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December 4, 2024

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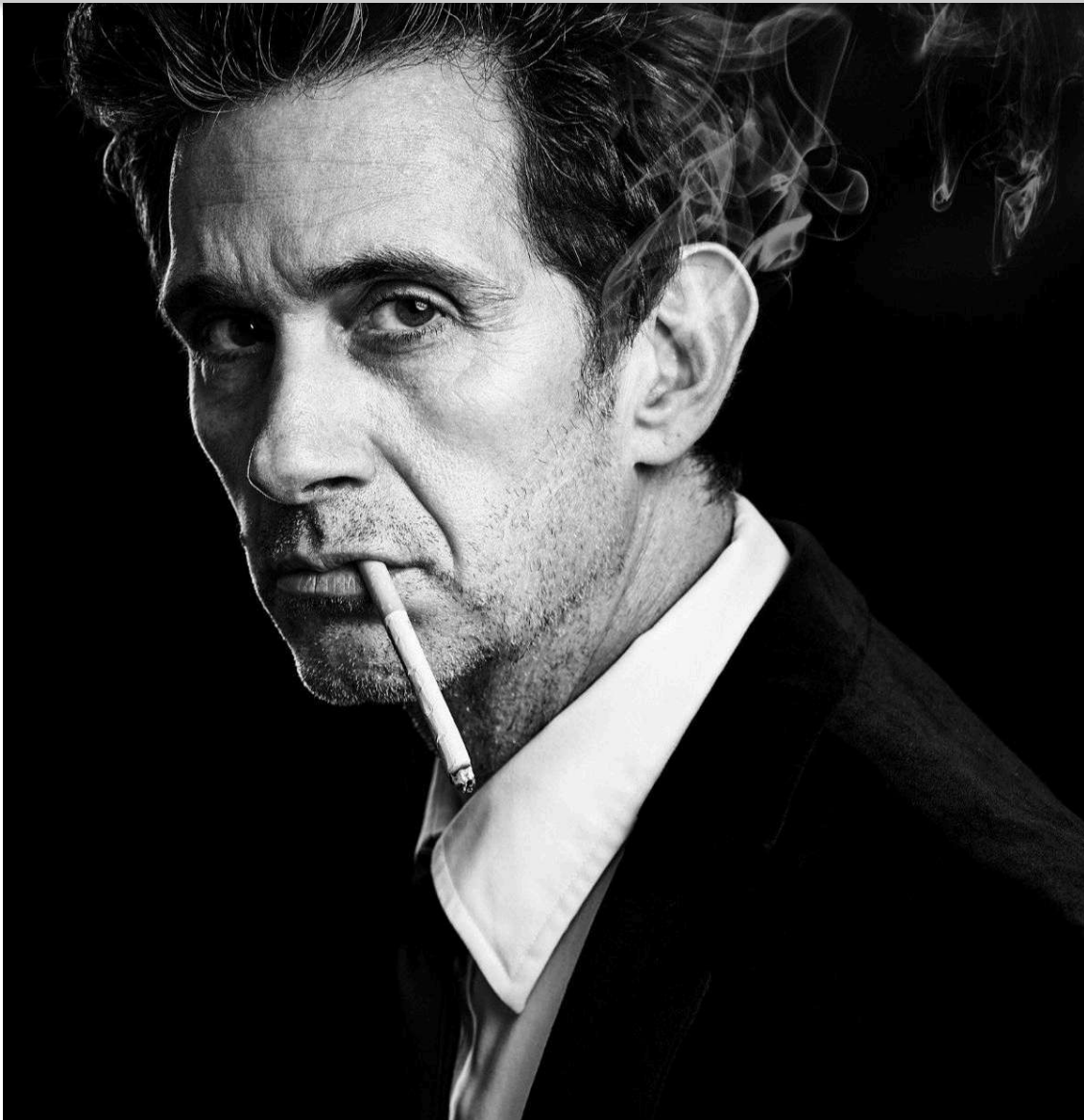
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“Obscene – Provocative – Criminal – Controversial”

Ronnie Marmo IS Lenny Bruce IN

“I’M NOT A COMEDIAN... I’M LENNY BRUCE”

DIRECTED BY MULTI AWARD-WINNER JOE MANTEGNA



Palo Alto, CA–December 4, 2024– Critically-acclaimed actor **Ronnie Marmo**, with the blessings of **Kitty Bruce** (daughter of the late Lenny Bruce), along with the **Lenny Bruce Foundation and Oshman Family JCC**, are thrilled to present ***“I’M NOT A COMEDIAN... I’M LENNY BRUCE”*** - Directed by **Joe Mantegna**, a captivating one-man theatrical performance that chronicles the life and influential legacy of Lenny Bruce, a Jewish comedy legend whose fight for freedom of speech is perhaps timelier now than ever before, in The Albert and Janet Schultz Cultural Arts Hall at the Oshman Family JCC on Saturday, January 25, 2025.

“I believe Lenny’s is the voice this country needs right now,” says playwright and star Ronnie Marmo. “In the 1960s, he exposed many of the ‘untouchable’ subjects that are in the news again now: religion, racism, immigration, xenophobia, gender inequality, sexual identity, the criminal justice system, capital punishment, bail reform, government aid, police brutality, corrupt capitalism, the opiate epidemic, marijuana legalization, censorship, I could go on and on. So here we are, over 56 years later, all the issues Lenny was fighting for are still so relevant and even radical. In certain ways, we’ve progressed since Lenny was with

I'M NOT A COMEDIAN... I'M LENNY BRUCE chronicles the life and death of the most controversial comedian and undisputed legend of all time...Lenny Bruce. His personal pain, sharply funny social commentary and completely original, freestyle comedy left a lasting impact on today's poetry, politics, music, film - and of course - comedy. His unwavering commitment to, and passion for, free speech led to numerous obscenity charges and arrests. Bruce fought for freedom of speech all the way to the Supreme Court, and died of an accidental overdose in 1966 while out on appeal. Lauded by fans and former friends of Bruce, Marmo's crowd-shocking portrayal brings the notorious funnyman to life with all the electrifying, insightful and comedic brilliance as the one and only Lenny Bruce himself.

Why This Event Matters: Lenny Bruce wasn't just a comedian; he was a trailblazer for free speech, using humor to confront the boundaries of language, race, religion, and sexuality. His willingness to challenge societal norms led to his arrest on multiple occasions, making him a powerful symbol of the struggle for free expression in America during the 1960s and 1970s.

In America today, debates over freedom of speech are becoming increasingly complex. Social media platforms serve as battlegrounds for free speech, yet concerns over misinformation, hate speech and harassment fuel calls for regulation. The current political climate further underscores the contentiousness of this issue, especially regarding public figures' responsibility for their words.

Now more than ever, Bruce's legacy serves as an essential reminder of the importance of protecting voices that provoke, challenge, and defy authority—even when their messages make us uncomfortable.

WHAT THE PRESS IS SAYING ABOUT *I'M NOT A COMEDIAN... I'M LENNY BRUCE*:

"Lenny Bruce is still talking dirty". – ***New York Times***

"This perfectly inflected performance is expertly directed by actor Mantegna." – ***Los Angeles Times (Critics Choice)***

"We are actually watching Bruce resurrected. " – ***Theater Mania***

"...even the most devoted Bruce fan will leave impressed with Marmo." – ***Chicago Tribune***

WHAT THE CELEBRITIES ARE SAYING:

"The best portrayal of my father I have ever seen". – ***Kitty Bruce (Daughter of Lenny)***

"Funny, fierce, tragic...beautifully directed by Joe Mantegna with a strong performance by

"A terrific show about a true genius who was ahead of his time. Go see *I'm Not A Comedian...I'm Lenny Bruce*." – **Tony Bennett**

"Actor Ronnie Marmo is a force of volcanic proportions. I was riveted by Ronnie... It had such an impact on me." – **Patti LuPone**

"Ronnie Marmo delights as he channels Lenny Bruce. A thoughtful authenticity in performance, direction and script." – **Bonnie Hunt, Actor**

"The performance is — to my eye — flawless, by a Brooklynite named Ronnie Marmo." - **Teller, Performer (Penn and Teller)**

"'I'm Not A Comedian... I'm Lenny Bruce' is superlative in all departments...it's the tour de force by actor Ronnie Marmo that for me is historic. Lenny's life pours out of him." – **Richard Lewis, Comedian**

For Calendar Editors

WHAT: The Lenny Bruce Foundation and Oshman Family JCC will present *I'M NOT A COMEDIAN... I'M LENNY BRUCE* in the Albert and Janet Schultz Cultural Arts Hall at the Oshman Family JCC.

WHEN: Saturday, January 25, 2025, 7:00 PM

WHERE: The Albert and Janet Schultz Cultural Arts Hall at the Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto

REGISTRATION: Registration takes place at palaltojcc.org/bruce.

About the Oshman Family JCC

The Oshman Family Jewish Community Center (OFJCC) on the Taube Koret Campus for Jewish Life serves the South Peninsula through educational, social, cultural, fitness, sports and other programs. The OFJCC is a multi-generational Jewish neighborhood where all are welcome and which fosters new personal and community connections through rich and rewarding experiences. The OFJCC provides a common ground for Jewish institutions, other local groups, organizations and individuals to work, learn and play together for the betterment of the whole community. The OFJCC's registered trademark is Live Fully®. For more information, visit www.palaltojcc.org or call (650) 223-8700. To receive pictures or arrange interviews, contact Michelle Shabtai (650) 223-8761, mshabtai@palaltojcc.org.

For more information, please visit www.LennyBruceOnStage.com.

A portion of the show's proceeds will go to the Lenny Bruce Memorial Foundation, a 501(c)(3). The foundation provides funds for those who don't have insurance or the ability to get treatment for drug and alcohol addiction on their own. For more information please visit,

About Ronnie Marmo

Ronnie Marmo (Playwright and Actor) has starred in more than 60 feature films and television shows, most recently guest starring on “Criminal Minds” and “Lethal Weapon.” He also starred in “Ammore E Malavita (Love and Bullets),” an Italian musical film which won the David di Donatello for best picture (the Italian equivalent to an Academy Award). Other credits include “Back In The Day” (on Netflix now), “Deuces Wild”, “Crocodile Dundee in LA,” “West Of Brooklyn,” “Pizza With Bullets,” “Truck 20’s Location,” “Death Of A Tree,” “Irish Eyes (aka Vendetta),” and “Limbo Lounge.” He has guest starred in several hit television shows including “JAG” and “The Young and The Restless.” He was nominated for Best Supporting Actor by the Indie Soap Awards for his role as Crotch in the series, “Adults Only.” Marmo enjoyed a three-year run on ABC’s “General Hospital” as Ronnie Dimestico. On stage, he has starred in more than 40 plays. Marmo recently completed the audiobook in which he portrays Lenny Bruce in Lenny’s autobiography, “How to Talk Dirty and Influence People.” He continues to serve as the Artistic Director of Theatre 68 in Los Angeles and New York City.

About Joe Mantegna

Joe Mantegna (Director) was awarded the Tony and Joseph Jefferson Awards for his acclaimed performance as Richard Roma in David Mamet’s Pulitzer Prize-winning play “Glengarry Glen Ross.” Some of Mantegna’s film and television highlights include: “House of Games,” “Searching for Bobby Fisher,” “Godfather III,” his Emmy and Golden Globe-nominated role of Dean Martin in “The Ratpack,” his Emmy-nominated role of Papi Delana in “The Last Don” and the voice of Fat Tony on “The Simpsons.” For two seasons Mantegna starred with Mary Steenburgen and Amber Tamblyn in the critically acclaimed CBS drama “Joan of Arcadia,” which won the 2004 People’s Choice Award for best new drama and picked up three Emmy nominations. In 2008 Mantegna reprised his Emmy-nominated role of Lou Manahan opposite Debra Messing in the USA Network series “The Starter Wife.” Mantegna has also lent his voice to the Disney/Pixar film “CARS 2” and continues his 23-year run as Fat Tony on “The Simpsons.” In April of 2011 Mantegna received a Star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. Currently Mantegna stars as FBI Special Agent David Rossi in season thirteen of the hit CBS Drama “Criminal Minds” and continues his hosting and producing duties for six seasons on “Gun Stories” for the Outdoor Channel. His newest collaboration is “Hollywood Weapons: Fact or Fiction?” Mantegna resides in Los Angeles with his wife of 40 years, Arlene and their two daughters, Mia and Gia.

Tickets + More Information:

For tickets and more details, visit https://Lenny_Bruce_Jan25.eventbrite.com

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The Oshman Family JCC is proud to be a part of the Koret Initiative on Jewish Peoplehood.



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