



# IF YOU DON'T MIND CARLOS MENCIA HEADS TO DAR

By Alfredo Flores

When one goes to a **Carlos Mencia** comedy show, one can expect raunch, and plenty of it. Controversial topics include the presidential election, race relations, ethnic stereotypes, immigration, war and family. But Mencia, star of the hit Comedy Central show "Mind of Mencia," doesn't rely on a script or act while on stage, preferring instead to look into the eyes of his audience, gauging their interests, seeing what they'd like him to talk about next.

"I wish I knew what I'm going to talk about, bro," Mencia said in an interview with On Tap. "I like to push buttons. Sometimes, you tickle somebody and they laugh, sometimes you tickle somebody and they pee, and sometimes you tickle somebody and they say, 'Don't touch me there.' I don't know what that reaction is going to be, and therefore I can't say I'm going to move on to another joke or whatnot. It's all predicated on the conversation I'm having with the audience."

It's that connection Mencia has with his audience that has endeared him to fans across the United States and overseas. He wrapped production on the fourth season of his show over the summer and immediately embarked on an 80-city "At Close Range" tour, which stops by **D.A.R. Constitution Hall** on **November 14**. The sponsor of the tour is Bud Light, his

Honduran-born father's beer of choice.

Mencia was raised in the Maravilla Projects of East Los Angeles by his aunt and uncle, Mencia, the 17th of 18 kids. Fearing the temptations of gang life would be too much to resist, his family shipped Mencia to their village home in Honduras for three years, where instead of going to school he chopped down crops with a machete, milked cows and lived without running water or electricity. As a teen, humbled by this experience, he returned to L.A., started 10th grade and after a brief flirtation with a career in electrical engineering, went straight into stand up comedy with a fearlessness to say whatever's on his mind.

"I'm going to say the stuff people are thinking but they can't say because of political correctness, or because they don't want to get into an argument," he said. "I do have a responsibility, to be their voice. I've got all this on my mind I'm trying to say."

Some of his stand up performances have featured call-and-response brand of comedy, with many audience members shouting out topics for Mencia to talk about, and, within reason, he'll oblige.

On Vice Presidential nominee Sarah Palin: "She has five kids? First of all, a little trailer trashy. How they heck can she afford to have five kids?"

On President George Bush's command, or lack thereof, of the English language: "How

bad is it that seven and a half years into the administration that if someone told CNN 'I have video of the president of the United States of America, not only butchering English, but making up words that don't even exist.' CNN's response? 'No, we don't need it. We have enough of that.' That's sad, bro. He's like the village idiot, but he's been good for my industry."

On the controversial pictures of Presidential nominee Barack Obama in a turban: "Somebody should have told him, come here, not a good idea. Shhh. Take that off, dress up as a pumpkin instead."

One of the staples in Mencia's work, and perhaps his most controversial, is his trademark "Dee-Dee-dee!" jokes. Many consider it a slight on the mentally challenged, but Mencia defends the bit saying its meant to demean those who have fully-functional brains but choose not to use them to capacity.

"If you live a regular life as a regular people, aren't the majority of the people you come across a little dumb, mentally complacent?" he asked. "They're lucky they're not celebrities, but if they were I'd be on that ass."

*Carlos Mencia "At Close Range," Friday, Nov. 14, 8 p.m. at DAR Constitution Hall. Tickets \$42. Info at: [www.carlosmencia.com](http://www.carlosmencia.com).*

