

Local Artisan: Michelle Krajecki, Aurora

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Page: 14

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Caption: **Michelle Krajecki**, 45, of Aurora, performed recently at Daniel's Den in Plano. Krajecki is a member of the Christian Comedy Association.

Michelle Krajecki will be the first to admit that her career choice sounds a bit suspect.

"Christians aren't exactly known for their comedy," Krajecki said. "It's almost an oxymoron, a Christian comic."

The field of religious comedy didn't even occur to Krajecki herself until just recently. In fact, one of the comedians she loved as a kid was George Carlin, whose "Seven Dirty Words" probably wouldn't have the intended impact on Christian audiences. The Aurora mother was a special-education teacher for eight years before she decided to start listening to friends and actually pursue a career in the arts.

Time after time, people would tell her to use her sense of humor for something more than a few free laughs at a dinner party. Krajecki had even considered a career on the stage back in college when she thought she'd major in theater. But something about it just didn't click, she said. "I'm not the starving-artist type," she said.

This time around, however, she decided to give it a go. As a stay-at-home mom ("it's good work if you can get it") with a husband to back her up, she knew there was no chance of starving even if her act didn't draw a crowd.

She and her 14-year-old daughter headed to Second City to take improv classes. She had the chance to perform where some of the comedic giants made their start during her musical improv jams and classes. "It was like the hallowed halls," Krajecki said. "I thought, 'OK, I could die, I've done the main stage.'"

Krajecki truly found her niche when she went to a seminar put on by Christian comedian Ken Davis, where she met a ton of Christian comics. "At that point, I wanted to throw up my hands like Evita and sing, 'My people!'" Krajecki sang.

Davis' advice was what guided Krajecki into her new field.

"He just talked about how if God calls you to do (something) you have to pursue that," Krajecki said. "You have to pursue it with everything you have. It kind of came together there."

What is the difference between a standard clean comic and a Christian comedian?

The difference is that Christian comics come at things with more of a Christian point of view. You can have a clean comic, but some of the attitude that comes through in the comedy is not very Godly.

When you take the stage in secular clubs, will people know you're a Christian comic just by your act?

Sometimes, sometimes not. A comic kind of has to know their audience. Sometimes if you're at a place where there are a lot of Christians, there is a lot to laugh at amongst ourselves. ... (In other circumstances), I won't ever do joke that devalues what God has made sacred.

Do you have a higher purpose than just making people laugh?

I'd like people to know me as someone, even in a secular sense, as someone who has more uplifting values. The point of a Christian in their whole life should always be to point others to Christ. Your goal is to point people toward Christ, as a human being. So that, hopefully, would be reflected in the comedy, as well. There's times when my purpose is just to make people laugh. Sometimes that's enough. I don't have to walk away every time I perform thinking, 'I just made a profound impact on this person's life.' But I would hope that happens more often than not.

