



Matt Baker

Durham Laporte Best of Halifax 2022 gold winner of Best Comedian

GOLD WINNER

Durham Laporte

[website](#)



During the voting process for Best Comedian, things took a turn for the meta: Competing comics banded together in an act of organic togetherness, asking their respective fan bases to vote for the late Durham Laporte. It was the exact sort of community-building that Laporte was known and loved for, a fitting way to honour the young comedian who passed away

...the young comedian who passed away unexpectedly earlier this year at age 25.

“I would definitely say I was his harshest critic when he was starting out. Like, he told me that this was something that he was gonna pursue. And I was like: ‘What the heck are you talking about?’ And the first show of his I went to was at Gus’ Pub—and, honestly, my jaw dropped. I could not believe the jokes that were coming out of his mouth,” says Laporte’s sister, Jayde Laporte, speaking with The Coast by phone alongside sister Justine Laporte.

Both siblings talk of Durham’s bravery in ironing out a path for himself in the field of comedy, and a hustle that never stopped. “When I was with him, he would AirDrop a poster to everyone that was in the room. No one



would have known who he was, and he’d just AirDrop a poster,” Justine recalls. Once, while visiting Saint John, New Brunswick, she remembers, “he found an opening only 20 minutes before a comedy show. And he was like: ‘Alright, well, I’m gonna go do that.’ He was always ready to do those things and he

made it so much fun.”

Early in the days of his budding comedy career, Laporte would host comedy nights on the Halifax Common, a creative way to perform during COVID that still complied with gathering limits. Adds Jayde: “I’m probably a little biased, but I think and I still do think he’s the best in Halifax.”

Laporte’s girlfriend, Mikhayla Attlesey (also a comedian and part of the same upcoming cohort of voices in comedy as Durham), echoes his sisters in noting his kind heart, endless generosity and inclusive spirit. “Durham created so many safe spaces, so many inclusive spaces. So we’re trying to keep that going,” she says, mentioning the BIPOC comedy showcases, women’s showcases and queer



comedy nights being carried on that Laporte either helped create or inspired.

When she, Laporte and a group of other friends launched a series of comedy shows—turning The Dart Gallery and the Doubletree Hilton into venues and hosting pop-up shows at places like Elle’s Bistro—Attlesey says “some of the older comedians that been in the scene for a long time were like: ‘What are these young people doing?’” But the audience’s laughter kept this new guard going, and kept Laporte polishing his craft.

“He was a dark, one-liner comedian,” says Attlesey. “Not all his jokes were dark, and he would have lighter jokes, especially to break it up. I’m kind of a little on the darker side myself, and you always need little patches of light so the audience doesn’t pull away from you. So, he was very good at that. And definitely one liners: He didn’t have very many long jokes.” Attlesey talks about one New Brunswick performance where Laporte delivered a breakneck 30 i in a 20-minute set.





Laporte is remembered as being a mentor to many new-to-the-scene comedians, even those who are older than him, like Amanda Spriggs, who continues the Red Room Riot (a Friday night comedy show at The Dart gallery on Portland Street, which Laporte co-founded). “I don't mean to put too much of an exclamation mark on it, but Durham wasn't in any other time or place,” she told The Coast earlier in 2022, adding Laporte was “the real reason for the resurgence of comedy in Dartmouth.” Later, emotion creasing her voice, Spriggs added: “All the magic that [he and his collaborators] made: I just feel like we're trying to carry that on.”

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