

INSIDE TRACK

BY OLIVIA VANNI

'CALLING' HUB COMIC

HBO funnyguy in lineup

Boston Calling's lineup of funny folks for its Comedy Experience in May has some familiar faces taking the stage at the **Harvard Athletic Complex** on Memorial Day weekend.

"I used to think cities were for special people," said comic **Pete Holmes**, who's behind the HBO show "Crashing" and set to perform at Boston Calling. "Like, to have an apartment in Allston meant that you were special."

Now, he'll be showing up in Allston as a pretty special person himself. The Lexington native will be joining other notable comics, such as **Comedy Central** sensation **Hannibal Buress**, who will be hosting the event, as well as **Phoebe Robinson** and **Jordan Rock** — **Chris Rock's** brother.

For Holmes, the Boston Calling performance will be a welcomed homecoming.

"When I was 13 or 14, I'd wait for the bus — I think it was the 62. I'd take it down Mass. Ave to Alewife and then take the T to Harvard Square — just to go to Harvard Square."

There, he'd hang out at **Newbury Comics** and the **Pit**. All the while, he said, he'd picture himself as **Matt Damon** from "Good Will Hunting," fantasizing that **Minnie Driver** was going to come along and discover he was a bonafide genius.

It was also in the Boston area that Holmes tested his standup skills for the first time.

"It takes a while to be funny where you're from," Holmes said. "Boston is where I started off doing open mics. I was really, really new, and it was embarrassing."

Since those early days of performing at the old Comedy Connection in **Faneuil Hall** and **Hong Kong** (the real one in Cambridge), Holmes has refined his comical craft — especially for our local audience.

"They know the references I know," he told the **Track**. "It's an elevated audience. We know how to make fun of ourselves. We know we're gruff, that we grew up driving down roads that

were made for a horse and carriage. We can tease ourselves about all that."



Pete Holmes in Los Angeles.

AP PHOTO

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ELEVATOR SOX:

You'll never guess what **Red Sox** players have been doing

in an elevator at the **Hotel Commonwealth** ... signing their names. The Kenmore Square hotel (aka the "Official Hotel of the Boston Red Sox") has a designated baseball elevator. Current and former Sox players have been scrawling their signatures on this lift's walls, which boasts a **Green Monster** motif. In the past week alone, left fielder **Andrew Benintendi** and former catcher **Jason Varitek** left their **John Hancock's** at the hotel. **Jackie Bradley Jr.** did the deed in January, and others who have gone before him include pitcher **Chris Sale**, right fielder **Mookie Betts** and former second-baseman-turned-broadcaster **Jerry Remy**.

HERE COMES THE CASTING:

Dating got you down? You're in luck, because TV show "Married at First Sight" is now casting singles in Boston who want to walk down the aisle

SIDETRACK



ASAP. So if you appear to be aged 25 to 35, are down for marrying a total stranger and are willing to have your newly wedded ... um, bliss? ... broadcasted to the whole country, apply online at MAFSBoston.castingcrane.com.

HEY, MR. DJ: Boston's **DJ Joe Bermudez**, whose song "Sunrise" topped the **Billboard** dance chart last year, is releasing his new single, "Ghosting," on April 17, **Marathon Monday**. The song's lyrics are a little too real for anyone who's dated in the past five years, but if you're left wanting more, look out for Joe's upcoming album, "2779 Miles to Go."

GIVING BOCH: **Ernie Boch Jr.'s Music Drives Us** has given a \$25,000 grant to the **House of Blues Music Forward Foundation** to underwrite the **Boston Blues School House** program in Boston. The program, which will now go by the name of **Boston Blues School House presented by Music Drives Us**, has students relive the history of the Blues and shows them how music can promote social change.

Ernie Boch Jr. speaks at the House of Blues. Boch's Music Drives Us gave a \$25,000 grant to the Boston Blues School House program, which teaches students how music can promote social change.

PHOTO BY REBECCA CARR