

HOW WE FIRST MET

remembering those magic moments

by james j. siegel

VALENTINE STAGES

Some couples celebrate Valentine's Day with roses and boxes of chocolates. Others celebrate with improv comedy. When Jill Bourque developed her sketch show *How We First Met*, she never thought it would run each year in San Francisco with a loyal fan base.

"I wanted to do a show for Valentine's Day that was about real stories," said Bourque. That first show played to a sold out crowd in February 2001. Fast forward ten years later, and shows are still selling out. And many in the audience are repeat visitors.

The concept is simple. Bourque interviews three couples live on stage. Once a couple divulges an interesting story about their life, the interview stops and actors play out the scene on the spot.

In the beginning, Bourque said it was difficult to get couples to volunteer.

"I had to beg people," she said. "Then once people saw the show, more and more people wanted to get in on it."

In fact, last year, over 70 couples requested to take part. With so many wanting to see their lives re-enacted on stage, audience members now vote online for the couples who will get to go on stage.

"Couples get to see their lives unfolding," said Bourque. "They laugh and remember and fall in love all over again."

HOW WE FIRST MET

February 12 | 8:00 pm

Herbst Theatre

401 Van Ness Avenue, SF

\$25 to \$59 | 415.392.4400

howwefirstmet.com