

*South Asian Arts Society Presents*



# MONSOON™

FESTIVAL OF PERFORMING ARTS

**#WelcomeTheStorm**

**AUGUST 9 – 13, 2019**

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[www.MonsoonArtsFest.ca](http://www.MonsoonArtsFest.ca)

## ABOUT THE FESTIVAL

THE HEAVY MONSOON RAINS OF INDIA TAKE OVER THE COUNTRY ON AN ANNUAL BASIS

Amidst the damage and destruction, the monsoon season is filled with celebration, including dance, music, theatre, film and festivals. The welcoming of the captivating and spiritual force of the monsoon dates back thousands of years in India. Vancouver is also known for its heavy rainfall. With the intersection of these two natural phenomena, the goal is to celebrate the monsoon here in the Lower Mainland by welcoming the storm with the Monsoon Festival of Performing Arts, presented by South Asian Arts Society.

Now in its fourth year, join us for five days of comedy, talks, and a myriad of workshops offered by prolific local performers and creators. Help us nurture the creative power within our community by attending our events, learning more about artists' processes, and experiencing creative practices, as we invest in and support the next generation of aspiring local artists.

Aside from the presentations, community engagement is also key, with an offering of FREE development workshops in areas including (but not limited to) playwriting, comedy, mindfulness, digital marketing, and movement, which together combine to form our "Industry Series."

## ABOUT THE PRESENTER

SOUTH ASIAN ARTS SOCIETY

South Asian Arts Society is committed to creating performance and educational opportunities for professional and amateur artists, while developing artistic forums that act as a platform for building knowledge of South Asian culture via new projects, new ideas, and new collaborations. We are active in promoting South Asian dance, music, and theatre via dance and music classes, professional performances and workshops, guest lectures, as well as presenting comedic plays, musicals, and dance dramas across the Lower Mainland.

[www.southasianarts.ca](http://www.southasianarts.ca)



# MONSOON COMEDY NIGHT

PRESENTING SPONSOR: ELEMENTS CASINO SURREY



**Aug 9, 2019**

**Doors @ 8pm**

**Show Starts @ 8pm**

**Afterparty @ 11pm - 1am**

Elements Casino Surrey

**Tickets: \$20 (plus s/c & GST)**

**STRICTLY 19+**

## LAUGH TILL YOU DROP

The 2019 festival kicks off with a night of **stand-up comedy** in partnership with **Elements Casino Surrey**, featuring some of Greater Vancouver's finest comedians: **Rae Lynn Carson, Ash Dhawan, Rajneesh Dhawan, Al Hassam, Devon Kandola, Leena Manro** (I Can't Believe It's Not Butter Chicken fame), and our emcee **Dusty Searcy!**

The night will continue with a post-show dance party featuring High Voltage Roadshow's DJ Beatdrop! Cash bar and dinner menu will be available.

## ABOUT THE COMEDIANS



### **Dusty Searcy (MC)**

Dusty Searcy is a hilarious man that audiences can't get enough of. Watching him perform you would swear you were best buds. Telling personal stories about his life, nothing is off limits for this budding young comic. Based in Vancouver, but touring all over western Canada, he's an act you surely don't want to miss.



### **Rae Lynn Carson**

Rae Lynn Carson is a Jill of all comedy trades. Not only does she do stand up, she's an improviser and sketch comedy writer. She performs regularly with Vancouver TheatreSports, Nasty Women Comedy, and guests on a number of shows around town! The best way to describe her comedy is 'weird but in a good way'.



### **Devon Kandola**

Devon Kandola is 27 years old, born in the lower mainland and raised as an Indian boy, by semi-Indian parents. A regular at Yuk-Yuks Vancouver, he has been a fan of comedy his entire life. When he's not focused on comedy, in his spare time he enjoys helping children learn how to make cocktails. His proudest moment came when he once fought a bear. In his dream. He almost won.



### **Ash Dhawan**

Ash Dhawan (A.K.A Bad Ash) has made quite an impression with her “OMG, did she just say that?” variety of comedy. Her hilarious take on life as a single South Asian woman has captured audience attention across Canada. She was the winner of Vancouver’s Funniest Comic With A Day Job contest in 2011, and the back-to-back winner of the 2014 & 2015 BC’s Funniest Female contest. An engineer by day and a comedian by night, she has worked with formidable comedians such as India’s founding father of stand-up comedy, Johnny Lever.



### **Al Hassam**

Al Hassam is of Indian background, but he was raised in a small town. His brand of stand-up comedy mixes knowledge of cultural ethnicity and relationships as key ingredients. His love of comedy has allowed him to perform in venues across Canada and the U.S. He is also passionate about community involvement and has performed with organizations such as Stand Up For Mental Health to promote a more inclusive society. Al’s quick wit leaves audiences delighted with laughter.



### **Leena Manro**

As one of the creators, writers and actors for the hit comedy play series, “*I Can’t Believe It’s Not Butter Chicken*”, Leena has spent years honing her comedy chops on stage. In addition to Butter Chicken success, Leena also received a LEO nomination for best supporting actress in the feature film, *Sisters & Brothers*. She’s been diligently studying and performing stand-up comedy all across the Lower Mainland, and believes that humour is a universal language that translates into many mediums and reaches many people. She is committed to doing just that!



### **Rajneesh Dhawan**

Rajneesh Dhawan is a professor, playwright, and performer with more than 30 years of public speaking experience. During his college days in India, he wrote three television series and four documentaries, and since moving to Canada in 2009, he has written five plays that have been performed in the Fraser Valley. In 2017, he returned to performing stand-up comedy and has won the Fraser Valley Comedy competition twice. He featured in *Just For Laughs Northwest* in Vancouver in 2018 and in March this year, he advanced to the long list of CBC’s *NextUp* competition.

# INDUSTRY SERIES

These **FREE** community based initiatives are excellent opportunities to both view art and also immerse yourself into the artistic process.

Sign up for a **workshop** that will surely get your creative juices flowing, or attend one of the **reading nights** and just kick back, relax and take in the beautiful words from our talented presenters.

**Post-show talkbacks** give audience members an opportunity to ask that burning question they may have once seeing one of the performances.

## **WORKSHOP BREATH, VOICE, AND BODY CONNECTION WITH VICTOR AYALA**

**August 10th - 11am to 4pm at Playwrights Theatre Centre, Vancouver**

This session focuses on breath, voice and body connection. You will explore exercises and games designed to connect you to the present moment, bypass your frontal cortex and access a physical and vocal vocabulary outside your comfort zone. These exercises present personal challenges unique to each participant that often shine a light on emotional blocks and hidden obstacles.

**NOTE:** *Please arrive to this session well-nourished. Wear clothing that allows for unrestricted physical movement. A small towel and water are also recommended.*

## **READING KAUR BY AGAM DARSHI**

**August 10th - 5pm to 7pm at Playwrights Theatre Centre, Vancouver**

KAUR is a story about five women from different parts of the world and different time periods, who are all connected through a mysterious pain in their right hand.

Maya seeks the help of a psychotherapist to ease a mysterious pain of in her right hand. When she is given medicinal psychedelics to initiate the treatment, she enters a surreal world where she meets four other women who harbor the same pain as her: Gurinder is a newly married woman from India in the 1940s, Virta is an aspiring doctor who must move to England from Kenya during the political turmoil of the 1960s, Sharan is a sexually charged woman from the 1980s who rebels against her parent's traditional ways while living in England, and finally present day Priya is a thirty-something year old woman who is torn between the conventional terms of marriage and her own desires for a fulfilling and independent life. By connecting to these woman, will Maya be able to heal herself?

**WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY Agam Darshi**

## **WORKSHOP FINDING YOUR CORE ESSENCE (FEMALE ACTING WORKSHOP) WITH AGAM DARSHI**

**August 11th - 12pm to 3pm at The Cultch (Green House), Vancouver**

An acting workshop for females or those who identify as female.

In this 3 hour workshop, learn how to make strong choices, find your inner voice, and discover some truths about the industry. This workshop is designed to



enhance your craft by creating a supportive environment where you can shine and learn.

For beginner to advanced actors. You will receive a scene or a monologue that you must prepare beforehand. During the three hours we will warm up, present our scenes, discover our personal essence, and how we can bring that into every audition. We will address the challenges that women (in particular women of color) in the industry face in safe, supportive environment.

**WORKSHOP DIGITAL MARKETING WITH AMNEET ATHWAL**

**August 12th - 3pm to 5pm at Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Surrey  
Fir Building, Room #1364**

Whether you're a marketing novice or a seasoned vet, take your marketing game to the next level with this digital marketing workshop. The world of marketing and promotions has changed, and will continue to change rapidly, so it's important to stay at least one step ahead. Artists often find it difficult to manage the task of marketing themselves, while continuing to be immersed in their artistic practice. Learn some simple tricks, ideas, and philosophies of marketing that will surely help you expand your profile!

**WORKSHOP COMEDY CLASS WITH LEENA MANRO**

**August 13th - 3pm to 6pm Playwrights Theatre Centre, Vancouver**

Turn that Funny Bone into a HILARIOUS bone by taking Comedy Class with Leena Manro!

Do you want to spruce up your boardroom talks with a little humour? Do you want to be THAT funny guy/gal who gets all the attention at parties? Do you want to have your own Netflix comedy special? (Um, that might be a bit too ambitious for this class; but good luck with that!) Then you must attend this special three hour workshop with comedy veteran Leena Manro. Join this beginner level class to activate your funny bone, and elevate your spirit as you make yourself and those around you laugh and laugh and laugh!

**WORKSHOP ART AND ANXIETY: MINDFULNESS AND YOUR ARTISTIC PRACTICE WITH GAVAN CHEEMA**

**August 13th - 7pm to 9pm Playwrights Theatre Centre, Vancouver**

Feeling burnt out? Feeling caught up in the highs and lows of life as a contractor or artist? Need help grounding yourself in your art? Join Gavan Cheema in her workshop on how to incorporate mindfulness and meditation into your daily life and artistic practice. This workshop is for people who are hoping to work through the anxieties that come with being an artist, whether they be emotional, physical or time management based. Together the group will support one another in grounding their work and inspire each other to create art from a more mindful and self aware place. Life is stressful, creating art doesn't have to be! Join us as we navigate ways to get into a more productive and creative headspace! This workshop is open to artists of all disciplines and backgrounds.

**POST-SHOW TALKBACKS WITH PLAYWRIGHTS, ACTORS AND DIRECTORS  
August 10th - KAUR Reading at Playwrights Theatre Centre, Vancouver**

# THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS

## PRESENTER



## GOVERNMENT FUNDERS



## MEDIA PARTNERS



## DIGITAL MEDIA PARTNER



## EVENT SPONSORS




## MEDIA SUPPORT





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