

Press Release
For immediate distribution

Montreal's Just For Laughs and Juste pour rire to hold virtual interactive festivals this Fall

The festivals will capture the spirit of the beloved comedy festivals online

Montreal (July 21, 2020) – With theatres closed, and stages silenced, the stand-up comedy sector has been one of the most profoundly disrupted industries as a result of COVID-19. With no clear indication when theatres will reopen fully and large crowds can gather, the **Just For Laughs Group** has made the decision to move ahead with Montreal's annual world-renowned **Just For Laughs Festival** and its well-established French sister festival, **Juste pour rire**, in collaboration with Loto-Québec – however, always the trailblazer, for the first time in its 38 year history, the festivals will be virtual this Fall.

The current demand for quality comedy content inspired the Just For Laughs Group decision to keep their postponed plans and take their festivals online this Fall, looking at it as an opportunity to rethink how comedy festivals can operate in a virtual space.

Just For Laughs will be 100% virtual, and Juste pour rire will be a hybrid of in-person, pre-recorded and virtual performances. Both festivals will be hosted on a new virtual online portal where users can choose among numerous free offerings, which will emulate the regular festival experience Montreal is notorious for offering its dedicated festivalgoers and industry friends.

"More than ever, we want to maintain our position as an industry leader by creating innovative comedy events that allow our artists to work and to make the highest-quality comedy available to the public," says Charles Décarie, President and CEO of the Just For Laughs Group. "Despite all the changes our industry has been going through, the most important thing for us is to satisfy our festival-goers. We're sparing no effort to present the best festival possible, while respecting the health measures that are in force."

JOIN JUST FOR LAUGHS ONLINE FOR AN UNPRECEDENTED TWO-DAY COMEDY FESTIVAL

Just For Laughs is currently working on the programming details that will be 100% virtual and consist of free, funny, interactive online gatherings, conversations, panels, performances, and events which will take place over two consecutive days, October 9 and October 10, 2020.

JFL Montreal's **ComedyPRO**, Toronto's **JFL42** and **ComedyCon** will join the party online, with their unique brand of comedy programming that caters to both comedy fans and industry experts.

"With no precise indication of when borders will reopen, and faced with soaring demand for high-quality digital comedy content, we've made the decision to move our festival online, while always maintaining our focus on the excellence of our offerings – an excellence that is recognized and appreciated throughout the world," says **Bruce Hills, President for Just For Laughs**.

The Ethnic Show, The Nasty Show and the Bill Burr concert show will reschedule to 2021.

Programming details for the virtual festival will be announced in the weeks ahead.

JUSTE POUR RIRE A HYBRID FORMAT, ACCESSIBLE TO EVERYONE

Juste pour rire will take place from September 29 to October 10, and will host a number of innovative, free and paid online and onstage performances that audiences have never been seen before! In addition to this collection of online offerings, if Quebec health guidelines permit, there will be live and pre-recorded theatre shows. All of your favourite comics are coming together to participate in this one-of-a-kind festival for the first time in Juste pour rire history.

"After presenting the HAHAHA digital festival back in May, we really listened to all the feedback we received from our fans, and we are confident we will present a hybrid festival that will go even further toward pleasing the public and satisfying expectations," says **Patrick Rozon, Vice President of Juste pour rire**.

"Assuming the new health measures are maintained, we're thrilled to be able to offer a part of our festival before a live Montreal audience. Above all, it was very important to us to continue to present a portion of the festival that was free of charge, as we've been doing for 38 years!" notes **Charles Décarie**, President and CEO of the **Just for Laughs Group**. *"We are so pleased to be giving comedy lovers around the world free access to the online portion of both of our festivals. We believe that in doing so, we're making sure that the best comedy from Quebec and around the world remains accessible to everyone, and continues to widen its popular appeal."*

THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS

The **Just for Laughs Group** would like to thank all its partners, who have been tremendous allies in bringing about the success of this initiative. First, we'd like to acknowledge the support of **La Capitale Insurance and Financial Services** and **Loto-Québec**. We also extend our thanks to our public partners: the **City of Montreal**, the **Government of Quebec**, the **Government of Ontario** and the **Government of Canada**.

About the Just for Laughs Group

Founded in 1983, the Just for Laughs Group is the most important player in the global comedy industry. Under the management of Groupe CH, Bell Media and ICM Partners, the company is an international powerhouse in the creation of multi-platform comedy content. Every year, it

entertains millions of spectators with its festivals on Canadian and international stages, in Montreal – the biggest comedy event in the world – as well as in Toronto, Vancouver, Sydney and Bermuda. The Group organizes shows featuring thousands of comics from Canada and other countries, including established artists as well as up-and-comers; stages its own comedy shows and musicals; produces touring shows; broadcasts digital and televised content (notably *Gags*, which is shown in 150 countries and followed by an online audience of ten million on YouTube); manages talented creators; and is the originator of the ComedyPRO and JPR Pro professional gatherings. hahaha.com

###

Source: Just for Laughs Group

Media contact:

C2C Communications

Charlene Coy

Charlene@c2ccommunications.com

info@c2ccommunications.com