

[MUSIC PLAYING]

ROB GEORGE: Oh, yeah, *Palm Of Your Hand* by the Buzzcocks, written by Pete Shelley who also wrote *Homo Sapiens* that was just covered by Pansy Division. We'll take your calls here at *After Hours*, the QMZ, 526-5738 because we want to know what you think of the new Pansy Division, which songs you like, and we'll talk to you about it. And 'til next week--

[MUSIC PLAYING]

Now, to close out the show, that interview of the *Kathy and Mo Show*.

SCOTT LEWIS: This is Scott Lewis with Rob George for *After Hours*, a continuing tradition here on 90.1 FM, KPFT in Houston. We're here with Dee Macaluso and Deborah Hope the stars of the *Kathy and Mo Show*, *Parallel Lives*, a hysterical new production that's going on over at Theater Lab Houston. Tell us a little bit about the *Kathy and Mo* show. Describe it to us.

DEBORAH Well, it's a two-woman piece that was written by Kathy Najimy who was in *Sister Act*. She was the little, portly, dark-haired nun who stole the show from Whoopi Goldberg. She was also in what was that movie with the three witches, with Bette Midler?

SCOTT LEWIS: Brewing something.

DEE No, no, no.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: *Hocus Pocus*.

DEBORAH *Hocus Pocus*, yeah, she was brilliant in that. Anyway, she wrote the show with Mo Gaffney, who is a stand up comic and also had her own talk show. And they performed the show off-broadway, and now we're doing it here as *Kathy and Mo*.

DEE It's just a series of skits that are incredibly funny. It has a feminist bent to it but not overly feminist. It's very funny. It's sort of like a *Saturday Night Live* thing. It's just skit after skit after skit.

DEBORAH We play about 24 different characters through the whole show.

HOPE:

DEE Men and women.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: The play has a real--

DEBORAH I wouldn't call it a play. I really wouldn't. And I don't think it's described as a play. I think it's more of a--

DEE A comedy review.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH Yeah.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: It seems to be real slanted to a woman's view or real pro woman, or just something that a woman would be interested in. But yet, I've been there three times, and there's always a lot of men there that seem to really enjoy it.

DEE Right.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Why the cross appeal?

DEE I think because it has that-- it seems like it's more towards women because women wrote it. So you write about

MACALUSO: what you know. But even though you know something as a woman, it doesn't mean that men can't identify with it. They all know women, live with women, have seen women.

DEBORAH Have been born by women.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Not all of them.

DEE Some of them are women.

MACALUSO:

[LAUGHTER]

DEBORAH I think, too, that it pokes fun at both sexes. And so the men can appreciate the humor in relationships and in the

HOPE: silly things that women do as well as men in their lives.

DEE Because it goes through every relationship that you could possibly conceive of. Maybe not mother daughter

MACALUSO: though, but husband wife, lovers, best friends, children. It's just all different relationships, and everyone can relate at some point or another.

SCOTT LEWIS: Now, the Theater Lab itself is a pretty small space for the review. You must obviously have some potential for getting a wide range of people in there, having some very different audience reactions to some of the material in the play.

DEE Yeah, oh, yeah.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH Well, we tried to get the music hall, but they were booked.

HOPE:

DEE Yeah, right?

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Do you find that sometimes, just by the sheer size of the place, that you get some very strange reactions to some of the more serious content of the play?

DEBORAH Yeah, and I'll let you speak in a minute, Dee. See what you think.

HOPE:

[LAUGHTER]

DEE

I was going to say, yeah, we have different reactions every night. It's never the same. It never is the same. Some people think one part is just hysterically funny, and we think, oh, boy, that was just a riot. We go the next night, we wait for a laugh, and nothing happens.

So people react differently, but what we were talking about before is that they react, usually, as one thought process, except for your mother.

[LAUGHTER]

DEBORAH Who laughed through the entire show, even the serious parts.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Good old Mary Jane.

DEBORAH Yeah.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: And there were, in fact, some pretty serious subjects being discussed. I remember that abortion was addressed, and certainly issues relating to homosexuality and in coming out, and just in general, also experiences dealing with uncomfortable situations, such as being hit on by an unwanted suitor.

DEBORAH What I love about this show, though, is that it deals with all these topics in such a loving way and such an

HOPE: understanding way. Even though it's poking fun at some level, there's also a real sympathetic approach to people's experiences and dilemmas in having to deal with the issue of abortion or homosexuality.

SCOTT LEWIS: What would you say is-- do you think that it's all just for fun? Or is there an underlying message?

DEBORAH Oh, I think there's definitely an underlying message. I think tolerance and acceptance and I think opening your

HOPE: mind and your heart is what they're trying to do. They're trying to say, here are the situations. And you can either completely close yourself off and either deny that it's happening or fight against it.

Or you can accept it and see who these people are and learn to just accept and love people for who they are and not what they profess to be or who they choose to love or any of those. Yeah, I think there's definitely that underlying message. What do you think?

DEE I also think, too, I also work as a standup comic, and I know that it's a lot easier to feed people things through

MACALUSO: comedy. They're much more willing to be open and accepting, and if it's palatable, if they can laugh at it, it may open their mind in a new way than it would be if you were standing on a soapbox very seriously trying to convince someone that they should believe this way or that way.

DEBORAH Right, yeah, we have that one line when we're the supreme beings and we're kind of creating the world. And we

HOPE: come back after we have given men ego to kind of balance the fact that women can have children and men can't. OK, just give them ego, and they'll be OK.

And then we come back and go, boy, that male ego thing sure took off [INAUDIBLE].

DEE Like a bat out of hell.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH And men laugh at that, I think, louder than women do. And when we first did it, it was like, oh, men are just going

HOPE: to be, oh, this is male bashing. And they're like, ah-ha, that's so damn true.

SCOTT LEWIS: That's funny, because one of the characters I find funniest is-- I don't know the character's name, but he keeps hitting on Karen Sue.

DEE Hank.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Hank.

DEBORAH Yeah.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Keeps hitting on it, and it's just-- because this is just such a thing a man does.

DEE Yeah.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Cigarette hanging out of his mouth in the honky-tonk bar, doing everything to impress her. Why aren't you-- you look very, very pretty tonight, over and over again. And when are you going to give up your boss man and marry me? And then as this section goes on, you find out that he's married.

DEBORAH Yeah.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Which is just further-- but yet, as a man, I found that one of the funniest pieces in the whole--

DEE Yeah, that's--

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH It's not like it stops him.

HOPE:

DEE Yeah, right.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH Right, and Dee is brilliant as Hank, I must say.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: As a matter of fact, all the male char-- you do several male characters, and you are brilliant.

DEE Oh, thank you. Thank you.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH I helped her. I coached her a lot.

HOPE:

[LAUGHTER]

SCOTT LEWIS: And really what really struck me about the review is the character changes. There's so many of them, and it's all very crisp and very cut and clear. And certainly, it's really interesting when the stage lights go down to see you getting in the character.

DEBORAH To watch us get ready.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Is that part of--

DEE Yeah, we do our changes on stage. The costumes are very minimal, but we change costumes on stage, and we set whatever changes in the setting need to be changed on stage in a dim light so that the audience can see us transform--

DEBORAH Into another character.

HOPE:

DEE --from one character to another. And it makes it fun for us too because we're not running backstage and then **MACALUSO:** coming out again as something completely different. And we get to be part of the transformation. And even the transformations get a laugh.

DEBORAH Yeah, people love to see that. Any kind of background stuff, they just love to see that. It's like, well, now you get **HOPE:** a little peek at behind the scenes when someone-- what physically they do to become another character. And we usually either jump around as children or we jump around a lot.

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

[LAUGHTER]

Do a lot of jumping around.

DEE Yeah.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Not only has this been so successful for Theater Lab, that they've had to extend a full other month of shows, you're also the only Texas company to be invited to participate in the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

DEBORAH Yeah, we're real excited about that.

HOPE:

DEE We're going to Scotland this summer.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Tell us a little bit about what that means, what you're going to be doing, and what's going to happen there.

DEE Well, first of all, it's quite an honor to be invited to that because you have to be invited. You can't just call up and go, please, let me do it. They'd go, no, [INAUDIBLE]. So it's quite an honor and quite a tribute, I think, to Ron Jones who is our director because a lot of it is based on his expertise as a director. And he is just a brilliant director. A little butt kissin' there.

DEBORAH Mm-hmm.

HOPE:

[LAUGHTER]

I want to be in his next show.

DEE He's wonderful. We love him. We love him. I want to do all his shows.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH But he does have a very good reputation. He was invited to the Fringe Festival because of his reputation. They

HOPE: just know that his productions are wonderful. And someone from the festival called him and said, do you have a piece you want to put in? And he said, yes, I do.

DEE And they said, we want you.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: What is the Fringe Festival to someone who just has no clue?

DEE It's a huge, huge, huge yearly event in Edinburgh, Scotland where 100s of thousands of people from all over the world come and descend upon this tiny little town and put on 100s and 100s of plays and shows and street theater.

And they're all competing for people to come in and see their show because you're only going to make money if you can fill up your venue, your theater. And I think the largest one is only a capacity of 75, which we have one of those. And I think the average is like 5 to 10 people a night.

So you really have to go out and sell your show every single day of the festival-- and it's like a six day a week thing for three weeks-- and get people to come in, and that's how you make your money and your reputation. And you can also win-- there's a weekly awards, Fringe First Awards and other awards for just being totally brilliant, which we'll probably get one. So that's what it is.

SCOTT LEWIS: With the success of Theater Lab in this particular production, I'm real curious, when we were at the play looking at the playbill, they've got something called Sin Theater coming up. It sounds very scintillating. What can you tell us about Sin Theater?

DEBORAH Nothing.

HOPE:

[LAUGHTER]

I don't know a darn thing about it. I think it has to do with their upcoming season that a lot of their plays have that theme of sin of some kind or some kind of struggle, a moral struggle.

DEE They want to have a different theme each season, and that season they picked sin.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Where do the two of you go from here, after you come back from Edinburgh with your awards in hand?

DEBORAH Yes, we'll probably continue running this show in order to make enough money to pay off the debts that we're going to incur going to Scotland. And we also are members of another comedy troupe, Deborah and I and two other men-- two other men.

DEE Two other men. Speak for yourself, John [? Almon ?].

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Is there something you're not telling me? Should I put on the *Crying Game* in the background?

DEE That's why I do those male roles so well. No, two men and Deborah and myself have a four person-- oddly enough-- comedy troupe. And we write and produce our own shows. And so we'll probably get back into the swing of that. We've produced two so far.

SCOTT LEWIS: Wonderful. Just briefly you mentioned the incredible expense of going to Edinburgh. I know that Ron had told me that the entire extension was going to help finance your trip to Scotland. But I also know that, if somebody came in to see the play and said, I want to donate this extra \$20 to help underwrite that, you probably wouldn't bitch at them, Would you?

DEE No, I don't think we could do that.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH Shut up, Dee. Shut up, Dee. Shut up. Please, please, please.

HOPE:

DEE Yes, we are taking donations. We're going to get one of those little tip jars, in the theater, I think. Yes, absolutely.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: During the scene with the little girls in church, you could pass an offering bucket--

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

DEBORAH Pass it around.

HOPE:

DEE That would be perfect.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH Yeah, we are taking donations to help finance this trip. We're going to have a couple of benefit shows that we're going to do to raise money. And if anyone wants to send in money for us, \$25, \$30--

DEE \$1,000.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH --dollars.

HOPE:

[LAUGHTER]

That would be great. You could send it to us in care of KPFT. That'd be great.

SCOTT LEWIS: Send it to *After Hours*, and make out the check to Theater Lab Houston, or it might end up--

DEBORAH No, no, no, no, no. You would have to send it to-- probably, make it out to--

HOPE:

DEE Oh, make it out to me. What the heck.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH No, to Way Off Broadway Productions. Way Off Broadway Productions.

HOPE:

DEE Way Off Broadway Productions, \$25,000, please.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Or you can just contact the theater, and they could give you some more information.

DEE Right.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Two of my favorite characters in the play are a couple of young Bronx-sounding, New York, little 15, 16-year-old young women by the name of Gina and Annette who have just a riotous repertoire back and forth. And I was wondering if I could get you to do that for us.

DEBORAH Sure.

HOPE:

DEE Sure, \$25,000.

MACALUSO:

[LAUGHTER]

DEBORAH We'll be there.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Sort of a little teaser for the folks at home.

DEE OK, sure.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH Well, the scene opens in Annette's bedroom, and we've just been watching the movie *West Side Story*.

HOPE:

[CRYING]

GINA: Oh, god.

ANNETTE: What'd you make me watch *West Side Story* for, Annette? It was so sad.

GINA: That is my favorite movie of all time.

ANNETTE: It was so beautiful.

GINA: I think Natalie Wood sings so good in that movie.

ANNETTE: Oh, she has got a good voice.

(BOTH SINGING) There's a place for us. Some place a place for us. [MUTTERING] peace and something about her hair.

ANNETTE: And she does, she does. She's got the prettiest hair. I hate my hair.

GINA: You got good hair, Annette.

ANNETTE: I can see it. It is bad hair.

GINA: Your hair is fine.

ANNETTE: Yeah, fine. All right, fine.

GINA: You know what I just thought of?

ANNETTE: What you just thought of?

GINA: That movie is a lot like *Romeo and Juliet*.

ANNETTE: Oh, pfft.

GINA: No, no, just think about it. Juliet's family could not stand Romeo. And the same thing with Maria. Her family hated Tony.

ANNETTE: You are right, Gina. Oh, my god, I can't believe you thought of that.

GINA: It's a rip off.

ANNETTE: You know who that is exactly like?

GINA: Who?

ANNETTE: Who do we know?

GINA: Who?

ANNETTE: Me and my mother and junior.

GINA: My mother cannot stand junior. Why? Because he's not Italian. He could be the pope or whatever, and she would not care.

ANNETTE: That is so unfair. I think what that movie is trying to tell us, Gina, is that everybody's the same on the inside. Oh, it's just like Beanie's poem *Colors*.

GINA: Oh.

ANNETTE: *Colors*. Blue, pink, purple, yellow, it does not matter.

GINA: Does not matter.

ANNETTE: Does not matter.

BOTH: Period.

GINA: Oh, that is so beautiful.

ANNETTE: I got goosebumps.

GINA: It's just like, you can't judge a book by its cover. You got to read it first.

ANNETTE: You can't judge a book by its cover? How do you know what the book is?

GINA: What?

ANNETTE: All right, for instance, say I was going to buy you a book for your sweet 16, right?

GINA: Don't buy me a book. I want a necklace.

ANNETTE: No, no, just listen, all right? I go into a store. I say, oh, I want to buy a book for my play sister, Gina. But do I say, oh, rip off the cover. Don't show me the cover. I don't want to judge. I don't know what the book is. And then, I take it home, I wrap it, I give it to you. And you go, well, what the hell? You give me a book with no cover.

GINA: I don't want a book, Annette.

ANNETTE: That is not the point, Gina.

GINA: It's just like in that movie. When Maria fell in love with Tony, she had no idea he was a white guy. He could dance so good, how could she tell?

ANNETTE: I know. You know there's something I didn't understand in that.

GINA: What?

ANNETTE: You know when she does it with him?

GINA: Oh, that's my favorite part.

ANNETTE: Did she know that Tony had just stabbed and killed her brother?

GINA: Yeah, Gina, remember Tony comes in the bedroom window, and he goes, I am so sorry. I killed your brother. And she still does it with him, like twice.

[LAUGHTER]

ANNETTE: That is so beautiful.

GINA: I know.

ANNETTE: And they didn't let it affect their relationship.

GINA: I know.

ANNETTE: Oh, and speaking of true love, I forgot to tell you. I was talking to junior in sixth period jewelry. And him and Eddie aren't coming over 'til way later. They're going over to Rico Bobini's cousin's house.

GINA: Teeny Bobini? Annette, he's like a drug dealer.

ANNETTE: No, it's a barbecue. Anyway, they'll be over like 7:00 or 7:30 , or 8:00 or 8:30 or whatever.

GINA: Yeah, if junior bothers to come at all.

ANNETTE: He'll come.

GINA: He's so mean to you, Annette.

ANNETTE: Don't start with me.

GINA: Besides which, he thinks he is god's gift to the borough, which he is not.

ANNETTE: Anyway, do you want to spend the night here tonight, or what?

GINA: All right, I'm right. You're going to ask your mother?

ANNETTE: Oh, yeah, hold on. Ma! Can Gina spend a night here tonight? Yeah, I know it is a school night. God.

GINA: What? Does she think you are a moron or something?

ANNETTE: I guess so. What? You want to have dinner here tonight?

GINA: What are you having?

ANNETTE: Shells and sauce.

GINA: All right. Yeah. All right, thanks Ma! OK, she said yeah.

ANNETTE: All right.

GINA: All right. Well, you better not sneak out and leave me here alone like you didn't last time, Annette.

ANNETTE: I'm not going to sneak out and leave you. I just hope she doesn't make junior leave early like she did the last time.

GINA: Yeah, well, you better not leave me alone.

ANNETTE: I won't.

GINA: I thought I was supposed to be your best friend, Annette.

ANNETTE: You are my best friend. Oh, my god. I would do anything for you, just like Anita and Maria. But I would never do to you what Anita did to Maria ever.

GINA: What did she do?

ANNETTE: Don't you remember the part where Maria asked Anita to give a really important message to Tony to meet her, and Anita's all pissed off? I forget why. And she said, oh, just tell them Maria is dead. And she's not even dead. She's down the street doing laundry or something.

GINA: Annette, first of all, they lifted her skirt and called her a tramp. Second of all, they killed her boyfriend. That is why she was pissed off.

ANNETTE: All right, I hear what you are telling me, but they're supposed to be best friends. My god, what if it were me and you?

GINA: Like we're Anita and Maria?

ANNETTE: Yeah.

GINA: I want to be Anita.

ANNETTE: OK, OK, OK, OK, so I go to you as my best friend and I say, I need you to give a really important message to junior to meet me at Tower Records across from the Burger King, OK. But first, he's got to do something to really piss you off.

GINA: Ooh, that should be easy.

ANNETTE: No, come on. Will you play right?

GINA: All right, like what?

ANNETTE: I don't know. Like anything, like he goes to your house and your mother's cooking dinner.

GINA: What's she cooking?

ANNETTE: Shells and sauce. It doesn't matter, OK? It's a Wednesday. And he says, your mother's cooking smells. Will you still tell him for me?

GINA: Yeah. My mother's cooking does smell. You can't fool junior.

ANNETTE: OK, fine. What if he did something worse, all right? He goes to your house. He like cuts off your little sister's legs. Will you still tell him?

GINA: Well, I would be pissed that he cut my sister's legs off, but I would still tell him for you. No one's been killed here. Do you understand what I'm telling you, Annette?

ANNETTE: Fine. OK, he goes to your house. He slaughters your entire family, all right, blood everywhere. But I beg you, I say, Gina, as my best friend-- and I'm crying, and I got a shawl on my head or something. I said, Gina, please, the cops are after us. I'm so sorry. Don't go to your house. It's a mess. Please, tell junior to meet me at the Burger King, por favor, and everything.

GINA: What does por favor mean again?

ANNETTE: It's like my friend.

GINA: Oh, yeah.

ANNETTE: OK, Gina, you are my best por favor. Please, tell junior to meet me at the Burger King. Will you do it?

GINA: All right, granted my entire family is lying dead on the floor and my sister is running around with no legs. But my boyfriend is still alive, and that was the whole point of that movie, Annette, so it's totally different here.

ANNETTE: I would do it for you no matter what.

GINA: You would not.

ANNETTE: Yes, I would.

GINA: Besides, what do you want to go with some guy who kills whole families and cuts off little girl's legs for? God.

ANNETTE: That is not the point, Gina. You love them no matter what they do. It's part of being a womanhood, all right? It's like, sure, Maria would not want Tony to kill her brother, all right? And I would not want junior to cut off your little sister's legs or be mean or mess around with other girls. But I know he does.

GINA: I know.

ANNETTE: I know he-- you know he does?

GINA: What?

ANNETTE: What? Did Eddie tell you something?

GINA: What?

ANNETTE: About Tina Antonelli?

GINA: All I know is that they went to the party together. I don't know that they did it.

ANNETTE: I just have this feeling that they did.

GINA: You do?

ANNETTE: And if I found out for sure that they did, ask me what I would do.

GINA: What would you do?

ANNETTE: Well, Ask me as my best friend.

GINA: As your best friend, what would you do?

ANNETTE: I would not break up with him because I love him.

GINA: I would, but first I would kill him. And then I would kill Tina Antonelli. And then I would break up with him.

ANNETTE: I am trying to tell you what's in my heart here, Gina, OK? It's like I just wish that I could get junior to love me as much as I love him, you know? And I know, Gina, that if I had better skin or prettier hair, that he would love me back.

GINA: It doesn't matter what you look like, Annette. You are losing yourself in him.

ANNETTE: You are right, Gina, oh, my god. I am. I'm losing myself. I can't believe you thought of that. It's like I look in the mirror and I go, where is Annette? Where is she? But I can't get myself back, you know.

GINA: You should just break up with him once and for all.

ANNETTE: But you are forgetting something very important here, Gina. I have given myself to him, you know?

GINA: I know you have.

ANNETTE: Gina, did it hurt the first time you did it with Eddie?

GINA: Yeah, why?

ANNETTE: Oh, my god. That is it, Gina. Love hurts. On every level, love hurts. I can't believe I thought of that.

GINA: That is so true. Love hurts, and love is blind.

ANNETTE: Love is a many splendored thing.

GINA: Love is a rose, but you better not pick it.

ANNETTE: Love is thicker than water.

GINA: That is so true.

[LAUGHTER]

DEE Thank you.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Oh, that's wonderful.

DEBORAH We love Gina and Annette.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Dee Macaluso and Deborah Hope in the Kathy and Mo Show *Parallel Lives* through July at Theater Lab in Houston.

DEE But not the last week in July.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: But not the last week in July.

DEBORAH And if they want to make reservations, they can call 869-8927.

HOPE:

SCOTT LEWIS: Wonderful, and be sure and buy lots of tickets and pay extra for them so they can go to Edinburgh.

DEE Thank you.

MACALUSO:

DEBORAH Thanks.

HOPE:

DEE Thank you very much.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: Thanks so much for being here.

DEBORAH It was wonderful to be here.

HOPE:

DEE Thank you, we had a good time.

MACALUSO:

SCOTT LEWIS: This is Scott Lewis with Rob George on *After Hours*, a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston, heard here every Saturday night, midnight until 3:00 AM.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

(SINGING) We shall not give up the fight. We have only started. We have only started. We have only started. We shall not give up the fight. We have only started. We have only started. We have only started. Together We'll have victory. Hand holding hand, hand holding hand, hand holding--

ROB GEORGE: In the background, you're listening to the Lesbian and Gay Chorus of Washington DC. Do a really rousing rendition of *We Shall Not Give Up The Fight*. Before that was Melissa Etheridge, *Yes, I Am*, title cut from her latest.

You've been listening to *After Hours*, a continuing tradition on KPFT Houston, 90.1 FM. Stay tuned for the Carbon Dating Game with Eric. He's in the house and coming your way. See you next week.

(SINGING) We have only started.