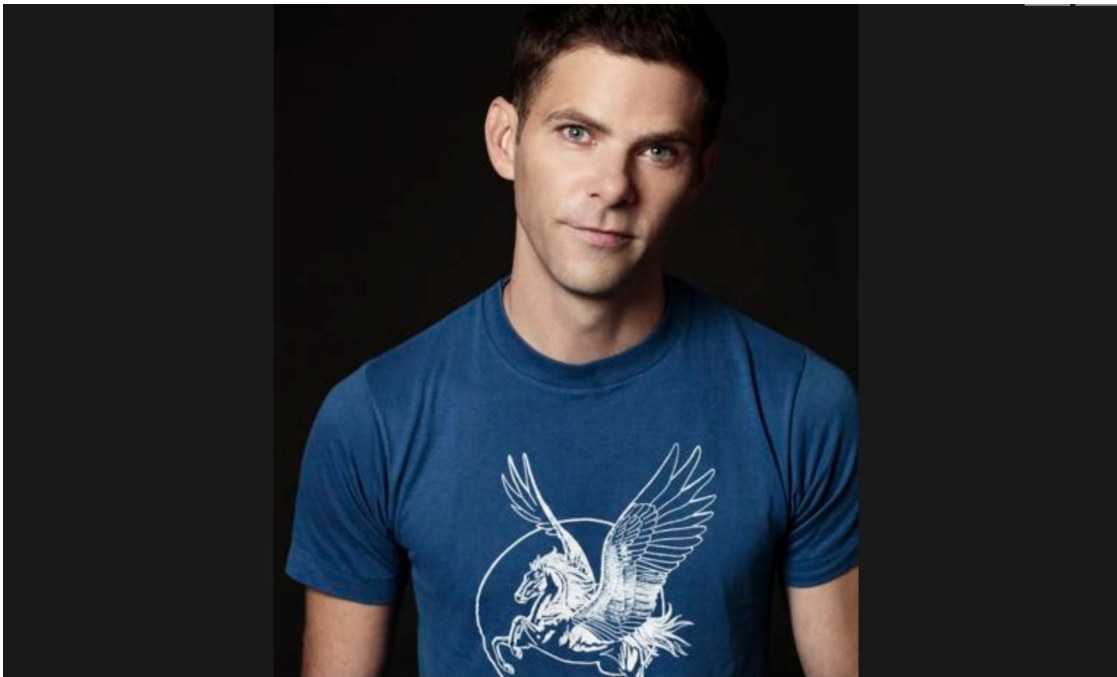


## SNL's Mikey Day, who helped write 'David S. Pumpkin' skit, to perform Sunday in Huntington

By DEREK HALSEY For The Herald-Dispatch Oct 20, 2022



"Saturday Night Live" comedic actor and writer Mikey Day will perform at the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center in Huntington on Sunday, Oct. 23, as part of the Marshall Artists Series.

HUNTINGTON — The Marshall Artists Series continues its fall schedule with a performance by "Saturday Night Live" comedic actor and writer Mikey Day on Sunday, Oct. 23. Opening up the show will be comedian Alex English, who is also a comedy writer for SNL.

Day and English will be live at the historic Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center at 7:30 p.m. Sunday. Tickets range from \$35 to \$55. The venue is located at 925 4th Ave. in downtown Huntington. More information can be found at [www.marshall.edu/muartistseries/#/](http://www.marshall.edu/muartistseries/#/).

Day's journey to SNL began when he wrote comedy bits for his high school's assemblies as a teenager. Like a lot of future comedians and comedy writers, Day got into his share of trouble for simply being openly funny in a school setting. After graduating, he earned a degree in theater at the University of California Los Angeles. To add comedy acting chops to his repertoire, he also joined the famed improvisational comedy group The Groundlings and began to write for various shows on TV channels such as MTV, The Cartoon Network and Showtime.

About 15 years ago, Day and Michael Naughton, along with actor Mitch Silpa, created a comedy video as members of The Groundlings that spoofed the street magic of famed magician David Blaine. You can still see those videos on YouTube, with one of them netting 50 million views. It was one of the many times that Day's work would go viral online as his career grew.

Perhaps his most memorable bit on SNL was when Day, Bobby Moynihan and Streeter Seidell wrote a sketch called "David S. Pumpkin," a Halloween spoof featuring Day and Moynihan as dancing clowns surrounding acclaimed actor Tom Hanks, who portrayed the David S. Pumpkin character. Titled "Haunted Elevator," the sketch struck a nerve while on live television and the video went on to garner 22 million views.

With the first three live SNL shows of the 2022-23 already completed, the program will take a break this Saturday, which will enable Day and English to come to Huntington on the next night.

While at SNL, Day has been asked to impersonate many famous personalities during on-air skits, from President Franklin D. Roosevelt to Elon Musk to U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va. Other times, his characters portray unknown folks in sketches that are as messy as they are fun. That was the case on the Oct. 8 episode of SNL when Day shared a segment with actor and host Brendan Gleeson.

During a spoof of an atypical History Channel documentary about two tribes in the year 500 B.C. who forged an alliance, Day and Gleeson play the tribal chiefs, who take a blood oath by cutting their palms and sharing their blood. In this case, however, Gleeson's character slices his palm too deeply and his fake blood splatters all over the set and onto his cast mates in disgusting, yet hilarious fashion. Day especially takes major splashes of blood to his face, all of which can be seen at [www.youtube.com/snl](https://www.youtube.com/snl).

"I actually got the fake blood off of me pretty quickly, like in five minutes or something afterwards, but there was a lot of it," Day told The Herald-Dispatch. "It was funny because the host that night, Brendan Gleeson, he has a beard and they did a test earlier in the week to make sure the fake blood wouldn't stain his beard. That was one of the funny parts of his SNL Week; that he had to go and do a 'Blood Beard Staining Test.'"

One thing that Day has developed while working as a comedy writer is a thick skin, as rejection of ideas is a constant. That is especially true at SNL with its infamous weekly "table reads," where the writers and that week's host pitch ideas for sketches while the ones in charge decide what ideas make it on-air. The process is notoriously not for the faint of heart.

“I guess you kind of get used to the rejection, but you really get used to it at SNL because there are so many opportunities to bomb,” said Day. “There is a read-through on Wednesdays where all of the ideas are read out loud and you write sketches for it and the read-throughs can either go well or go badly. If it goes well and goes to dress rehearsal, the idea can still go bad at dress rehearsal. So, throughout the year, you have to develop a thick skin and you have to build up a resistance to it. You just go on to the next one. It changes from week to week, as sometimes I will have a lot of ideas while other weeks, not as much. I think that you can write as many ideas as you want from week to week, but there is no guarantee that they will all be read or that there is room for everything. But I think that, ultimately, they want you to focus on your best ideas.”

For Day, an idea can come in the middle of the night, out of the blue, and he has to capture that burst of creativity before it is lost to the awakened state.

“Sometimes, however, I’ll get an idea late, as in 4 a.m. in the morning, and I’ll write it up and it can become some of my best stuff. If it is a host that I am not familiar with, I will watch some of their work as research. The process is truly different from week to week, which is the cool part. You can have a really good week, yet the next week, everything starts over, and it is a brand-new week and it can become a bad week and you think to yourself, ‘Oh wow, I thought I had totally cracked the code and understood it all.’”

Day, who has never been to West Virginia before, says he is happy and excited that he will get the chance to perform in the state. After both Day and English perform, they will take questions from the audience about the comedy business, life at SNL, or whatever queries are thrown at them.



SNL comedy writer Alex English will open for Mikey Day at the Keith-Albee Performing Arts Center on Sunday, Oct. 23.  
Submitted photo