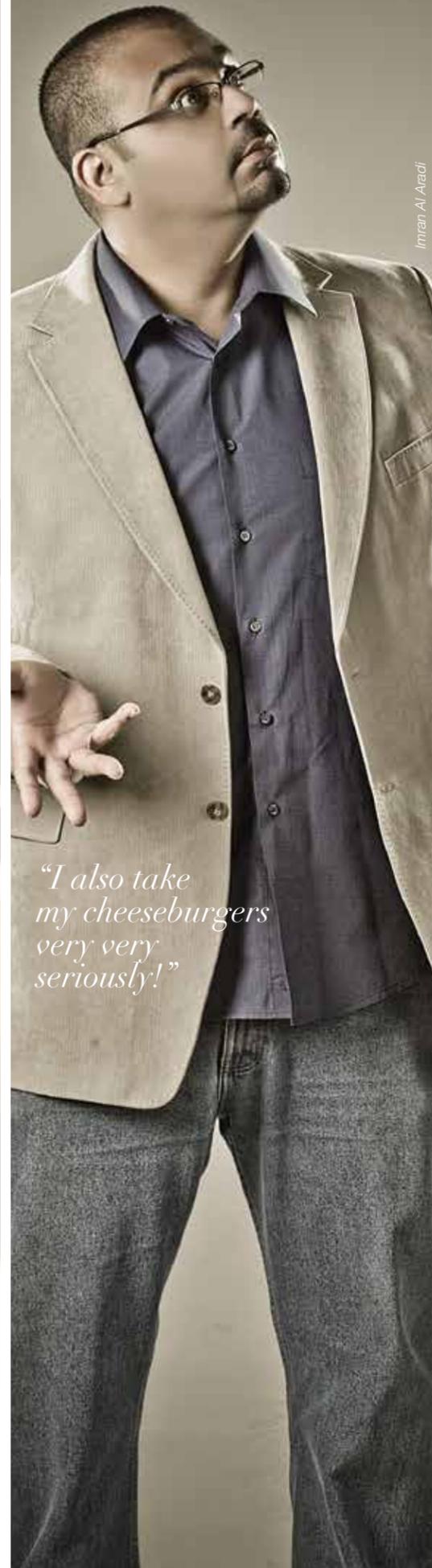




Baraa Abdulla

"It can be challenging but once you enjoy it you want to do more."



Imran Al Aradi

"I also take my cheeseburgers very very seriously!"

"I've always loved making my friends and family laugh."



Charlie Holding

Charlie Chaplin once said that a day without laughter is a day wasted; true that! Is there anything that can uplift your mood the way a contagious giggle does? Though stand-up comedy has been popular in Bahrain for quite a few years now, the recent wave of open-mic nights and the launch of the Chuckle Club earlier this year has taken comedy to a whole new level.

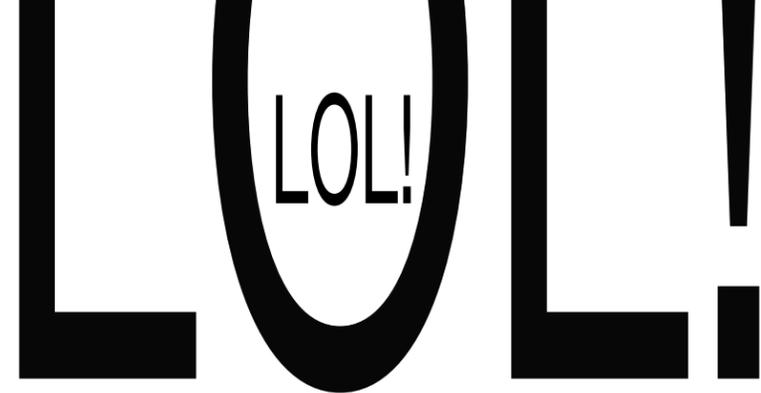
Charlie Holding, Imran Al Aradi and Baraa Abdulla are well-known for their funny bone and have had many of us catching our tummies to tears. I've been to one of the open mic nights and trust me it's great fun! In fact, if you think you're funny and want to give stand-up comedy a shot then this is the platform! Join me as I cross over to the other side of the mic to find out more about these funny men; well, the comedians just got candid!

It's one thing to have a sense of humour but a TOTALLY different thing to actually stand in front of a crowd and make them laugh? How difficult is it and how do you pull it off?

Charlie Holding (CH): Being on stage is a nerve racking experience for me to say the least. I get unbelievably nervous, especially if my girlfriend is in the crowd. I calm down a lot after I get my first laugh and I know the audience and I are on the same page

Imran Al Aradi (IA): Yes, making an audience laugh is a totally different ball game. The difference lies in the delivery, making friends laugh doesn't come with the pressure of being in front of a live audience. The challenge is to provide a steady stream of laughter because that's what the audience expects.

... I've worked as a martial arts instructor, communications technology consultant, product manager, and events manager and promoter!



Melissa Nazareth interviews Bahrain's favourite stand-up comedians.

Baraa Abdulla (BA): It can be challenging but once you enjoy it you want to do more. You need to be in this positive, fun and entertaining mode which is not always easy for me to do only few minutes before a show. It's also about practice. There is a common feeling around you and some common reactions from the audience; over time you understand better.

What inspired you to take your sense of humour to the next level, stand-up comedy?

CH: Imran Al Aradi is a friend and suggested I give it a go at his open mic night. I've always loved making my friends and family laugh and I'm never happier than when people around me are happy, so I figured why not give it a go!

IA: I've wanted to be a comedian since high school but back then the idea of getting on stage and making an audience laugh sounded insane; also there were no opportunities. In 2008, I was asked to host the Axis Of Evil comedy tour with international names like Maz Jobrani & Ahmed Ahmed; that was my first gig and thanks to the response, I decided to continue.

BA: I wanted to experience something new and it so happened that in 2008, the Axis Of Evil comedy tour came to Bahrain. They had auditions and I got selected!

Do you have a serious side to you? Tell us more about it.

CH: I take my work seriously but I try not to take myself too seriously, or life either since nobody gets out alive anyway.

IA: Yes! I'm an RJ and comedian, and so many believe that my daily routine and past are filled with jokes, laughter and flying unicorns. Before being a full time entertainer I've worked as a martial arts instructor, communications technology consultant, product manager, and events manager and promoter! I also take my cheeseburgers very very seriously!

BA: I'm a full time father, husband, training technician, and television presenter. I'm also working on being the president of the Afternoon Nap Society; but that is way too serious and classified.

"I'm a full time father, husband, training technician, and television presenter."

QUICKLY, make a crazy sentence with words that begin with letters 5, 9, 23, 19 and 11 of the English alphabet (in any order)

CH: I do comedy, not mathematics and riddles! 'Everyday I walk slowly Kumquat.'

IA: 'Imran eats kebab with samboosa.' This is was tougher than getting my bachelors degree!

BA: Was that a question or combination code for unlocking the Pandora Box, how did you come up with that (laughs out loud)! Marriage Proposal to Imaginary Second Wife (hopefully this won't reach my existing LIVING wife): You're beautiful like an eggplant from Kazakhstan, you have an IQ higher than a waffle, even though I'm a Blackberry guy and you're a Samsung person but I'll still accept you. Will you accept what amount of imagination I have as dowry and be my unreal wife?

Share your most embarrassing moment with our readers.

CH: I don't really get embarrassed. I once took my girlfriend to see the Justin Bieber movie ... admitting that was pretty embarrassing.

IA: Once, a child accidentally ran into me, at the mall and I kindly placed my hand on his head to ask if he was okay only to realise it was a very short bearded man!

BA: Going to a funeral and congratulating instead of paying condolences. It was supposedly my friend's brother's wedding but they had a funeral in the same family and nobody told me the wedding was off. I didn't have a Blackberry or a Facebook account back then

Watch this space for updates on the next open mic comedy nite!

"I take my work seriously but I try not to take myself too seriously, or life either since nobody gets out alive anyway."