

# A FINE AND PLEASANT MISERY

## Electronic Press Kit



The  
**McManus  
Comedies**

*Starring* **Tim Behrens**

# A FINE AND PLEASANT MISERY

Written by Patrick F. McManus  
Starring Tim Behrens

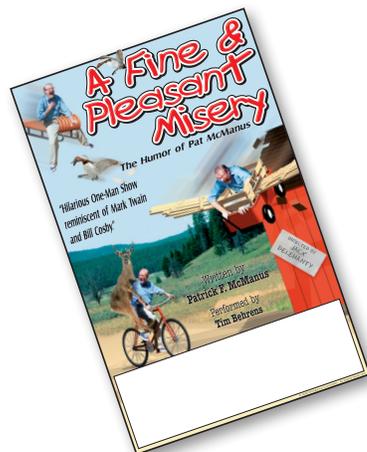
In 1992, Pat, already recognized as one of America's funniest humor writers, wondered if his stories about growing up in rural Idaho might work on the stage. Using his own fear of the dark as a central theme, he wove some of his favorite pieces together to create a hilarious tapestry of mirth. The result has been described by one reviewer as "a cross between Mark Twain and Bill Cosby."

The two-act play begins as Pat rummages through an old trunk. Each discovery—a piece of tent, the slingshot "Whomper," his collection of dried road kill, a cracked brace from his sled "Rosebud"—triggers recollections of a story.

The key to the success of Pat's writing—and Behrens' acting—lies in activating the imagination of the audience. Just enough detail is provided to connect the viewer to each misadventure. The audience fills in the blanks, and makes each story its own. As a matter of fact, one six-minute segment takes place entirely in the dark, during which the only sounds heard are Tim's voice and the rolling laughter of the audience. In this way, specific incidents become universal experiences.

Behrens portrays more than 12 different characters, each suggested by nothing more than a change of voice, posture or movement, ranging from the dirt-encrusted old woodsman, Rancid Crabtree, to the daft, but well meaning, Mrs. Swisher.

HILARIOUS



# Kudos

*"I write on behalf of Tim Behrens, an actor whose work I have admired for a long time. Tim's work, especially in comedy, is absolutely outstanding. When needed, he can push the envelope, and he can also be extremely subtle, still making a major impact. I strongly urge you to book his shows. He is loaded with talent and is a definite crowd pleaser."*

Most sincerely,

*Jack Lemmon*

the late Jack Lemmon, actor

*"The shows are hilarious. They are laugh-packed and remind you of a cross between Mark Twain and Bill Cosby. Don't miss these shows!"*

*The Billings, MT, Gazette*

*"The Nampa Civic Center has presented the McManus Comedies more than any other arts program over the past 8 years. Each of the programs are packed with laughter featuring some of the most bizarre characters on earth, all portrayed by Tim. Even if you are not a fan of McManus' best-selling books, these shows are great entertainment, and they appeal to both traditional theater patrons and people who normally might never set foot inside a theater.*

*For many communities, including ours, these shows are a "Nutcracker" type selling show, often selling themselves! It is rare that you find an artist that has high artistic performance, sells like crazy and can encourage arts education. Here you have the opportunity to enjoy it all."*

*Bill Stephan,  
former Director, the Civic Center, Nampa, ID*

*"Sometimes, the laughter is so loud it hurts my ears."*

*Tim Behrens*

KUDOS

1993-2010

# Show Reviews

## REVIEWS

“The play brought jolts of laughter to the Discovery Theatre’s sold-out performance as actor Tim Behrens worked nothing short of magic into the realm of these tales set amongst a sparse collection of junk, a rocking chair, and a porch railing. Behrens cooked up a perfect delivery. The man seated next to me had such hard time breathing from laughing so violently that it resulted in odd-sounding snorts and gasps that were so loud!”

*The Anchorage Daily News*

“The ensuing pandemonium is evoked with such vivid lushness that the audience, already moved to tears of laughter, were reduced to banging their heads on their knees in a rictus of paralyzed delight. Behrens is a wonder at bringing to life the inhabitants of McManus’ fictional childhood...the anecdotes are hilarious.” *The Seattle Times*

“Behrens did a masterful job. He promised you’ll laugh until it hurts and they [the audience] did.” *The Detroit News, Detroit MI*

“Behrens’ brand of humor keeps the show fast-paced, raucous and fun to watch.” *The Salt Lake Tribune, Salt Lake City UT*

“People were laughing so hard, and for so long, I was afraid paramedics would need to be called in! The audience was in stitches, and speaking of stitches, I was afraid some people might end up needing a few. For busted guts, and that sort of thing.”

*Spokesman-Review, Spokane WA*

“One does not need to have ever read a word of McManus’ to enjoy this production. The two-act play is a must-see for anyone.”

*Moscow-Pullman Daily News, Moscow ID*

“If you’ve ever been afraid of the dark, [this show] offers you an opportunity to send that specter fleeing, chased away by belly-rolling laughter.” *White Bear Press, St. Paul MN*

“One-man play’s author and actor guaranteed laughs, and they deliver.” *Casper Star-Tribune, Casper WY*

“Behrens’ portrayals of unique characters were warm, real and often funny to the point of tears.” *The Flint Journal, Flint MI*

1993-2010

# Show Reviews

“The evening’s laugh quotient is almost off the chart as Behrens darts through the boys’ search for meaningful advice on dating.”

*Deseret News, Salt Lake City UT*

“In many ways, McManus in Love is reminiscent of the old Bill Cosby comedy routines which generations of kids memorized by listening to them on LP Albums.” *Red Wing Republican Eagle, MN*

“Behrens was nothing short of amazing. Facial expressions, body language and tone of voice were the only tools he used to portray over a dozen unforgettable characters. His timing and delivery were excellent, and according to comments heard during intermission, he had more than one person “sobbing with laughter.”

*Comox Valley Record, British Columbia*

“I laughed until my chest ached and my face hurt. Then I laughed harder.” *Billings Gazette, Billings MT*

“This G-rated play had people laughing so hard, they cried!”  
*The Register Guard, Eugene, Oregon*

“Nearly two weeks later, and every day since your sold out performance someone has told me how much they enjoyed your side-splitting performance. I’ve never heard such sustained laughter in the theater...”

*Lori Patrick,  
Cultural Arts Manager,  
City of Auburn, WA*

“A terrific show, wonderfully well delivered to our sold out audience: energetic, nuanced, smart.”

*Development Director,  
the Reif Center,  
Grand Rapids, MN*

“McManus is a master of words...and Behrens is a master of expression.”

*Wood River Journal,  
Sun Valley ID*

REVIEWS



# Tim Behrens **Biography**

## BIOGRAPHY

**Tim Behrens** comes from an acting family. His dad, Frank Behrens, was a well known radio and TV actor. Frank also wrote material for several comedians, including Tony Randall and Don Knotts, for many years.

Tim's mom was a working actress for 60 years! Her stage name was Amzie Strickland, and if you watched TV from 1955 to 2001, then you've seen Amzie. Originally from Oklahoma, Amzie began acting in radio in New York City, and became sought after for comic roles. As radio waned, she moved to Hollywood.

Amzie guest-starred on more than 600 TV shows, everything from I Love Lucy to the Andy Griffith Show (Miss Rosemary plus 3 other appearances) to ER. Indeed, her resume reads like a history of television. She also appeared in 15 feature films including **Doc Hollywood**, **Krippendorf's Tribe** and **Pretty Woman**. Plus, she had feature roles in more than 35 made-for-TV movies and pilots.

Growing up in a household of two actors, Tim avoided acting like the plague...until some moment of deranged alchemy got him on stage for the first time at age 32.

Tim was the managing/artistic director of Centre Theatre Group for 6 years, and the founder (along with his beautiful jazz songstress wife, Leslie Ann Grove) and artistic director of CenterStage and Ella's Supper Club, all in Spokane, WA. He was the Marketing Director and a featured performer at Rockin' B Ranch near Liberty Lake, WA, for three seasons.

All along, Tim has consistently toured and continues to tour the McManus Comedies.

Tim and Pat celebrated 20 years of McManus Comedies in October of 2012! Pat celebrated by phoning Tim from an easy chair, while Tim was stuck in Winnemucca trying to find the theatre in an early but devastating snow storm. Sometime during 2013, Tim will perform a McManus Comedy for the 1700th time....but who's counting?

When not touring, Tim and his wife are avid gardeners, having cultivated several new species of auids.

# Patrick F. McManus **Biography**

## Patrick F. McManus - Best Selling Humor Writer

### BOOKS more than 6 million sold

- A Fine And Pleasant Misery ('78)
- Kid Camping From Aaaaa! To Zip ('79)
- They Shoot Canoes, Don't They? ('81)
- Never Sniff A Gift Fish ('83)
- The Grasshopper Trap ('85)\*
- Rubber Legs And White Tail-Hairs ('87)\*
- The Night The Bear Ate Goombaw ('89)\*
- Whatchagot Stew ('89)  
(With Patricia "The Troll" McManus Gass)
- Real Ponies Don't Go Oink ('91)\*
- The Good Samaritan Strikes Again ('92)\*
- How I Got This Way ('94)
- Never Cry Arp! ('96)
- Into The Twilight, Endlessly Grousing ('97)
- The Deer On A Bicycle ('00)
- The Bear In The Attic (02)
- The Blight Way (06)
- Avalanche (07)
- Kerplunk! (07)
- The Double-Jack Murders (09)
- The Huckleberry Murders (10)

\* Appeared on the *New York Times* Best Seller's List

### PROFESSIONAL

- Professor, English and Journalism, Eastern Washington University, 1960-83; Professor Emeritus, EWU
- Associate Editor: Field and Stream. 1977-1982
- Editor-at-Large: Outdoor Life, 1982-2009
- Freelance Writer: Reader's Digest, TV Guide, Sports Illustrated, Field and Stream, Outdoor Life, New York Times, and many other publications.

### STAGE PLAYS

- A Fine And Pleasant Misery:  
The Humor Of Patrick F. McManus ('92)  
A One-Man Show Starring Tim Behrens,  
Currently Touring
- McManus In Love ('95) A One-Man Show  
Starring Tim Behrens, Currently Touring
- Pot Luck ('99) A One-Man Show Starring  
Tim Behrens, Currently Touring
- Scrambled McManus ('99)  
A One-Man Show Starring Tim Behrens,  
Currently Touring
- Poor Again... Dagnabbit! ('09)  
A One-Man Show Starring Tim Behrens,  
Currently Touring

*These comedies have been performed in more than 1,200 public performances 400 school shows and more than 200 corporate shows. They have toured through 23 states and 3 Canadian provinces to more than 400,000 pretty happy folk.*

### HONORS (partial list)

- Who's Who in America, Literature & Education, '95
- Idaho's Hall of Fame Award for Outstanding Achievement in Literature and Writing, '95
- Founder's Day Medal, Eastern Washington University, '94
- Washington State University's Distinguished Achievement Award, '93
- WSU Alumni Achievement Award, '88
- Excellence in Craft, Outdoor Writers' Association Of America, '86
- Trustees Medal, Eastern Washington University, '84
- Governor's Award for Literature, Washington State, '83
- Pacific Northwest Bookseller's Award for Literary Excellence, '83

# Press Release

## The McManus Comedies

One-Man Shows written by Patrick F. McManus • Starring Tim Behrens

A Fine and Pleasant Misery • McManus In Love • Pot Luck • Scrambled McManus • Poor Again...Dagnabbit!

www.mcmanusplays.com • tim@mcmanusplays.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For Information, call:

Email:

For Box Office:

### XXXXX proudly presents

What: A Fine and Pleasant Misery: the Humor of Patrick F. McManus Starring Tim Behrens

When: XXXXXXXXXXXX. Doors open at XXXXXXXX

Where: XXXXXXXXXXXX

Tickets: \$XX for adults; \$XX for kids 17 and under

Box Office: XXX-XXX-XXXX for Reservations

XXXXXXXX presents the first of all the McManus Comedies, A Fine and Pleasant Misery, by Patrick F. McManus, starring Pat's indentured actor, Tim Behrens.

The one-man Show introduces 12 zany McManus characters, from Rancid Crabtree to daft old Mrs. Swisher, from Strange the Dog, to a deer on a bicycle.

Join Pat and his sidekick Crazy Eddie Muldoon as they try to conquer their fear of the dark so they can become mountain men. Watch Rancid Crabtree convince you that baths are bad because soap and water will eat holes in your protective crust. Listen as Pat explains how to execute a proper full bore linear panic and its cousin, modified stationary panic. See Mr. and Mrs. Muldoon react to Pat and Crazy Eddie's airplane as it teeters on the barn roof headed straight towards oblivion. And learn how not to hunt your first deer with nothing more than a bicycle.

The McManus Comedies are family friendly, hilarious stories about growing up in rural America when you're dirt poor (dirt being the only toy you can afford) and when the adults in your life get nervous every time they pass you on the street.

McManus is one of the most popular humor writers in the country. His 23 titles have sold more than 6 million copies, and five of his collections of short humor have made the top 10 of the NY Times Bestseller's list.

The Billings Gazette said: "*Behrens doing McManus is like a cross between Mark Twain and Bill Cosby.*"

The late actor Jack Lemmon said: "*Tim relishes in knocking the audiences out with laughter; see this show!*."

And the Spokesman Review once worried that "*paramedics would have to be called in people were laughing so hard.*"

# Photos **Promo Help**

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*Description:*

Pat (Tim Behrens) leaps to new heights to tell a story.

# Photos **Promo Help**



*Description:*

Pat (Tim Behrens) shows off his roadkill collection.

# Photos **Promo Help**



*Description:*

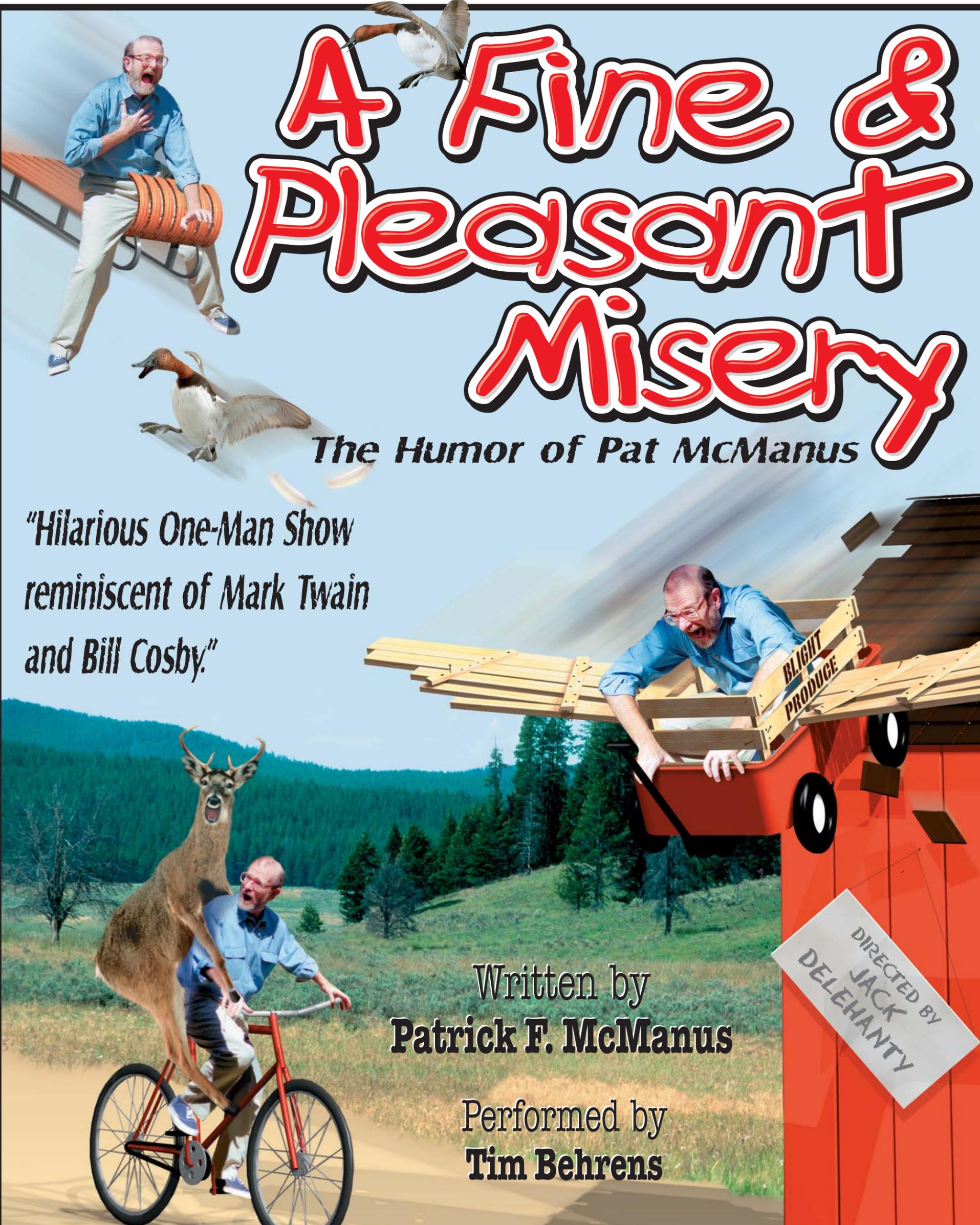
Patrick F. McManus and his indentured actor, Tim Behrens.

**Art Promo Help**

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# A Fine & Pleasant Misery

*The Humor of Pat McManus*

*"Hilarious One-Man Show  
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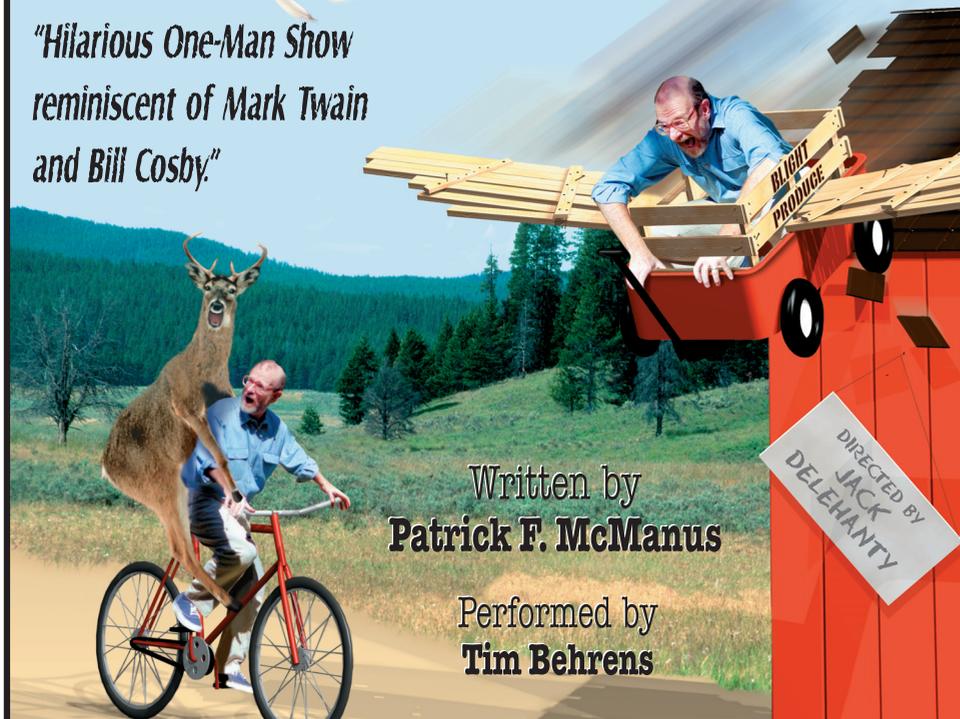
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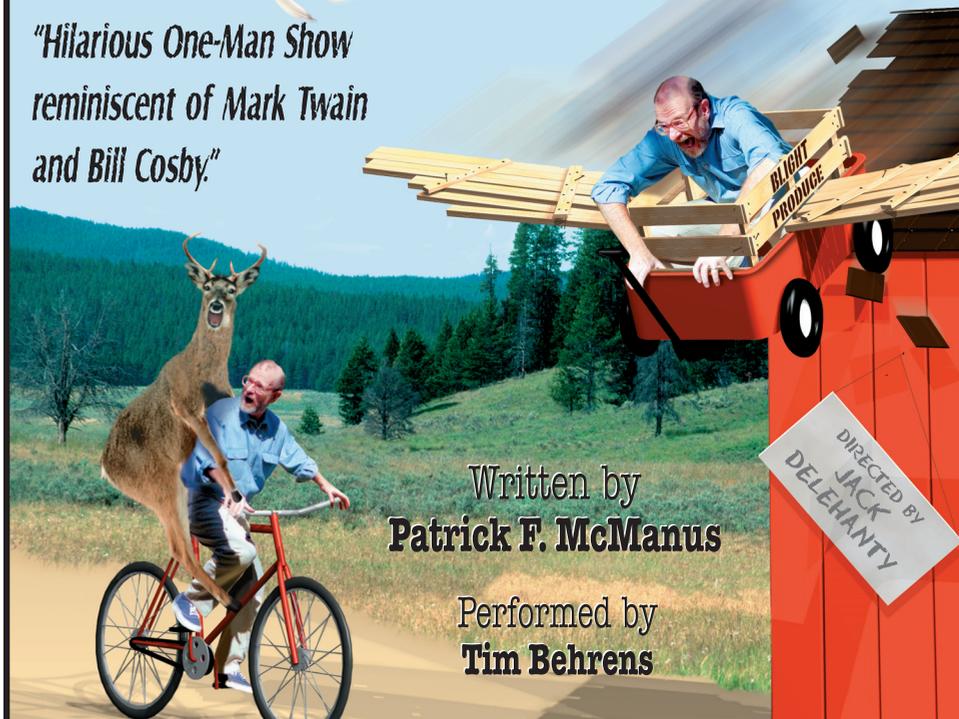
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# The McManus Comedies

*Starring* **Tim Behrens**

## **Contact**

*We enjoy hearing from you. If you have any question,  
please feel free to contact us either by phone or e-mail.  
We'll get back to you as soon as possible. Thanks!*

**Tim Behrens**  
**The McManus Comedies**  
**509-993-7121**  
**tim@mcmanusplays.com**

For more information go to  
**[www.mcmanusplays.com](http://www.mcmanusplays.com)**

