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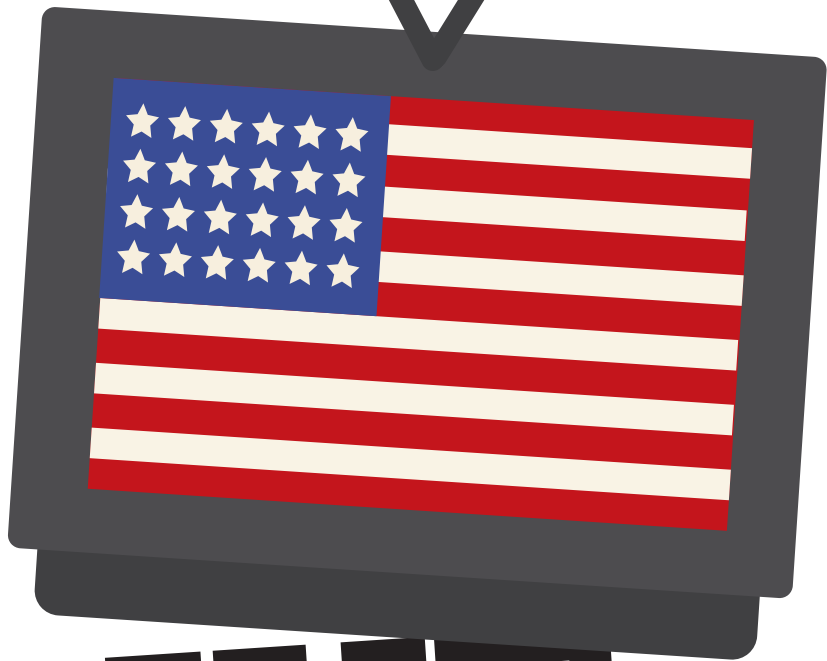
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LIVE FROM NEW YORK, IT'S ELECTION SEASON.

‘SNL’ Premiere capitalizes on election craziness

I approach every season of “Saturday Night Live” the same — this is going to be the year with the greatest social commentary since the 1980s. And recently, I’m let down. But — and that’s a big but — every four years when a presidential election rolls around, I am not disappointed because the “SNL” players are provided with rich material to guide an entire season of good parodies and sketch comedy. And 2016 is going to be the best presidential election year yet for this. I ask you, my fellow Americans, to draw on a time when there was a presidential candidate of a major party that easily provided as much comedic material by simply being alive as Donald Trump? Oh, you can’t? Me neither. That’s precisely why this season of “SNL” is going to be the best yet — we have Trump. But we also have Hillary Clinton, who provides plenty of material for the writers of the show. The cold open featured Kate McKinnon as Clinton and invited Alec Baldwin to play Trump, and it was spot-on. The show left most of the political commentary there, but it did pop up in Margot Robbie’s opening monologue as she fact-checked

herself throughout it. Her success didn’t stop there, though. Each sketch she was part of, including a “Family Feud” sketch where she played Ivanka Trump, she hit the nail on the head. Weekend Update provided another platform to allow “SNL” to catch up on all the political commentary it missed over the summer. Throughout the episode, Leslie Jones continued to steal the show. This episode was the perfect balance of politics and culture, never relying too heavily on the easy material provided by this particular election but never shying away from tackling politics just as hard as it should. “SNL” provides America with the therapy and relief it needs during an election season. Whenever you ask yourself, “Wait, did Trump really just say that?” all you’ll have to do it wait until Saturday night and trust “SNL” will show you, yes, he really, really did. Thanks “SNL,” I know with you all of us will make it through November now.

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Season 42 adds to legacy of political satire

“Saturday Night Live” opened its 42nd season last Saturday with quite possibly the greatest cold open in the history of the beloved sketch show. What better way to kick off the king of modern parody than to satirize and exploit the already ludicrous presidential debate. Kate McKinnon has proved herself for well over a year to be one of the best Hillary Clinton impersonators ever, next only to Amy Poehler’s pitch-perfect 2008 Clinton. On top of this, Alec Baldwin not only proved himself as a capable Trump impersonator, but the best we may have ever seen on “SNL.” I don’t know what made me laugh harder — his weird pronunciation of “China” or his perfect facial expressions. While this was a pleasant surprise, none of us have forgotten that “SNL” has a strong history of perfect casts for political figures on its show. From Chevy Chase’s impersonation of Gerald Ford in 1975 to the upcoming impersonations of vice-presidential candidates Mike Pence and Tim Kaine this Saturday, “SNL” has managed to parody every thinkable

politician alive in the past 40 years. Most of these have stuck with us like TV’s most artistic time capsule. Will Ferrell as George W. Bush, Tina Fey as Sarah Palin, Phil Hartman as Ronald Reagan, Larry David as Bernie Sanders and Hammond as Bill Clinton. Parodying political and authoritative figures has been around since the birth of comedy, and it’s sufficient to say that, after more than four decades, “SNL” is even more effective to us than the political cartoon was for our grandfather’s generation and everything before. “SNL” has the power to creatively balance the absurd with the accurate. No matter how dull the original, “serious” content may be, the “SNL” writers will be able to find at least five hilarious jokes and gags to throw into their sketch. Of course, “SNL” is nowhere close to being the only satirical show to be present on cable television. Comedy Central basically dominates in this area in commentary shows like “The Daily Show” and “South Park,” but multiple other shows like “Last Week Tonight” and “The Late Show with Stephen Colbert” also provide

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