

John Kerwin Reveals What He Really Thinks About Los Angeles

Where iconic late night talk show hosts such as Johnny Carson marked milestones in their career by showing their funniest and most awkward moments on camera, John Kerwin doesn't wait for a career milestone to share his funny and awkward moments with his fans.

Working in a genre that is often heavily scrutinized, John Kerwin is rising to the top ranks of late night talk show hosts by remaining true to who he is and remaining equally true to his adoring fans. While he's as classy as Johnny Carson always was, he can also hold his own against any of the other talk show hosts currently on TV.

So much more than just a funny guy, Kerwin is a proud graduate of

Cornell University. Upon graduating he embarked on a comedy career with the hopes of eventually doing what he has now achieved; hosting a variety talk show. He clawed his way to the top by starting out in the NYC comedy club scene, which got him the exposure he needed to get his foot in the door. After moving to Los Angeles and emceeing at The Hollywood Improv Comedy Club, one night Jerry Seinfeld happened to be present. Some ad-libbed back and forth comedy between Seinfeld and Kerwin not only greatly amused the crowd, but landed Kerwin a deal for a talk show.

More than 10 years later, Kerwin is still making crowds laugh. His impressive social media following alone proves how much viewers all over the world love Kerwin's brand of humor.

A quick glance at the set of Kerwin's talk show appears to be just the same as any other; and in some respects it is. Like any other talk show he has a house band, a desk and he interviews celebrities—but perhaps that's where the similarities end. Unlike many other talk shows, those attending a taping of Kerwin's will notice that there are no cue cards used and he forgoes an opening monologue. His refusal to use cue cards has to do with wanting to avoid reciting prepared material, as opposed to, creating what he calls "now moments" for his studio audience and viewers. Also, his avoidance of a traditional monologue steers him away from bashing celebrities, politicians and news makers. Instead of delivering jokes based on what's in the news, he prefers to create comedy based on what's happening during the show. When asked whom he is influenced by, Kerwin mentions comedy icon, Garry Shandling, who guides him with key advice and direction.

Each of Kerwin's talk shows start the way that most parties and other social gatherings do; he simply mingles with the studio audience. This often leads to discussions that form the heart and soul of the show and set Kerwin apart from all other talk show hosts.

When it comes time to speak to his guests, viewers will find that Kerwin does not follow a script of any kind and has not formed questions for the guest prior to speaking with them on air. For this reason, there are no staff writers working on Kerwin's show. The questions he asks each guest are spontaneous, something that is seemingly unheard of in the world of talk shows.

This hardly stops Kerwin from attracting celebrity guests to his show, as he has spoken to stars such as Bruce Dern, Cloris Leachman, E.G. Daily, Sean Young and many more. Milestone shows within Kerwin's talk show run have included the last interview with the late Jonathan Winters and David Carradine.

John Kerwin has taken the talk show world by storm and as a result, in 2007 he aspired to have his show take the place of Conan O'Brien's show in the late night NBC lineup. Though plans didn't pan out, he did have a spirited meeting with an NBC executive in an attempt to take over Conan's spot. While Kerwin is an admirer of Jimmy Fallon's work, he believes that he can create a unique show in his own right.



Photo Credit: Lucie Aleks

The fact that Kerwin tragically lost out on slipping into Conan O'Brien's time slot with NBC did not deter him from success as he has been honored with more than 15 TV awards for his talk show, including awards such as the Hermes and the AEGIS awards. He has also received the Wave and the Telly. Not one to let success go to his head, Kerwin was the proud recipient of a Special Commendation given to him by Antonio Villaraigosa, the Mayor of Los Angeles. Kerwin received this commendation in recognition of the 60th episode of his talk show. The day Kerwin received the award also

happened to be his talk show's sixth year anniversary. Currently you can watch The John Kerwin Show on DirecTV channel 366 Saturday nights at 10pm and on individual cable stations throughout the country. John Kerwin still aspires to air on a major network as long as the network allows him to keep doing his show in his own unique, out of the box style. According to Kerwin, his style is to simply interact with his studio audience and let the humor come from them. This distinct brand of humor has allowed Kerwin to succeed as a talk show host on his own terms.

We had an opportunity to sit with John Kerwin and of course we wanted to know about him but also what he really thinks about Los Angeles!

Localista: Describe Los Angeles in three words?

John Kerwin: Magic can happen. At college, in upstate New York, during blizzards, I'd walk along the campus with my friends...and start singing, as loud as I could, "California Dreaming." I always believed that magic can happen here. Last week, I was at a restaurant, having lunch, and at the next table, Ringo Starr sat down. We chatted briefly and it was magical. I believe that my show is magical. That's what I want to bring to viewers; the magic and fun of Hollywood.

Localista: What's your favorite place to hang out in Los Angeles?

John Kerwin: I like going to the Griffith Observatory. It's like a vacation from your little world, as you see the big picture. It's nice to visit the stars...beyond those on Hollywood Blvd.

Localista: What's your favorite club?

John Kerwin: Boulevard 3 – it's fun and you can talk to people outdoors. It's conducive to communication. Once upon a time, before the streets in L.A. had permanent names Sunset Blvd., was called, Boulevard 3.



Photo Credit: Don Sweeney

Localista: What's your favorite restaurant?

John Kerwin: The Bazaar at the SLS Hotel – a visual smorgasbord. It's fun to be overwhelmed by a restaurant.

Localista: What is your favorite breakfast restaurant in Los Angeles?

John Kerwin: John O'Groats in West Los Angeles. Best oatmeal in town, even though they call it "porridge" which makes me feel like Goldilocks.

Localista: What's your favorite activity when you're not working?

John Kerwin: I recently became a black belt in karate. Fighting in a controlled atmosphere can be exhilarating; ironically, it leaves me feeling very peaceful.

Localista: What's your favorite neighborhood in Los Angeles?

John Kerwin: Hollywood – a little dangerous, a little rowdy, a little cheesy – but always interesting.

Localista: We've heard you love practical jokes from your show. What is one of your favorites?

John Kerwin: One of my favorite off-camera practical jokes is to go to an Abercrombie and Fitch, where they have a male model in front with their shirt off. Quietly, I take off my own shirt and tell them I'm relieving them for a 10 minute break. They take off and I get to stand

there, bare-chested until some store assistant manager frantically rushes out.

We'd like to thank John Kerwin for providing an endless source of entertainment to viewers who have grown weary of the standard late night talk shows.



Photo Credit: Lucie Aleks

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Featured image photo credit: Katja Bresch