

# Richard Ryder: Fearless, Flamboyant and Funny

**"My mother was planning a gay child, and I know this for two reasons. Number one, she never decorated my nursery. She was waiting for me to do it. And number two, she named me Richard Ryder—a name that shortens right down to dick rider!"**

Hearing Richard Ryder on Proud FM, Canada's first gay radio station, is a good thing. But seeing him perform his comedy schtick live is a near riot. With a tongue so sharp it could clip your bangs, his rapier wit is not afraid to skewer those most deserving of comeuppance. His keen observance of the homo lifestyle, along with his stinging rebukes to unfortunate hecklers, not only keeps his audience gasping for more, he also possesses the biggest dimples you've ever seen. (That's right I said dimples. Get your mind out of the gutter!) But when Richard's infectiously robust laugh erupts full force from his ample belly, you know this caustic charmer means no lasting harm.

After being expelled from the Toronto High School for the Performing Arts, Richard assaulted showbiz like a scud missile hoping for success as a film extra. But it was not to be. Undaunted, he dived into the wonderful world of wardrobe where he excelled for a decade "stitching and bitching," before he daringly tossed his chapeau into the ring as a stand-up comic. And, luckily for all concerned, he'd finally found his true calling! His outrageous jokes are delivered with expert timing, a devilish gleam in his eyes and perhaps a "poodle" or two thrown in for good measure. FYI: Richard references "poodle" as a personal homage to gay fave Karen from television's *Will and Grace*. But let's not get sidetracked with that

sassy lass, because it's time now to share with you some of the fun I recently had with the main man himself.



**When performing, do you have an agenda?**

"No, I don't have an axe to grind, a mean face. My agenda is funny."

**Do you inhale?**

"Always. Otherwise it's a waste."

**Can you describe your perfect partner?**

"A cartoon with a huge cock!"

**Have you ever experienced an eye-opening moment?**

"Growing up with an alcoholic stepfather made me realize that it was up to me. I had to improve my surroundings to survive. I had to leave that toxic environment and find my humour."

**What are some of your upcoming projects this summer?**

"I'll be the headliner at Yuk Yuk's SuperClub in Toronto from July 21st to 24th. I'll be appearing at Windsor PRIDE in early August. Last year when I was there, I opened for Sandra Bernhard. Also in August, I'll be at the 10th Annual Jamboree at The Point. It's a clothing optional campground for guys located near Lake Erie, and it's a hoot!"

**Have you performed at any other bear-related events?**

"I've appeared at Bear Quake in San Diego for the past two years. I loved it. It was fabulous. They're a great group. I was flattered to be asked to participate. San Diego's gay community has an inspirational sense of itself. And I've also performed in Buffalo at Bear Trap 3. Those guys were fantastic. It was a very comfortable and welcoming environment."

**What's been your most embarrassing career moment?**

"I was performing a show without knowing my fly was open until a person in the front row informed me. As I zipped up, I told the audience each of them owed me an extra five dollars."

**What has been your most satisfying career achievement so far?**

"It's the positive response I get from audiences after a really good show, the outpouring of applause, the hugs from the wives, and also getting lots of great emails the next day."

**Do you have a gripe regarding the gay community?**

"It's the general separation between gay men and lesbians. Can't we all just get along?"

**Are you looking forward to Toronto's Pride parade?**

"Yes! I'll be on the fabulous Proud FM float hosting something, waving to the crowd and getting soaked."

**Wild or mild?**

"Wild!"

**Madonna or Lady Gaga?**

"Oh...do I have to?"

**Domestic or imported?**

"Imported."

**Batman or Robin?**

"Batman. Robin is a pussy."

**Fantasy or reality?**

"Fantasy."

**Boxers or briefs?**

"What, on me?"

So there you have it, the latest scoop on a comic genius who'll be coming soon to a Tim Horton's drive-through window near you. I'm kidding! But for those who do want more Dick, (I know, I know, I couldn't resist) simply tune in to 103.9 Proud FM weekdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Or check out his very entertaining website, or his cheeky blog called, "The Last Laugh." Or, better yet, have Richard appear live at your upcoming event. You'll laugh like crazy...and you'll thank me later. **O**