

of the sexes



Photo provided

rom Mars – Women Are From Venus Live,” based on John Gray’s 1992 best-selling book about the

The acting bug bit me so hard. It was this, it had to be this. Nothing else made me feel this way. I couldn’t imagine doing anything else.”

He studied acting, particularly the works of William Shakespeare and other classical material, at New York University, and

filled his life outside the classroom studying people as a bartender and absorbing as much film and theater as he could.

After college, Gullberg did regional theater with the Alabama Shakespeare Festival, was Prince Charming on a Disney cruise, and landed the role in “Deployed,”

among others.

He says “Men Are From Mars – Women Are From Venus Live” is different than anything he has ever done before.

“I’ve been acting almost my entire life, but I had never done stand-up before, and I had never been on stage entirely by myself,” Gullberg says. “The first thing I did when I got the role was surround myself with one-man performance and stand-up. A lot of it is the craft and mechanics of building a joke, which is very useful, but that disappears the second you walk out on stage and have to make a roomful of people laugh.”

So Gullberg started with one person – Emily, his wife of 10 years, who is the main subject of much of his material.

“Let me preface this by saying that I have found an incredible woman who loves me very much,” Gullberg says. “She’s tremendously patient. But I imagine that all of us have moments where we can’t believe that the person that we love and live with just can’t get out of the house on time. It’s these every day things that happen to us, the touchstones of living with and loving a beautiful and terrifying human being, that make it into the show.”

When asked for another example, Gullberg launches into a recent discussion he had with Emily.

“Oh, she did this to me the other day, and I’ve been talking about it in the show forever,” he says. “She walked over to her closet, and says ‘Erik, I have nothing to wear.’ I walked over to this same closet, and all I see is a closet full of clothes. ... What I have to realize is that everything in there is a different emotion; it’s a different mood. It’s not just a piece of clothing, otherwise maybe we could slim down our closet a bit.”

Gullberg quickly adds the show is much more than bits

IF YOU GO

What: “Men Are From Mars – Women Are From Venus Live”

When: 8 p.m. Friday

Where: Lake Michigan College Mendel Center Mainstage Theatre, 2755 E. Napier Ave., Benton Harbor

How much: \$50, \$25 with 50 percent off code VENUS50 online or in person

Contact: 927-1221 or www.themendelcenter.com

centered around “things women do that drive men crazy.”

“Hopefully, by the end of the show people will be elbowing each other and saying ‘Honey, that’s just like you,’” he says, “but more specifically it’s about how to love your partner better and more completely through all of the stresses that life piles on top of you.

“I was fortunate enough to find an incredible woman who thought that I was funny and even moderately handsome. She’s also boundlessly patient and encouraging. This show is a reminder of how lucky I am to have found her.”

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Women are from... 

