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## Carter approaches comedy with energy, but ... gingerly

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By Matt Wohlfarth

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Comedians always struggle to fit in with society, but they aren't sure if they ever really do. High-energy comedian Darren Carter has literally been trying to fit in since he arrived ... on Earth.

Carter is the son of a notorious biker father, Elvin (mentioned in Hunter S. Thompson's book "Hell's Angels"), and a mother who was in and out of jail, where she would later die. Carter's parents, who almost named him Tahoe Joe, weren't in a position to care for him, so Carter was put into a foster home.

The ginger-haired boy was fostered by a Southern Baptist deacon's family where he grew up to be a big-hearted, happy-go-lucky comedian.

"Only 3 percent of the world has red hair. You're never going to see my people up-rise and march in Washington. At least, not without sunscreen," Carter says.

Fresh off of his Showtime special, "The Ginger's Crazy," Carter will bring his hyperkinetic show to Latitude 40 in Robinson for two shows May 17 and 18.

Carter's show is more of a concert than a pure comedy show. He started his entertainment career as part of a rap duo called "Strawberry Fudge."

"We found out if you throw out hard strawberry candy at a rap show, it comes back harder candy," he says.

Fortunately for audiences nationwide, that partnership fizzled out and Carter found his true calling with stand-up

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Darren Carter

### Comedian Darren Carter

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#### Darren Carter



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comedy. Evidence of his early rap roots still appears in his shows by his amazing beat-box abilities coupled with a great arsenal of sound effects. The show is a fun, fast-paced interaction that leaves audiences reeling just keeping up with the freneticism.

Even though he is a comedy veteran of 20-plus years, Carter retains that youthful passion for comedy of a kid still trying to fit in. "Comedy teaches me something every time I step on the stage. Even now."

Carter, who is married with a 5-year-old son, got his start on backstreets of the San Francisco Bay area and moved to Los Angeles in 1995. Carter has performed on "The Tonight Show with Jay Leno," and was featured in the movie "Be Cool" with John Travolta.

When asked what's next, he says, "I would like more television but, hey, I'm happy being a comedian trying to find balance between work and family."

Carter did reconnect with his birth father after his mother died in prison. "It was strange when I heard about my mom, I was matter-of-fact, oh well, but then I busted out in tears. It was like a part of me had died."

Carter later found solace and closure with his mom's passing by finding some letters his mother had written to him from jail. "She loved me; she just couldn't be there."

*Comedian Matt Wohlfarth is a contributing writer for Trib Total Media.*

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When: 9 p.m. May 17 and 8 p.m. May 18  
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