



HOMECOMING FIT FOR A KING

Roll out the red carpet! Louisville, Kentucky's hometown hero, comedy magic star Mac King is coming home this summer.

That's right, the kid who started out doing those freebee birthday parties and \$25 shows for the Kiwanis Club is taking a few days off from the stage of Harrah's Las Vegas — where *The Mac King Comedy Magic Show* has been successfully playing to sold-out houses for six years — and is traveling to

Louisville, where he'll be headlining at the 79th Annual S.A.M. National Convention. And the lucky attendees

who are heading to the Blue Grass State for the July 12-15 convention are in for an experience that promises to be a major show-business event.

"It's actually a *celebration*," says S.A.M. Executive Show Producer R.G. Smith, who prefers to call his convention productions "shows for a reason." Last year, when Mac agreed to bring his entire one-hour-plus Vegas show to Louisville, R.G. began expanding on the festive theme, adding more talent to the lineup. Losander from Las Vegas, Tony Chapek from Atlanta, Fujimoto from Japan, and Terry Seabrooke from England were invited to the party. The result is a Saturday night party spectacle that's called the *Homecoming Celebration with Mac King & Friends*.

"It's a real coup for the S.A.M. to get Mac, who's one of the nicest guys in all of magic, to perform his complete Las Vegas show," says R.G. "And to have him bring some of his magic friends home with him is the icing on the cake." So, if you've not witnessed Mac King's hilarious show that's only been seen in the city called the "Magic Capital of the World," now's the chance to be a part of magic history and see it all right here in Mac's hometown.

What other "shows for a reason" does R.G. Smith have up his sleeve? Funny you should ask, because funny they are. The other two galas he's producing are about wagering "friendly competitions." And R.G. is quick to point out that this is not competition of the Paul Critelli kind [see page 66, "Speaking Out," for an interview with the S.A.M. Contest of Magic chairperson Paul Critelli]. Instead, Mr. Smith's two galas are themed around a humorous magical rivalry between the two genders.

Thursday night will see *Bargatze's Boys* firing the opening volley of folly. It's an all-male show, and with the exception of releasing the names of Stephen



Stephen Bargatze, who will bamboozle you with the Eleven Bill trick one minute and have you in stitches with his slapstick Straitjacket Escape the next, hosts the Thursday night gala, *Bargatze's Boys*.

Bargatze and Johnny Thompson, R.G. is holding back until next month on announcing the names of the other magical, musical, and comedic acts. However, he does warn, "On Thursday night, Stephen and 'his boys' do know that they are going to have to present their absolute best, because the cast of the Friday night gala (with one of the performers being Pam Thompson) will be out in the house watching every move the guys make."

Come Friday night, the curtain goes up on the *The All-Gal Gala*. Las Vegas magical entertainer Arian Black has been dreaming and scheming with Mr. Smith to produce a fantastic evening of all-female magic, illusion, comedy, and variety. "These talented ladies plan to show Bargatze's Boys how it should and can be done," says R.G. "We don't know how the guys will take this 'one up(wo)manship,' but it definitely will be fun." It's rumored that Pam Thompson will be redefining the role of "Company" in *The Great Tomsoni & Co.* act.

That's three theme shows for this year's convention. And it sounds like each of these productions is destined to join the ranks of other great "shows for a reason" from past conventions — productions like *Legacies* in 2002 in New York City, 2003's *Soul-diers of Sorcery* in Las Vegas, Topas & Roxanne's full-evening show in St. Louis, and *Mysteries of Japan* last year in Boston. Add the Wednesday night *S.A.M. Contest of Magic Show* to the mix and you've got an array of shows with something to please absolutely everyone.

For best theater seating for all of the gala shows, which will be staged at the Kentucky Center for the Performing Arts, you are encouraged to register early. Another incentive to register now is the fact that the first 750 people signing up for the convention will receive free cruises on the Belle of Louisville. The grand old sternwheeler, now a National Historic Landmark, will be taking convention attendees on a magical mystery tour of the beautiful Ohio River. Close-up magicians and walk-around entertainers will abound on the different decks, and



Arian Black, who was honored with the international "Female Magician of the Year Award for 2004," and has starred in her own Las Vegas show *Secrets*, appears on Friday night's *All-Gal Gala*.

there will be plenty of refreshments, as the Belle's steam calliope fills the air with music.

Back at convention headquarters, the Marriott Louisville Downtown (where there's a guaranteed \$99/night rate!), you'll experience non-stop magic, magic, magic, and more magic. There's a full schedule of lectures, close-up shows, teach-ins by the pros, the *Stars of Tomorrow* show, the S.A.M. University and Master Classes, the extremely popular S.A.M. Sessions and, of course, the place where you'll see all the latest wonders, the S.A.M. Dealers Room.

Remember if you register prior to March 1, you receive the early-bird discount: \$155 for adult members, spouses, and children 16 and over; \$115 for children under 16; \$95 for SYM members; and \$195 for non-members. It's easy to register online at www.magicsam.com or by calling John or Virginia Apperson at (618) 451-9749. Do it now! ♦

**BE IN LOUISVILLE
JULY 12 - 15!**

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