



LYNDA ALLISON

Bob Cates sits with his feet outstretched and his head resting on his hand in a philosophical thinker pose.

He describes himself as an introvert, weird, and eccentric. He likes science fiction, extreme sports, and cries during sad commercials.

While he studied commerce at McMaster University, he practised his true love -- juggling. His friend claims he's "a businessman who likes to juggle."

In fact, he loves it.

This Best Entertainer of the Year award winner now performs for educational institutions, churches, youth rallies, business forums, festivals, theatres and Caribbean cruise ships.

He is successful because his act, "Comedy in Motion", defines variety. He combines juggling, unicycling, Chinese yo-yo and plate spinning with comedy and audience participation.

His show transcends eras, incorporating skills from by-gone days and giving them a modern spin using special effects. He knows that in order to win an audience, his theatrical skills are more important than his technical juggling skills.

"People, they want to laugh, they want to have fun, and they want to be entertained," Cates says. "You don't necessarily have to be the best juggler in the world; however, I do have a lot of highly technical skills, so I present them in a comical way."

In Grade 13, Cates discovered juggling as a fluke when he and a friend saw it on TV.

"My friend told me he could do it," says Cates with notable awe in his voice "and sure enough he could do it. Somehow he had learned."

Cates also learned. "I taught myself one night spending about three hours in the basement with two tennis balls. I started practising more and more. I got some books out of the library and went on to four balls within a few months."



Combining juggling, unicycling, Chinese yo-yo and plate spinning, Bob Cates' comedy act defines variety.

Once Cates found he could do it, juggling became like an addiction. Before long he was dazzling his high school friends with a three-and-a-half minute talent show.

More inspiration came at a Montreal juggling convention which featured 1,000 jugglers.

"You're just blown away. You can't believe the level. Little kids are doing what you can only dream of doing," he says. "You go away and you don't know whether to cry or practise. Hopefully you practise, and you get better and better."

While at the Baptist Leadership Education Centre, Cates and his friends learned to ride the unicycle in the hallways of his dorm.

"There's an awful lot of falling involved in learning the unicycle," he says. "We smashed so many walls, leaving holes in the drywall, that they banned small-wheeled vehicles in the dorm."

Cates is always looking for new ways to keep his show unique and fresh. Currently he is developing an invention for a human laser show.

The laser glasses and flashing bracelets go on, the lights go off. Cates performs amazing feats with a black light Chinese yo-yo.

Oohs and aaahs resound in the audience around you. Or, are those your own? The introverted thinker is doing what he loves -- juggling.

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