

## Kim Campbell tries hand at comedy with TV cameo



Tonya Lee Williams (left to right), former prime minister Kim Campbell and Colin Mochrie in a scene from *She's the Mayor*. (Mark Holzberg / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

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TORONTO — Former prime minister Kim Campbell is searching for the right thing to say.

Flanked by Canadian comic Colin Mochrie and soap star Tonya Lee Williams, the country's first (and only) female PM is standing on the set of "She's the Mayor," taping promotional bumpers for the upcoming VisionTV sitcom.

"I was prime minister, but you're watching 'She's the Mayor,'" says Campbell, smiling into the camera as the series regulars mug silently behind her.

"That wasn't so great," Campbell says immediately after delivering her line, drawing a bigger laugh from the crew with her suggestion she could ramp up the funny with another take.

A few tweaks later, everyone settles on a joint delivery in which Mochrie and Williams chime in when Campbell says, "She's the Mayor."

It's a small change, but like others that a jovial Campbell suggests during a brief visit on set, recall her past life as a joke writer with a student-produced variety show at the University of British Columbia.

"If you talk to people who knew me at law school, most of them would remember me as the person who wrote and directed the Law Revue every year," Campbell says.

"And some of them will say, 'I think she went on and did something interesting after law school but I'm not sure what it was.'"

At the 1982 revue, Campbell's claim to fame included writing a song called, "How to Succeed in Law School Without Really Trying," to the tune of the Petula Clark song, "Downtown."

Several years later she would find herself surrounded by the very titans of power she once skewered.

"One of my law school classmates ... did wonderful impressions and he did a better Joe Clark than Joe Clark did and we used to do a lot of political satire," says Campbell.

"When I was elected to Parliament and wound up sitting around the cabinet table with all these people that we'd sent up in the law revue I said, 'Ooh, guilt, guilt,' and it all came back to haunt me."

Campbell's latest stab at comedy comes by way of a seconds-long cameo in the upcoming comedy about a 60-something school principal who bumbles her way into the mayor's chair.

Janet Laine-Green stars as political neophyte Iris Peters, Mochrie plays the tightly wound, germophobic city manager Scott Hawkins, while Williams is Iris's self-involved communications director, Maxine.

Much of the humour comes from Iris's lack of diplomacy. When she accidentally insults an overweight person in one episode, she tries to apologize but ends up slighting the elderly. And then she offends black journalists.

"Everytime she tries to apologize for something she accidentally insults a new group that ends up picketing outside city hall," says Mochrie.

The show is the first original scripted series to come from the multi-faith channel VisionTV, which solicited pitches from across the country last year as it readied itself for sale to Moses Znaimer's ZoomerMedia Ltd.

Green says the show offers a fresh perspective when much of the dial is dominated by youth-obsessed series.

"What's great about the Iris character is that she's not a perfect woman," adds Green.