

Jeff Around Town – August 12th, 2025

Jeff: Joining me on Jeff Around Town, it's Matt Geiler, comedian, writer, animator, and so much more, all-around great guy and all-around creative. Matt, thanks for being on Jeff Around Town.

Matt: The pleasure is mine, Jeff, thank you so much.

Jeff: Yeah, so we're here at Myrtle and Cyprus, and when I came in, you had your iPad in this really cool, like, drawing board kind of thing, but you were here just drawing.

Matt: Yeah, I was actually drawing some character designs for an animation project I'm working on.

Jeff: Okay, and so how do you... you're doing so many different things, and like, lately at Backline you've been doing these improv nights, right?

Matt: Yes, improvisational concerts where the setlist is completely improvised off of song titles that I don't know until the audience shouts them, and then I improvise those songs to music that I have not heard yet, because I don't know what the sound gal Sam is going to play.

Jeff: So, okay, so you're working in all these different areas, and so just in general, like, are these things weirdly connected? Like, you're working on some animation, which has to be so planned out, so detailed in terms of the timing, and then you go, it's like you're out on a high wire act without a net doing improv. Like, that seems like a totally different thing, or is it not?

Matt: I think they're totally different creative acts, but my thing is, it's all, you know, your creativity is personal to you, so I think you, you know, you, me, all creatives and all artists have kind of a personal core creativity that's integrated, and for me, that's where all those things come from. So, the animation is a, is one expression of that thing, which is, which, in my case, is probably like a child... I don't know, like a wild child joyfulness, I guess. It expresses itself that way, you know, the improvised concerts are another way that that happens, you know, music is another thing, but it all kind of resides in that.

Jeff: Oh yeah, musician, I forgot that as well. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Matt: So, they're just, they're different manifestations in different disciplines, but it's kind of all the same ball of wax, it feels like.

Jeff: Yeah. So, say a little bit more about that. I love the childlike thing you're talking about, because I've noticed, having gone to, like, when I was starting out in the world of cartooning, I would meet my heroes, cartoonists that I had grown up studying, and I would meet them, and they still seemed as young as they ever did, and I got to noticing that a lot of people who do that kind of, maybe, and maybe all creative work, but was it keeping them young, you know, and I wonder if you are tapping into this childlike part of your brain, like, I don't know how old you are, I don't need to know how old you are, but there is a youthfulness to you, and a youthful energy.

Matt: It's kind of you to say, Jeff, I'm 175 years old, and I may not look it on the surface, you know, I look like a late, like a mid-40s, late 40s, but I'm 192 years old.

Jeff: (laughter) You've just aged 20-some years in the last three seconds.

Matt: I'm closing on my finishing my second century. I was around for a lot of stuff that you don't even know about, Jeff, that you only read about in history books, but I think, I do think that's true, though, but I think for any kind of creative pursuit, or artistic pursuit, there's some, I feel like the artist is accessing some kind of, some part of their child, that spontaneous sense of play, you know, and maybe you're accessing different parts of it, or different amounts, but I think that it's true that to do that kind of work, whether you're a dancer, or you're a sculptor, or doing pottery, or whatever, you're tapping back into that thing we all have as children, which is kind of an unfettered, spontaneous, un-self-conscious, just ability to play.

Jeff: Love it.

Matt: Ya know?

Jeff: Yeah. Very inspirational, Matt. (laughter) No, it is. I appreciate it. Time's gone by very quickly. Matt Geiler, thanks for joining me and Jeff around town.

Matt: Most welcome. Most welcome, Jeff. Thank you for having me. (laughter)