Fat Joke

by Cheyenne Rouleau

EASY READ GUIDE

	Fat Joke is about: Fat Joke combines stand-up comedy, storytelling, and straightforward facts to address fatphobia. Cheyenne Rouleau uses sharp humour to explore this often ignored topic, prompting audiences to rethink their preconceptions.
	In this show, Cheyenne Rouleau discusses their experiences as a person who identifies as fat. We frequently employ the term "fatphobia" to articulate Cheyenne's encounters, yet it's worth noting that most individuals within the fat community favor the term "anti-fat bias." You can learn more about the terminology in an article by fat activist Aubrey Gordon, where she discusses the differences between fatphobia and anti-fat bias. You can read the article by clicking the link here.
	Sometimes, there is music while the performer is talking. There is one point where the sound of a metal pipe falls and clangs, and it is loud.

Lights	There aren't any flashing or moving lights. There are a couple of seconds of darkness at the end.
Projections	There are four projection screens on stage.
	Social Expectations: The show is set in a comedy club. Sometimes the performer may look directly at you or speak at you. There is no expectation that you will respond or do anything. Sometimes the performer might ask you to read something on the screen together. Participation is optional. At one point in the show, there is a karaoke section, the performer will invite the audience to sing along. Participation is optional.
Things in the show that might be intense	This show contains significant discussion of fatphobia and diet culture. Additionally, it contains sensitive themes, including depictions of Jarred, the subway guy, who is a child predator. An image of cannibalist Jeffrey Dalmer, mentions abortions, complicated

	pregnancies, misogyny, slavery, eugenics, racism, and systemic oppression. The performer discusses when they were sexually assaulted but does not go into graphic details.

PERFORMERS	
	Cheyenne Rouleau plays **Cheyenne**, a heightened version of herself.

What happens in the show:

This section explains the story of the show.

You may like to read it to learn more about each scene in the performance; it will reveal some of the story before you see it.
You can also choose not to read it.

	Cheyenne tells a story about every fat person having stories about being picked last. ● Grade 5, late 90s, choosing dodgeball teams. ● Feeling picked last, trying to hide being fat. ● Shift in gym class dynamics over time. ● Meeting another fat girl, the Horse Girl. ● Feeling safer with someone similar and yet competitive at the same time.
	Transition with loud sound and shift of light introducing “Fat Joke” on the projection.
	Cheyenne introduces the show with a fat joke, setting the tone for discussing fat-related humour and clarifying that this is a comedy show and you can laugh through your discomfort. ● Comedy is a form of tension release. ● Importance of optimism as a fat person. ● Navigating comedy in a world full of information.

	Cheyenne introduces a flow chart that asks, “Can I laugh at this?” and explains it. ● Consideration of audience and context. ● Clarifying boundaries for laughter. ● Highlighting societal perceptions and stereotypes.
	Transition with lights and sound. Cheyenne sits downstage left and discusses what it means to call someone fat. ● Exercise on describing a person (Cheyenne) without bias. ● Reflecting on societal associations with the word “fat.” ● Highlighting societal biases towards weight and appearances.
	Cheyenne introduces the pun counter. Every time a pun is made in the show, there will be a sound and projection cue, and the pun counter number will go up.

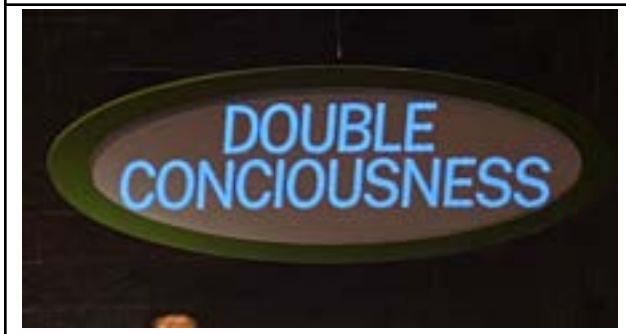
	Cheyenne defines fatphobia: ● Lack of recognition of fatphobia as a societal problem. ● Comparison to other forms of discrimination.
	Understanding fear and concern: ● Differentiating fear of fat people from fear of becoming fat. ● Addressing societal concerns about health. ● Critique of moral judgements on health.
	Cheyenne asks for the next section to be introduced through karaoke and asks the audience to sing along. ● Explanation of why health judgements based on appearance are flawed. ● Assertion of privacy regarding health. ● Critique of ableism in equating heath with value.

	Cheyenne introduces the complexity of the fat community: ● Introduction to the diversity within the fat community. ● Explanation of terms and spectrums of fatness (including straight size, small fat, mid fat, large fat, superfat). ● Exploration of intersectionality and marginalization. ● At the end of this section, Cheyenne brings out a paper Burger King crown and crowns someone in the audience with the crown.
	Cheyenne introduces the body positive movement: ● Origin of body positivity movement in marginalized communities. ● Critique of capitalism's exploitation through marketing. ● Loss of original message due to commercialization.
	Cheyenne introduces Body Neutrality v.s. Body Positivity: ● Introduction of body neutrality as an alternative. ● Emphasis on acceptance of existence over self-love. ● Illustration of societal discomfort with fat acceptance. ● A projection plays of the "plus-sized models" of America's Next Top Model.

	An image of Cheyenne comes up on the screen again. This time, Cheyenne asks the audience to reconsider how they would describe the body within the context of body neutrality and the fat scale. Cheyenne makes a joke about how a carpenter would describe the body and there becomes loud audio cues of drilling and metal pipes dropping.
	Online Dating and Fatness: ● Discussion of fatness as a primary focus in online dating. ● Humorous take on navigating dating as a fat person. ● Illustrations of societal biases in dating.
	Cheyenne introduces Fat Joke #2: ● Discusses personal background as an actor before comedy. ● Reflection on body shaming in theatre school. ● Limited roles available for fat actors. ● Personal anecdotes about contradictory feedback.

	Cheyenne launches into discussing celebrities who once were fat but then lost weight i.e. Rebel Wilson. ● Critique of Hollywood's limited portrayal of fat actors. ● Reflection on personal experiences with casting directors. ● Cheyenne then celebrates fat celebrities who stayed fat i.e. Chris Farley.
	Cheyenne introduces Fat Joke #3 and the Fat Acceptance Movement.
	Discovery of Queer Softball League and joining the Heavy Hitters (all fat softball team). ● Explanation of Fat Liberation and personal reflections on the meaning. ● Challenges faced by the team such as securing jerseys that fit.

	Transition into FAT talks (a spoof of Ted Talks).
	Cheyenne wears a face microphone and discusses the history and the roots of anti-fatness in slavery.
	Cheyenne introduces “White Man Math” which breaks down the equations and logic (or lack there of) to “justify” slavery.

	Introduction of Problematic History of the BMI (the Body Mass Index)
	Cheyenne launches into her challenges navigating fatness, bisexuality, and identity and explores the intersectionality of fatness and womanhood.
	Cheyenne shares a deeply personal story of pregnancy complications and trauma. Cheyenne also introduces W.E.B. Du Bois' concept of Double Consciousness.

Ending with hope:

- Cheyenne shares her hopes and fears for the speaker's daughter's future.
- Express a commitment to fostering an environment of acceptance and empowerment.
- Emphasize the importance of challenging societal norms and advocating for inclusivity and equity.

Fat Joke

Created and Performed by **Cheyenne Rouleau**

Directed by **Chelsea Haberlin**

Dramaturgy by **Jiv Parasram**

Set Designed by **Jenn Stewart**

Sound Designed by **Mary Jane Coomber**

Projection Designed by **Andie Lloyd**

Original Costume by **Jessie Jade Churchill**

Stage Managed by **Jasmin Sandhu**

Technical Director, **Jamie Sweeney**

Assistant Technical Director, **Brianna Bernard**

Community Development Consultant, **Layla Cameron**

Accessibility Consultant, **Siobhan Barker**

Tour Costume Coordinator/Community Outreach Coordinator, **Alexa Fraser**

Photography by **Jesse RAY Photography and Angelica Schwartz**

Neworld Theatre:

Artistic Director, **Chelsea Haberlin**

Managing Director, **Alen Dominguez**

Producer, **Jasmine Chen**

Community Engagement Manager, **Angelica Schwartz**

Resident Technician, **Brianna Bernard**

This Easy Read Guide was created by Angelica Schwartz and inspired by our friends at Back To Back Theatre. If you have any questions, you can reach out to us at angelica@neworldtheatre.com