

Tempo

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By Rick Kogan
TV critic

● Having been featured on the "Today" show a few months ago, Joe Winston has upped the stakes. Instead of opening his TV show in traditional bare-footed, food-munching fashion, "This Week in Joe's Basement" (10 p.m. Monday on Chicago cable access Channel 19) begins its third season with the first of an ambitious two-parter that involves the loss of Joe.

Episode No. 38 is called "The Diapers and Daisies Dance" and starts with Joe nowhere to be found. He is trapped in some alternate basement and as his pals Mark and Paul try to find him or make do without him, you'll visit an apartment with a couple spouting poetry and lifting fake weights; witness the dance of the title; see an appearance of the "Butt Creature" who is keeping Joe company; and, finally, see Joe open a door and scream.

I'm not sure where the program is going after this "cliffhanger," but I'll be watching.

"This Week in Joe's Basement" is one of public access' strangest adventures, and now that its star has had a taste of success, I want to see if it will spoil him or embolden him.