with Laurie Kilmartin called "The Jackie and Laurie Show," where they talk about the thing they both love to do and think about: stand-up comedy.

Maria Bamford will perform at the Traverse City Comedy Club on February 3 at 7pm and at the City Opera House on February 4 at 7pm. Tom Papa will perform at the City Opera House on February 2 at 7pm. ISMO will perform at the Traverse City Comedy Club on February 2 at 9pm, February 3 at 7pm (with Bamford), and February 4 at 7:30pm. Dean Edwards will perform at the City Opera House on February 2 at 9:30pm and at the Traverse City Comedy Club on February 3 at 9:30pm and February 4 at 10pm. Jackie Kashian will perform at the Traverse City Comedy Club on February 3 at 7pm (with Bamford and ISMO) and at the City Opera House on February 4 at 7pm (with Bamford). Tickets for all headlining shows range from \$35-\$45 and go on sale Tuesday, November 1 at 9am at TCCComedyFest.com. Additional festival performers and events will be announced in the coming weeks.

For booking inquiries for the 2023 Traverse City Comedy Fest, [click here](#). For media inquiries, contact Jean Derenzy at jean@downtowntc.com or (231) 922-2050. Follow the Traverse City Comedy Fest on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter at [@tccomedyfest](#).

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