

Interview: Mary Lynn Rajs kub – Star of Hit TV Show ‘24’ – Discovers She’s Hilarious

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CHICAGO – On the other end of the phone, Mary Lynn Rajs kub (best known to most Americans as Chloe O’Brian on the hit television show “24”) tells me her Thanksgiving plans.

Even though her voice is sweet and humble as we discuss the logistics and square footage needed to properly deep fry a turkey, something in my mind can’t separate her from the government agent she plays.

I find myself fighting the urge to talk into the headset with a deep, raspy voice a la Kiefer Sutherland and demand she send me the schematics of an abandoned industrial complex.

“I thought [deep frying a turkey] was a terrible idea, but apparently it’s pretty delicious,” she says completely unaware that in my mind a bomb is about to go off somewhere in the city unless she can get me the information I need.



Mary Lynn Rajs kub.

Photo credit: [GeekSugar.com](http://www.geeksugar.com) [11]

Rajs kub has found playing a hit character on a fast-paced action show a high point in her career. Meanwhile, an oft-forgotten bit of information known only to fans of her earlier work and attendees of the annual CTU holiday party is that Mary Lynn Rajs kub is hilarious.

In case you don’t believe me, she performed stand-up at the Lakeshore Theatre in Chicago on Nov. 24 in a show called “Mary Lynn Rajs kub: Turns Out I’m Funny”.

The Trenton, Mich. native started her comedy career on the first two seasons of the HBO sketch comedy “Mr. Show”. At that time, she was dating the show’s co-creator (David Cross), and when their relationship ended, she was no longer allowed on the set.

While working as a barista at Seattle’s Best, her agent took a video of her doing a stand-up routine of a performance artist on acid to Garry Shandling. He cast her in the “Larry Sanders Show”.



Mary Lynn Rajs kub.

Photo credit: GeekSugar.com [11]

Between being a foil to Bob Odenkirk and over-the-top David Cross sketches and making out with Jeffery Tambor (in what was the funniest “Larry Sanders Show” episode), Rajs kub became a favorite to comedy nerds throughout the nation.

One such fan was director Paul Thomas Anderson who cast her as an assistant to Tom Cruise in the film “Magnolia”. When her scene didn’t make the final cut, he made a point to give her a much bigger role as Adam Sandler’s overbearing sister in “Punch-Drunk Love”.

This is what caught the eye of “24” executive producer Joel Surnow.

“He really liked my character. He decided he wanted somebody somewhat like that at the CTU,” Rajs kub said. “I had never watched ‘24’. I really didn’t audition for very many dramas. I didn’t really want to go in on it.”



Mary Lynn Rajs kub (left), Emily Watson and Adam Sandler in “Punch-Drunk Love”.

Photo credit: *Bruce Birmelin, Columbia Pictures*

The decision to sign on paid off. Rajs kub was an immediate hit for critics and fans when she joined the cast in the third season. The following year when the show was retooled, she was one of the only characters to stay on as a regular.

Rajs kub has been manning the computer at CTU ever since and even has some fun with it by parodying the role on shows such as “The Simpsons” and “MADtv”.

Of course, she won’t be going anywhere any time soon. The much-anticipated new season of “24” will feature Chloe working for a rogue CTU agency outside the government while Jack Bauer faces torture charges. The much-talked about “24” movie is still in the works as well.

“They have written a first draft of that,” she says as she seems to search her brain for something she hasn’t thought about in a while. “Then FOX put it on hold because they wanted to do it when the series was entirely over.”

While talking about “24” seems like it has become almost overplayed in the comedian’s life, sometimes her television show is all the audience can think about when they see her perform other places.



Mary Lynn Rajs kub.

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“Sometimes I can feel that they’re really beside themselves,” the actress says of some “24” fans who see her live show. “They think Kiefer is backstage or something. I can tell all they’re thinking about is ‘24’.”

How does the comedian/field agent diffuse this situation?

“I’ll just talk to them,” Rajs kub said. “Like: ‘What do you want to know?’” She admits that while she does mention Hollywood briefly, the show is on a more personal level. It’s less like a conventional stand-up show and more like old-fashioned storytelling.

“I tried to put together a show that was more theatrical, but I just end up standing there talking to the audience any way. I’ve never been a straight-up ‘joke teller,’” Rajs kub confesses. “I’ve always been funny on stage.”



Kiefer Sutherland and Mary Lynn Rajs kub in “24”.

Photo credit: 20th Century Fox

This comes as no surprise because she’s always funny on screen. Hopefully we can see more of that sooner than later.

While Mary Lynn tells me that she would love to work with Ricky Gervais or Garry Shandling again, there might be another collaboration with a former “Mr. Show” cast mate in the future. She is currently reworking a feature-length script based on an earlier short film she made with comedian Paul F. Thompkins.

The story follows a recently dumped woman who becomes a hit man just to not look pathetic in front of a guy at a bar. Following through on her word, she takes out an advertisement and becomes possibly the most inept assassin ever.

Interestingly, Rajs kub doesn’t even have a copy of the original short film. “I found it on YouTube,” she laughs. “I thought ‘somebody found

that and put it up. I’m going to watch it.”

A short film featuring Mary Lynn Rajskub as an adorable hitman.

“I haven’t really shown it to anyone,” she says. “I just keep rewriting it.” In the meantime, we can expect to see more of Mary Lynn Rajskub on televisions on the upcoming premiere of “24” as well as the recently released “Not Just the Best of the Larry Sanders Show” on DVD.

As the phone conversation ends, I’m again a bit heartbroken. She hasn’t confirmed that she hacked into some terrorist computer network or at least a decent cliffhanger to lead into the next hour.

While I know the beautiful and funny Mary Lynn Rajskub will go on to call into radio shows and will do more interviews, my inner Jack Bauer hopes Chloe is investigating a mole working inside Mancow’s “Morning Madhouse”.

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