

READ, LISTEN, WATCH

The Hilarity of the Human Condition

Stand-up comedy, like all art, reflects the cultural zeitgeist. It's a snapshot of what people value, and how they think, behave, and interact during a specific period. With today's risks of cancel culture and the polarization of audiences, comics are more socially conscious than ever, which some audiences once feared would weaken punch lines. The outcome, perhaps unintended, is content that's both funny and looks deeper into the human condition.

Of course, there is still plenty of political and social satire. But comedy's best performers are

more often turning their gaze inward, grappling with topics like mental health, family dynamics, and death—and they are increasingly blending additional art forms, such as visual storytelling, music, and theatrical improv. It's resonating with audiences. The business of making people laugh has more than doubled in the last decade, with ticket sales reaching almost \$1 billion last year. Meanwhile, streaming platforms have been investing significantly in stand-up specials. Here are *Briefings'* top picks for comedic routines that capture the human condition. ▮

CAMERON ESPOSITO, FOUR PILLS (DROPOUT)

The actor and comedian takes viewers through the ups and downs of living with bipolar disorder and the impact on bystanders, especially their dog.

SARAH SILVERMAN, POSTMORTEM (NETFLIX)

Previously known for her explicit humor, Silverman explores the emotional complexity of caring for her dying parents.

BILL BURR, DROP DEAD YEARS (HULU)

With his signature sharp, merciless style, the comic grapples with what it means to be a good husband.

ALI SIDDIQ, MY TWO SONS (YOUTUBE)

From serving time in prison to stardom, Siddiq chronicles the complexities of raising kids with and without financial means.



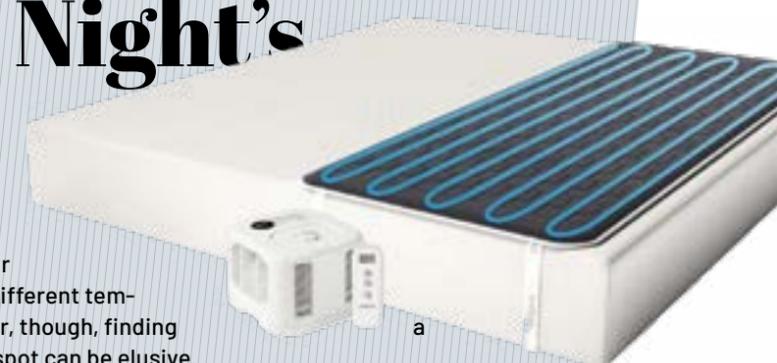
ATSUKO OKATSUKA, FATHER (HULU)

As much visual art as comedy, Okatsuka's work is a celebration of color and joy amid darkness, as well as a commentary on codependency.

SUGGESTED

A Cool Night's Sleep

Experts say the right temperature is crucial for a good night's sleep. For those who run hot or at a different temperature from their partner, though, finding climate-controlled sweet spot can be elusive. The Chilipad Cube Bed Cooling System is a machine-washable mattress pad that circulates water through thin, flexible tubing. With a remote control or through a small cube that connects to the mattress topper and rests on the floor, users can set the temperature from 60 degrees to 115 degrees Fahrenheit. The single-person system fits any size bed.



Chilipad Cube Bed Cooling System, half queen, \$599

PRO TRAINING

Acroyoga partners Michele Dawson and Jon Rea explain why the once fringe practice continues to gain mainstream momentum.

WHAT IS ACROYOGA? "It's partner acrobatics mixed with yoga. It's a playful way of moving and creating poses."

EXPLAIN THE ALLURE. "You learn to trust. It forces you to be 100 percent present—and you get to share the moment."

WHAT SHOULD BEGINNERS KNOW? "It's really accessible. A lot of it is learning technique, not strength. Find a community in your city and just show up."

Learn more at www.acrowithjon.com

