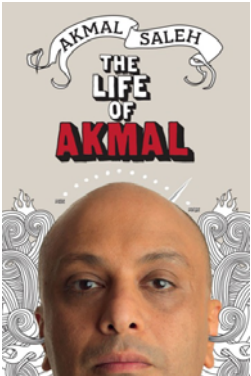


MEDIA RELEASE



The Life of Akmal by Akmal Saleh



Published by Ebury Australia, 1 March 2010
Memoir
RRP: 34.95

A strikingly candid and hilarious memoir from one of Australia's best-loved comedians

AKMAL WILL BE TOURING SYDNEY, MELBOURNE & BRISBANE 1-6 MARCH

Akmal is an Egyptian-Australian comedian who failed high-school English. However, as a result of missing his appointment with the high-school careers counsellor, he decided to make a living out of writing. The result is *The Life of Akmal*, a no-holds-barred, roller-coaster ride of a rip-roaring memoir, describing all aspects of the author's early life in Egypt, high-school years in Australia and purported adulthood as a professional funny man on the international comedy circuit.

It was 1974 when Akmal's parents moved the family from Cairo to Sydney. For reasons unbeknown to him, they lied about the decision to immigrate, telling him that they were going on a family holiday to Alexandria, a two-hour trip from Cairo. To Akmal's surprise, twenty-two hours later he found himself arriving on the other side of the world. From that point on, he subconsciously started gathering a treasure trove of comedy material, at the same time refusing to go on any more family holidays. Akmal quickly adapted to his new environment, learning just enough English to embarrass members of the unsuspecting public.

He started his working life as a taxi driver and enjoyed almost every aspect of it – the independence, being able to work when he chose to, listening to CDs – except for the part where you have to pick up passengers and take them places. So, following two road accidents in the space of a week – which Akmal saw as a sign – he made the logical transition from taxi driving to comedy.

It was with other comics that Akmal finally felt he belonged. Their shared personality traits – socially dysfunctional behaviour, low self-esteem, oversensitivity to the opinions of others and an odd compulsion to risk public humiliation night after night – meant that he really was one of them. He was fully ready to start his new life – at least in his head; he had a lot to learn about being a professional comedian first.

If you have ever felt like an outsider, a total failure or the butt of others' jokes, then this book is for you. Find common ground with Akmal as you go with him on the confusing, comical and often absurd journey that is his life, finding comfort in the knowledge that you only paid \$34.95 for the experience.

Akmal will be appearing at the Adelaide Fringe, Melbourne Comedy, Sydney Writers' and Byron Bay Writers' Festivals

To organise an interview please contact Annabel Rijks on 02 8923 9834 or at arijks@randomhouse.com.au



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