



By Lachman Balani

TORONTO: MOSAIC, the Greater Toronto Area's biggest annual multi-disciplinary arts and culture South Asian Festival showcasing well known talent from around the world, will welcome you to its weeklong festival in Mississauga this year not with just a smile but with a whack load of laughter!

Straight from the belly of Skokie in Illinois, US, the AYATOLLAH of Comedy, Azhar 'Bin Laughin' Usman comes back to Mosaic to split your sides with non-stop laughter.

Born into an Indian family, Azhar Usman took everything seriously despite his incredible funny bone!

With a BA in Communications and Spanish from the University of Illinois and a Juris Doctorate in Law from the University of Minnesota Law School under his belt, he not only practiced law but stand-up comedy as well.

In 2004, he launched a comedy tour, 'Allah Made me Funny', that later turned into a theatrical production and ended up as a movie.

Listed as one of the world's 500 most influential Muslims, Azhar is wildly funny and equipped with a unique sense of humour.

He finds himself in a sensitive spot where traumatized communities in post 9/11 world cannot find much humour in the Muslim diaspora.

He is able to not only find it but also pushes it to the boundaries with maturity. This delicate balance is what makes Azhar the most sought after Muslim comic of Indian American origin in the world.

Alongside him, flying in from Dubai in the Middle East will be Sindhi comedian Nitin Mirani. Called King of UAE comedy and 'One of the funniest people of 2012 and a brand builder' by Rolling Stone magazine, Nitin is a darling of comedy circles around the world having performed in comedy's finest venues in the Big Apple, Toronto, London, India, Hong Kong, and of course the United Arab Emirates, sharing the stage with famous comics Eddie Griffin, Maz Jobrani and Ava Vidal to name a few.

His act called 'Komic Sutra' (no guesses as to what inspired that) will knock your socks off!

He has also made a cameo appearance with Bollywood star Sony Sood in the award winning film 'City of Life' and is shooting his second film 'Soul of Dubai'.

And to host this splendid comedy night we have our very own home grown Ali Hassan, lead comedy panelist of the George Stroumboulopoulos Tonight show. Proudly Canadian, Ali is also the host of Laugh Out Loud on CBC Radio and SiriusXM – a show with over 1 million listeners.

He was nominated (2013) for the Canadian Comedy Award for Best Breakout Artist. He has performed at many world class festivals such as Just for Laughs in Montreal, Cottage Country Comedy Festival and Amman stand –up comedy festival opening for Russell Peters. He is also a movie actor, having acted in several productions.

A graduate of McGill University, Ali is an ardent foodie and a celebrity chef as well.

This accomplished troika of international comedians will take you on the wildest summer laugh riot this side of the Rockies! Don't miss it when it hits town at the Novotel Hotel in Mississauga on Sunday, Aug 11, at 5 pm!

For more information and tickets call 647-286-9596 or 416-388-9596 and visit www.mosaicfest.com.

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