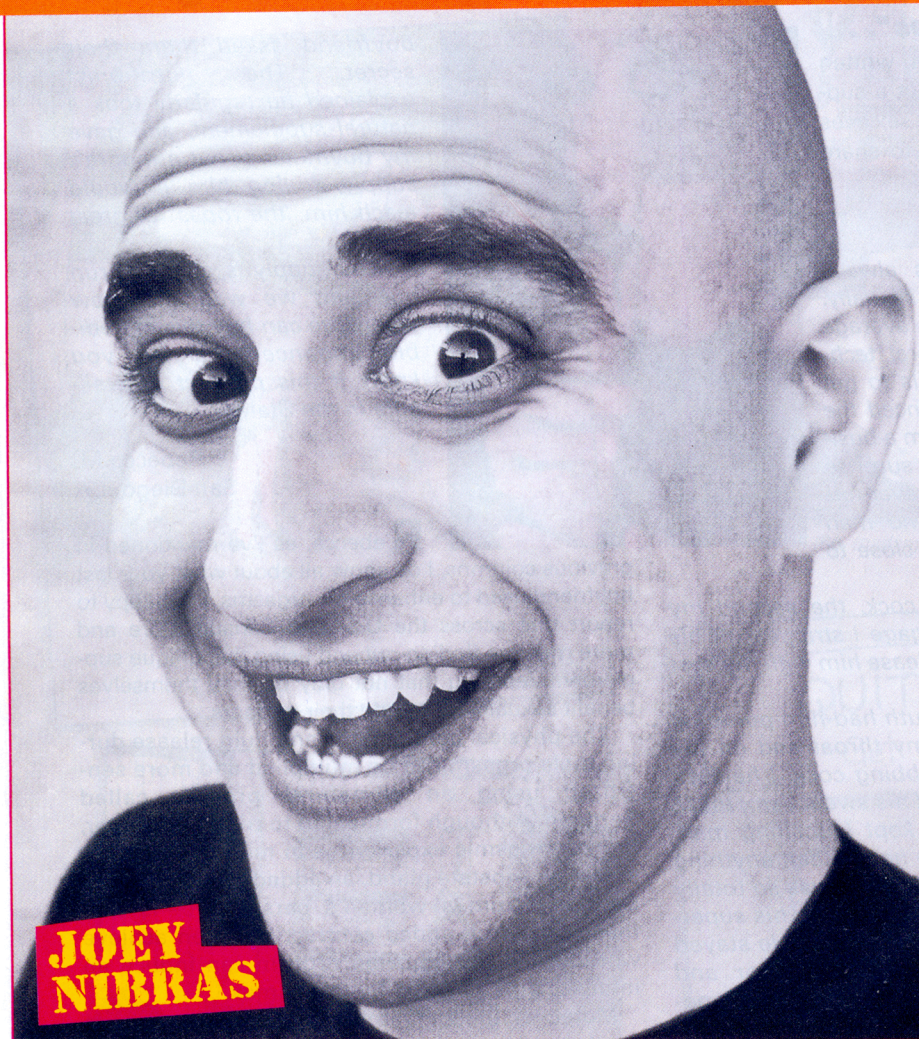


BIN LAUGHIN'

In the wake of 9/11, stand-up comics of Middle Eastern descent are pitching in and fighting terror—with humor. ★Profile by Ed Rampel



Joey Nibras, a/k/a the “Wacky Iraqi,” says he was made in Baghdad, but born and raised in Detroit. His family came to the U.S. in the late 1960s because of the persecution they experienced as Chaldean Christians. Nibras, 31, broke into comedy via a Detroit club’s open-mic night. After moving to L.A., Nibras developed a reputation on the local comedy circuit and, in 2003, appeared on Snoop Dog’s *Doggy Fizzle Televizzle*. The war in Iraq is a major part of his routine. “People in America don’t know anything about Arab-Americans. I try to bring our worlds a little closer to each other through laughter,” explains Joey.

“Wassup with security? They checked my shoes twice! On the plane, a lady was very nervous and kept looking at me; so I figured to make her comfortable, I’d fall asleep.”

When I woke up, I had five seatbelts tied around me. What is this? The Mile High Club for bondage?”

“Let me clear up some rumor about Baghdad—we don’t have sex with sheep; the sheep have sex with us.”

“During the Iraqi war, the following shows were canceled in Baghdad: *Allah McBeal*, *Just Shoot Me*—you guys got *Friends*; we’ve got *Enemies*. You’ve got *Magnum P.I.*; we’ve got *.45 Magnum*. You’ve got *The Price Is Right*; we’ve got *Saddam Is Always Right!*”

“I went to Hollywood and wanted to do my own TV show. An actor told me I have to shoot a pilot first. [*Double-take.*] Are you serious? I don’t do that!”