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[.@byoussef](#) makes his Philly debut 6/6 at the @KimmelCenter during #PIFA2018! Tickets on sale now! More info @kimmelcenter.org/pifa

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**DUBBED THE “JON STEWART OF THE ARAB WORLD”
BASSEM YOUSSEF MAKES PHILADELPHIA DEBUT WITH
THE JOKE IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD
DURING THE KIMMEL CENTER’S
PHILADELPHIA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS
JUNE 6, 2018**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Philadelphia, PA, April 30, 2018) – Creator and former host of the popular political satire TV show in the Middle East, *AlBernameg*, **Bassem Youssef** makes his Philadelphia and Kimmel Center debut during the 2018 Philadelphia International Festival of the Arts (PIFA). Frequently called the “Jon Stewart of the Arab World,” Youssef shares his personal stories and thoughts on the political climate that led to the Arab Spring in his new stage show *The Joke is Mightier Than The Sword*. For one night only June 6, 2018 at 7:30 p.m., the former cardiothoracic surgeon takes over Verizon Hall and shows audiences why *The Hollywood Reporter* calls him “fascinating.”

“Bassem Youssef’s charismatic and undeniably entertaining comedic approach to politics is a breath of fresh air,” said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. “We are honored to welcome this satirical superhero of international comedy to our festival and we look forward to hearing what he has to say.”

When Jon Stewart made a surprise appearance on Youssef's show in 2013, he said, "What Bassem is doing, and this is so inspiring to me... he is showing that satire can still be relevant, that it can carve out space in a country for people to express themselves because that's all democracy is, is the ability to express yourself and be heard."

Named one of *Time Magazine's* 100 most influential people in the world, Bassem Youssef is the creator and former host of the wildly popular TV show *AlBernameg*—the first political satire show in the Middle East and the most watched program in the region with 30 million viewers every week. In his stage show, *The Joke Is Mightier than the Sword*, Bassem shares his personal story and thoughts on the political climate that led to the Arab Spring; its parallels to the current state of American politics; and how propaganda lays the foundation for dictatorial regimes.

Other featured upcoming performances at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus include: ***Cristal Palace*** (June 1-10, 2018, banks of the Schuylkill River), ***Taylor Mac: A 24-Decade History of Popular Music Part I*** (June 2, 2018, Merriam Theater), ***Doggie Hamlet*** (June 3-4, 2018, Belmont Plateau), ***Tape Riot*** (June 5-8, 2018, locations revealed to ticket buyers), ***Taylor Mac: A 24-Decade History of Popular Music Part II*** (June 9, 2018, Merriam Theater), and ***Disney's Aladdin*** (June 13-July 1, 2018, Academy of Music).

BASSEM YOUSSEF THE JOKE IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD

Verizon Hall

June 6, 2018, 7:30 p.m.

Tickets

Tickets are on sale now and start at \$45.00. Tickets can be purchased by calling 215-893-1999, online at www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa, or at the Kimmel Center Box Office. Group sales are available for groups of 10 or more and can be purchased by calling 215-790-5883. See www.kimmelcenter.org/pifa for more information.

The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, the Kimmel Center's mission is to operate a world-class performing arts center that engages and serves a broad audience through diverse programming, arts education, and community outreach. The Kimmel Center Campus is comprised of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (Verizon Hall, Perelman Theater, SEI Innovation Studio, and the Merck Arts Education Center), the Academy of Music (owned by the Philadelphia Orchestra Association), and the Merriam Theater. The Kimmel Center is also home to eight Resident Companies: The Philadelphia Orchestra, Opera Philadelphia, The Pennsylvania Ballet, The Philly POPS, PHILADANCO, The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia, The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society and Curtis Institute of Music. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, The Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts is the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is the season sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2017-2018 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit www.kimmelcenter.org.

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