

America's Biggest South Asian Comedy Festival Expands to East Coast, Closes Historic Run at The Bell House in Brooklyn

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, February 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Desi Comedy Fest, America's biggest South Asian comedy festival, closes its historic inaugural East Coast run on March 22 at The Bell House in Brooklyn, marking a bold national expansion after more than a decade of elevating South Asian voices on major stages across the San Francisco Bay Area.

Co-founded and co-produced by Samson Koletkar and Abhay Nadkarni, Desi Comedy Fest enters its 11th year having presented 75+ shows, featured 250+ comedians, and entertained more than 14,000 audience members. What began as a Bay Area institution has grown into a nationally recognized platform spotlighting the rising influence of South Asian voices in American entertainment and the continued rise of diaspora storytelling on mainstream stages.

New York City - long considered the epicenter of American stand-up comedy - provides a fitting finale for the festival's inaugural East Coast edition. Hosting the show at The Bell House, one of Brooklyn's most iconic live performance venues, underscores the festival's commitment to presenting bold, contemporary comedy in spaces known for artistic excellence and cultural impact.

The New York lineup reflects the global and multicultural breadth of today's South Asian and diaspora comedy scene, bringing together internationally recognized performers and dynamic voices from across continents and communities::



DCF New York Flyer

SAMSON KOLETKAR: Co-founder of Desi Comedy Fest and the world's only Indian Jewish stand-up comedian, known for his wit, warmth and clean humor. Named one of Silicon India's "10 Indian Comedians Who Found Success in the U.S.," he has been featured on NPR, NBC, CBS, NDTV, The Times of India, Ha'aretz, and jWeekly, and was a semi-finalist in the Seattle International Comedy Competition.

ABHAY NADKARNI: Co-founder of the festival, born in Delhi and raised in Doha and Bangalore. A nationally touring comedian with an Amazon Prime special, *Brown Jesus*, he has appeared at Montreal Just For Laughs and the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, bringing a globally shaped perspective to audiences across the country.

HARI KONDABOLU: A Brooklyn-based stand-up comedian and writer praised by The New York Times as "one of the most exciting political comics in stand-up today." His specials, including *Warn Your Relatives* and *Vacation Baby*, and his documentary *The Problem with Apu* sparked global conversations on race and representation. He has appeared on Conan, Jimmy Kimmel Live, and The Late Show with David Letterman, and co-hosts the acclaimed podcast *Politically Re-Active*.

AYANNA DOOKIE: A stand-up comedian, writer, storyteller, and Lupus advocate of Trinidadian descent whose humor reflects her experience growing up Brown, Black, woman, and first-generation American. She has been featured on HBO's *Pause with Sam Jay*, truTV's *Laff Tracks*, *2 Dope Queens* on WNYC, NPR's *Snap Judgment*, Fox's *Laughs*, and AXS TV's *Gotham Comedy Live*. She writes for BET's *50 Central* and MTV's *Wild 'N Out*, and produces an annual comedy show supporting the Lupus Foundation of America.

MADDY KELLY: A New York-based stand-up comedian of Irish and Indian heritage, originally from Vancouver, Canada. Named a Just For Laughs "New Face of Comedy," she is a writer for *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* and co-host of the Webby-award-winning podcasts *Let's Make a Sci-Fi* and *Let's Make a Rom-Com*. Her comedy blends sharp observational wit with perspectives shaped by her mixed cultural background.



SHAFI HUSSEIN: A New York-based comedian and writer originally from Bangladesh. Named one of New York's Funniest Stand-Ups by the New York Comedy Festival, he has appeared on Kevin Hart's LOL Network, toured nationally and internationally, and released his debut special Not From Here.

"This East Coast expansion has been about establishing permanence," said Koletkar. "To close this inaugural run in New York - the heart of American comedy - is both symbolic and strategic. These voices belong here."

Nadkarni added, "New York has always been where global stories meet American audiences. Ending our first East Coast edition at The Bell House signals that South Asian comedy is not niche - it's part of the mainstream conversation."

The Brooklyn performance caps Desi Comedy Fest's inaugural East Coast run, which included shows in Boston, New Jersey, and Washington, DC. Moving forward, the festival will establish a permanent bi-coastal presence - March on the East Coast and August in the San Francisco Bay Area - solidifying its role as a national cultural platform.

Beyond the Bay Area, Desi Comedy Fest has toured internationally, including a four-city tour of India, and has presented shows in Portland, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Diego, New Jersey, Toronto, and Vancouver - consistently drawing packed houses while amplifying the next generation of South Asian comedic voices.

Event Details

Desi Comedy Fest – New York City

Sunday, March 22 – 7:30 PM

The Bell House, 149 7th St, Brooklyn, NY 11215

Tickets are available at www.DesiComedyFest.com

Samson Koletkar

Desi Comedy Fest

+ +1 415-676-1371

[email us here](#)

Visit us on social media:

[Instagram](#)

[Facebook](#)

[YouTube](#)

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/896260879>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable

in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2026 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.