

thedailynewsegypt.com

beta

[Home](#) | [Politics](#) | [Business](#) | [Society](#) | [Opinion](#) | [Lifestyle](#) | [Culture](#) | [Sport](#) | [Multimedia](#)

[Culture](#) [Art](#) | [Film](#) | [Music](#) | [Theater](#) | [Opera](#) | [Dance](#) | [Radio&TV](#) | [Archaeology](#) | [Books](#) | [Movie Listings](#) | [Museums](#) | [Art Galleries](#)
[Cultural Centers](#)

The many talents of George Azmy



Artist and comedian George Azmy, alongside one of his somewhat surreal artworks.



Related Stories

There is no related article

By **Mariam Hamdy**

June 27, 2008, 2:00 am

If one is to analyze some of the most influential artworks of all time, it's easy to see that a large chunk of them employ a measure of humor. Some of the most profound pieces of art - be it on film, canvas or literature - are made by artists who had an abundance of wit, from Da Vinci and Molière to Gaudí and Woody Allen.

While it may seem easier than painting the Mona Lisa, comedy is in fact a strenuous effort. Stand-up comedy is especially difficult: It requires a remarkable talent for storytelling, a heightened sense of observation and wit as well as a knack for writing.

Not only is it a one-person show - stand-up comedians are their own directors and scriptwriters - the performer is always at risk of ending his or her career every time they ascend the stage.

Fortunately, this was not the case with artist turned stand-up comedian George Azmy.

An illustrator with a bachelor's degree in fine arts, Azmy worked as an art director at some of the best advertising agencies in Cairo and Dubai. At 24, he already has a successful solo exhibition at Townhouse Gallery under his belt. As an art director, Azmy also received the Silver Award at the Cannes Advertising Festival this year.

Besides his impressive résumé, Azmy has always been known as the class jester among friends and peers.

The absence of stand-up comedy in a city distinguished by its quirky sense of humor prompted the Cairo Image Collective (CIC) to hold auditions for stand-up comedy last year to tackle these uncharted waters.

Azmy's audition went well, but the show never materialized because of the low turnout of comedians.

Enter the Axis of Evil Comedy Tour. Armed with the publicity powers of Showtime and a reputation as charismatic comedians, Axis of Evil held auditions, with hundreds of candidates, one of whom was Azmy.

"I didn't want to go, Azmy said. "I had already given it a shot at CIC and I didn't feel it was worth the trouble again. I didn't think I was going to make it.

Knowing that undue modesty is one of Azmy's most frustrating traits, his friends forced him to audition. His wry social commentaries that poke fun at everything from national ID cards to cab drivers, coupled with a strong stage presence, landed him a spot with Axis of Evil's performance in Egypt last year.

He then went on the road with the group to perform at three more shows in Dubai, which were eventually broadcast internationally on Showtime. The young comedian quickly gained an unexpected cult following in the Middle East.

The moment Azmy returned to Egypt to pursue his illustrating career he was commissioned for several stand-up shows delivered solely in Arabic.

"The audience gets suspicious since I do stand-up in Arabic, he noted.

"The younger crowds who are familiar with stand-up expect English and the older audience get defensive. Either way, it becomes more rewarding to find them all laughing in the end

[Most Read](#) [Commented](#) [Emailed](#)

[24 hours](#)

[3 days](#)

[Week](#)

[Daily News Egypt: Final words](#)

[No to a bloody future for Egypt](#)

becomes more entertaining to him from an audience in the street.

The driving force behind Azmy's passion is to create a demand for stand-up and encourage closet comedians to pursue their passion. However, he doesn't see stand-up comedy as a career he can pursue full time.

Azmy remains adamant that above all, he is an artist and illustrator who performs stand-up comedy on the side. Meanwhile, his own artwork heavily relies on the twisted sense of humor he employs in his routines. Azmy's artwork is very much a visual illustration of his comedy, poking fun at people's social skills or lack thereof.

"It's all in the details, be it in my art work or in my performances. I exploit a detail and blow it out of proportion, he said.

His ability to take details that are generally overlooked and twist them into painfully sarcastic observations is the basis of his success both as a stand-up comedian and as an illustrator.

Azmy is managing to bring back comedy on all fronts, and one day he may just be able to combine his talents and create what he calls "the first stand-up comedy art show.

Yes, you heard it here first.

Catch George Azmy's stand-up comedy show Saturday at 11 pm, Bull's Eye pub, 32 Jeddah St, Mohandiseen, Giza. Tel: (02) 3761 6888.s



What's This ?

[Add Comment...](#)

[About Daily News Egypt / International Herald Tribune](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Advertising Guide](#) | [Subscribe to the International Herald Tribune / Daily News Egypt](#) | [Subscribe to DNE e-paper](#) | [E-paper](#) | [Corrections](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Sitemap](#) | [Archive](#)
[Cartoon](#) | [Blogs](#) | [Jobs](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Events](#)

© Daily News Egypt 2008, All Rights Reserved.

Technology Managed by El Motaheda Web Designs 