

# **JAMES CAMPBELL**

**“Campbell’s stand-up for kids has acquired almost holy status. Don’t miss.”  
SUNDAY TIMES**

James Campbell is the only Stand-Up Comedian for Children in the world. Think there is no such thing - well think again. Over the last ten years, James has been bringing his unique form of comedy for all to theatres, over 1000 schools and festivals all over the world. James talks about everything that is relevant to kids and anyone who has ever been a kid – everything from parents to Playstations, why we have hair and what he had for breakfast. His show is aimed at children aged six and over; their parents; and anyone who enjoys top quality comedy without the swearing.

**“The best sort of absurdist comedy there is.” THE GUARDIAN**

In 2004, James was a regular on **BBC1’s Mysti Show** for three months and also piloted his own show - James Campbell’s Silly Experiment - for the **Disney Channel** with Graham Norton’s **So TV**. James regularly appears on local radio and has been a guest on Radio 4, Radio 2 (Mark Radcliffe) , BBC Radio Wales, BBC Radio Scotland and countless Canadian and Australian stations. James has appeared on BBC Breakfast with Dermott and Natasha; Rise on Channel 4; CBBC’s Exchange Show and was described by Iain Rankin on **Newsnight** as:

**“The best comedian I have ever seen.”**

James has made numerous appearances at the Edinburgh Festival most recently the Ballroom at the prestigious Assembly Rooms in 2004 and at the Spiegeltent in 2005. He has also performed his Comedy 4 Kids show at the Montreal Just For Laughs Comedy Festival; the Hay-on-Wye Literary Festival; the Adelaide Fringe; The Melbourne Comedy Festival and many other UK comedy festivals and The Comedy Store, London. James’ largest audience record is 4000 children at the Royal Albert Hall last year. James also regularly hosts special events for charities and frequently works as an MC for the Ulster Symphony Orchestra narrating such works as Peter and the Wolf. Most recently, he has completed a highly acclaimed Broadway season at The New Victory Theatre in New York.

**“He belongs on stage” THE NEW YORK TIMES**

In 2005, James launched a unique **Comedy Club 4 Kids** in the **Menier Chocolate Factory** near London Bridge. The show consists of James as host with comedians from the adult circuit performing sets for children and also includes occasional open spots from children who have been taught by James in his **Academy of Comedy 4 Kids** for children between the ages of 7 and 13 who want to learn the skills of stand-up.

**“I should have given him six stars – just too brilliant.” SUNDAY HERALD**

James also writes plays and was one of the winners of the South London International Playwriting Festival in 1994. His children’s play The Onomatopoeia Society made its debut in Edinburgh ’05 and in ’06 the production travelled to Australia for the Adelaide Fringe Festival. James’ stories for children are being considered by various publishers and at the moment and he has two audio books available on CD. James also writes poems, articles and songs.

**“My seven-year-old was howling with laughter and so was I.” DAILY MAIL**

For more information, take a look at James’ website: [www.jamescampbell.info](http://www.jamescampbell.info)

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## Family Fare

By LAUREL GRAEBER (NYT)

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### So This British Guy Walks Into a Theater

James Campbell may specialize in humor for children, but he does not do children's humor. No knock-knock jokes. No expressions that parents have ruled out at the dinner table (unless you count "shut up"). And no routines involving flatulence, though he does do a bit about being stuck on a bus in traffic while desperately needing a bathroom.

Fortunately, that comic business succeeds. His facial expressions alone set the youngest audience members giggling. And when he defines the kind of traffic he means -- when it's "quicker to lie down and just use your eyelids to drag yourself along" -- the adults are chuckling, too. And that's the key to Mr. Campbell's charm: all through a show with the somewhat cutesy title "Comedy 4 Kids," he makes grown-ups laugh.

Mr. Campbell, now at the New Victory Theater, is an Englishman making his American debut, and he is to be commended for ensuring that on this side of the Atlantic, no jokes thud like trucks driving into New York potholes. He gets considerable mileage out of cultural differences. He pokes fun, for instance, at the United States educational system's reverence for nurturing self-esteem, a method that is not, shall we say, very British. He has also done his homework on American youth's favorite pastimes, one result being

an inspired riff on an imaginary video game, Grand Theft Tractor.

Mr. Campbell is equally adept at physical comedy, whether evoking the uncle who dances really badly at a family wedding or imitating a cappuccino. (In his universe, that's a tiny monk, not a coffee drink.) He knows how to work the audience as well, leading it in a slightly rude -- though never vulgar -- love song.

You can imagine Mr. Campbell as a great dad, and he is going to become one. Or so he said onstage on Saturday, adding that he and his wife thought it was time to disclose the news. He asked that it be published: "It will save us a few phone calls."

I'm happy to oblige. Mr. Campbell shouldn't be wasting his time on the phone; he belongs onstage.

"Comedy 4 Kids," through April 16 at the New Victory Theater, 209 West 42nd Street, Manhattan, (212) 239-6200. Tonight at 7; tomorrow at 2 and 7 p.m.; Sunday at noon and 5 p.m. Full schedule: [www.newvictory.org](http://www.newvictory.org). Tickets: \$10, \$20 and \$30.

<http://thescotsman.scotsman.com/>  
Sat 20 Aug 2005

## **James Campbell's Comedy 4 Kids**

*KIRSTY MCLUCKIE*

### **JAMES CAMPBELL'S COMEDY 4 KIDS SPIEGEL GARDEN (VENUE 87)**

IT MUST be hard to handle a ten-year-old heckler, but James Campbell is obviously used to dealing with them. "You said that last time," Joe shouted several times through the course of the hour. It was enough to make a lesser stand-up cry, not least because Campbell uses the improvised style to great effect; jokes seeming to come directly off the top of his head. He was not to be floored by the comment, however, and cunningly turned the audience against Joe, to the point where we booed the child and cheered the comedian.

Campbell is like the cool uncle who is ruder than the kids' mums and dads let them be, but the surreal quality of his musings is much cleverer. He explains why babies start off bald and stupid - their growing brains push out the hair stored in the head, apparently, and you fear that the reaction from the audience might leave some sitting in a puddle.

Despite taking the mickey, he also remains very firmly on the children's side. One conversation with a small boy in the audience leads them both to conclude that the amount of time you are allowed to spend on the PlayStation depends very much on whether or not your mum is in the kitchen with some friends and a bottle of Frascati.

This level of rapport means that Campbell inspires devotion in his audience that comedians for adults would kill for. If any fan misses his stand-up at the Spiegel Gardens, he has written a play called James Campbell's Onomatopoeia Society, which he's performing at the Gilded Balloon. His fellow cast members were at the back of the tent for the stand-up show, a fact he pointed out at the end. "They were all outside having a fag a minute ago," piped up Joe, who surely will be the first to sign up for Campbell's children's comedy workshops promised for Edinburgh next year.

- Today and 27 August, 4pm

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<http://www.edinburgh-festivals.com/topics.cfm?tid=933>

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