

Edinburgh Festival Fringe 2017 – Mark Row

From zero experience of stand-up to the fringe in just a year...
you're having a laugh!

Mark Row and The Free Festival Presents

A1: The Long Road to Edinburgh

Did you hear the one about the teacher who decided to take a stand-up comedy show to the largest arts festival in the world, despite having no prior experience? Well you have now – because that's the ambitious plan of circuit newbie Mark Row, who this summer is performing at the Edinburgh Festival, and it's really no joke!



In August last year, 36 year old Mark began his journey along 'The Long Road to Edinburgh' and ever since then he has been learning the craft, writing material, and packing in gigs to prepare himself for this incredible challenge.

If that wasn't difficult enough, he has been filming the entire experience to create a documentary showing the reality of a year in the life of a brand-new comedian. Explaining how it all began, Mark said "I had this idea that most people's view of stand-up comedy is 'Live at The Apollo', and 'Mock the Week', and that all of the comedians have great shows every night. I wanted to show what life is really like for new comedians on the circuit, and give a glimpse into just how tough performing live comedy at the grass roots really is"

Fortunately, he hasn't been walking this long road alone. Promoters Ben Robinson and Stephen Powell of 'The Comedy Cow' in Milton Keynes have been supporting Mark along the way, and

have provided many opportunities for him to perform, putting him on stage at their regular nights at The MK Dons Stadium and even staging gigs especially for him to test out his new material. Ben was very honest about his initial thoughts saying "When Mark first told me what he was planning, I thought he was mad... having been in Edinburgh and run comedy shows, I couldn't think of anything more terrifying; but hats off to him."

Also keeping him on the right path, Mark has been given help and advice from some of the best in the business. Making the documentary has given him the chance to interview established TV comedians James Acaster, Mark Dolan and Dane

Baptiste, along with Oliver Double, the UK's first lecturer in stand-up comedy. Mark has really appreciated the help "Everyone has been so supportive...A lot of them have been quite honest about just how big a task this is going to be, but they all said if I get out and gig as much as possible, there is nothing to stop me succeeding" And that advice has paid off, with Mark securing spots at clubs all over the country, and winning The Comedy Gladiators competition at Riproar Comedy Club in Bristol, as well as a 'gong shows' for Funhouse Comedy in The Midlands and Honest Comedy in Banbury, all at his first attempt.

What began as a crazy idea, has now become a daunting reality, as Mark has confirmed his venue for the festival. With shows every night for the full three and a half week run at in Edinburgh, he knows that this will be a marathon not a sprint. If you want to follow Mark's journey all the way to Edinburgh you can keep up to date on Facebook.com/markrowcomedy, Twitter @markrow80 or Instagram @mrmarkrow.

Alternatively go to www.thecomedycow.co.uk for regular updates and to see where you can see him performing over the coming weeks and

months.

Venue: Moriarty's Bar, 161 Lothian
Road, Edinburgh

Tickets: Free, unticketed

Dates: 3rd-27th

August

Time: 19: 30 (45 mins)