



Sebastian Maniscalco

Let's face it: in our increasingly tepid, polite and politically correct culture we need more people like Sebastian Maniscalco. Forever able to seize the moment, never failing to speak his mind, always telling it like it is, this is one man who isn't afraid to put it all out there. Yes, the Chicago-area born, Italian-immigrant-raised comedian behind wildly successful network specials including last year's "Sebastian Maniscalco: Why Would You Do That?," "What's Wrong With People?," and "Aren't You Embarrassed?" is that little voice within all our heads. The one we are too timid to unleash. Maniscalco is bearing the burden of our bizarre and head-scratching modern-day world. You can thank him later.

Make no mistake: Maniscalco's is a meticulous, hard-won comedic point of view. "Every night you're getting up there and doing something new," says the comedian, who now has hordes of fans pouring into venues across North America to witness his outsize, highly physical brand of comedy. That's when he's not appearing on Jerry Seinfeld's *Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee*, or making return visits to late-night shows like "The Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon," "Late Night With Seth Meyers," and "Conan." "It's just working out a muscle, man," he says of maintaining his comedic chops. "You don't become a bodybuilder the first day you start lifting weights. You gotta work each muscle. Same thing with comedy. You gotta flesh out your joke, your bit. You add and subtract. You see what works."

Distinguished by the *New York Times* as having his "own kind of panache," Maniscalco is a success story resulting from years of hard work and a keen self-awareness of innate talent. A natural born-storyteller, one constantly regaling his family with madcap tales at the dinner table, Maniscalco moved to Los Angeles in 1998 and began pounding the pavement on his comedic quest. The tireless worker first made his name at the city's famed Comedy Store where he performed at every opportunity -- even if that meant rushing over to the club on a break from his waiter job at the Four Seasons Hotel in Beverly Hills. "I felt if I missed an opportunity to be on stage I missed an opportunity to somebody being in the audience and seeing me." His persistence paid off: then-massive comic Andrew Dice Clay saw him onstage one night and took a young Maniscalco out on the road with him. But not until Vince Vaughan enlisted him for his popular "Wild West Comedy Show" did his career begin to explode. Says Maniscalco: "From there things started to snowball."

It's quite the understatement: Maniscalco now sits as one of the premier standup comedians. And a multi-faceted one at that: following a massive standup tour of theaters last year, the coming months are monumental ones for the 2016 Just for Laughs Stand-Up Comedian of the Year. In addition to starring in his own wildly popular SiriusXM program, "The Pete and Sebastian Show," Maniscalco has made several major motion picture appearances this year. Notably, a voice-over role as Johnny The Groundhog in the animated feature "Nut Job 2"; a role in the New Line Feature comedy "The House" starring Will Ferrell and Amy Poehler (directed by Andrew Cohen); and a turn in the independent drama "Cruise" directed by Rob Siegel and produced by Jeremy Renner.

Still, for Maniscalco, the work continues. Says the comedian, "There's a voice always in the back of my head saying "Don't rest!"