

Rock the Cradle

Sir Jerry's Sgt. Pepper shtick delights kids—and their Wiggles-wearry parents BY BARRETT HOOPER



Jerry Levitan doesn't pull rabbits from his top hat. He doesn't sing about minding your manners or eating your broccoli. In the syrupy universe of children's performers, Sir Jerry—as he's known to his pint-sized fans—is an anomaly. Donning a vintage tux and a hammy British accent, he belts out high-octane tunes that unite the rock sensibility of Ziggy Stardust with the supreme silliness of *Monty Python*. His act, featuring no less than 10 people—a sax player dressed as a fairy, a quartet of ballerinas, a Buddhist monk guitarist—has made him a hot commodity among the elementary school set, who swarm the stage during his gigs at the Drake and the Liberty Grand. It wasn't always this way. Two years ago, the Toronto-born Levitan was loathing his full-time job as a litigation lawyer. So he scaled back and started writing songs for his then two-year-old daughter, Jamie. When a friend connected him with local rock producer Ruben Huizenga (for-

merly front man for now-defunct indie band Glueleg), Sir Jerry was born. Parents who have OD'd on Elmo and Dora love him for his witty banter, and kids can't get enough of toe-tapping tunes such as "Bees, Butterflies & Bugs," set to the same thrumping bass line as Johnny Cash's "Folsom Prison Blues." Finally—cool kindertainment.

Sir Jerry performs at the Drake Hotel June 3. \$5. 1150 Queen St. W., 416-531-5042, www.sir-jerry.com.