

**Habib Siam and Jean Paul present:
COCONUTS, CEDAR TREES, AND MAPLE LEAVES**

A stand-up comedy special at the 2018 Toronto Fringe Festival

SHOW SYNOPSIS:

"Coconuts, cedar trees, and maples leaves" is entirely based on actual events. A literal case of art imitating life and life experience.

Habib and Jean share similar life trajectories as immigrants to Canada. Their Fringe Festival presentation draws on both comics' relationship with home, Canadian culture, and the sometimes contradictory worlds they've had to navigate.

Despite the common ground, Habib and Jean also diverge in many ways. Habib is a single almost 40-year-old, with more shoes than any one person (or any 20 people) would ever need. Jean is a family man who works hard to reconcile a road heavy schedule with family responsibilities.

This show is about their personal journeys, their friendship, and their love of comedy. It is also their attempt at reclaiming how immigrant experiences are shaped and conveyed.

It is fairly common for dominant social groups to fashion broader narratives. Cultural minorities are underrepresented in almost every social arena. In some cases, black, brown, and beige people, must watch idly as their stories are told by outsiders.

Comedy is a powerful tool in subverting narratives and presenting difficult ideas in more palatable ways. Stand-up is also a platform that provides powerful potential as far as reimagining how we navigate human interactions.

Whereas some culture-themed shows adopt an insular "for us by us" approach to content and narrative, "Coconuts, cedar trees, and maple leaves" is for everyone... while remaining true to the "by us" part of the equation.