



Tim Hawkins: Man Behind “The Government Can”

In this era of potty-mouthed comedians, good clean humor that isn't cloying is hard to come by. The Red Skeltons and Victor Borge of yesterday would have trouble getting a laugh from today's jaded audiences, who expect the unexpected, edgy, and outré from their funnymen. Most of us who enjoy a good laugh have gotten used to tolerating “a little” profanity or inappropriate subject matter from our comedians, as long as the coarser material is bleeped out (see: Jon Stewart's “The Daily Show”).



But there are still a few genuinely funny, talented comedians who manage to be innovative without resorting to sexual and scatological laugh lines. One of these is Tim Hawkins, a manic musician-cum-comedian with a gift for mimicry. His hilarious routine on aging rock stars, for example, features flawless send-ups of many favorites from the Golden Age of Rock n' Roll, including the Eagles, Neil Diamond, and Garth Brooks (okay, I know, Garth's not a rock musician, but Hawkins manages to sound like his vocal twin).

A devout Christian, Hawkins once did a stint with Chuck Colson's prison ministry. A father of four whose wife has done battle with breast cancer, Hawkins made the jump to full-time comedy in 2002, and has not looked back. He has performed all over the country and is, according to his website, “on track for 120+ shows in churches and theaters across 30 states” in 2010 alone.

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A skillful guitar player and singer, Hawkins' routines are equal parts monologue and gently satirical songs, the latter ranging from the marriage-related spoof “Things You Don't Say to Your Wife” to the nothing-too-sacred indictment of the federal government “The Government Can” (sung to the tune of the 1971 hit “The Candyman”).

Hawkins has so far produced both DVDs, like “I'm No Rockstar” and “Insanitized,” and CDs — “Cletus Take the Reel” and “Tunafish Sandwich,” for example — but his biggest impact has been on the Web, where his online comedy routines and songs have received many tens of millions of viewings. Hawkins, wanting to try the “Google concept,” has given away some of his songs and comedy clips on the Web, including the aforementioned “The Government Can” embedded below and found, along with many other samples, at timhawkins.net.

Tim Hawkins, a man with bona fide talent, is an outstanding if unusual example of a modern entertainer able to appeal to a broad audience without pandering to the baser instincts. Would that there were more men and women of talent willing to emulate him.

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Thumbnail photo of Tim Hawkins: “The Government Can”



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