# SIKHlens THE COMIC ART OF VISHAVJIT SINGH

AM NOT WHAT YOU THINK I AM LOOK BEYOND THE TURBAN AND BEARD THERE IS MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE ARE YOU CERTAIN WHAT MY FAITH IS WHERE I COME FROM HAVE YOU EVER PERSONALLY ASKED ME WHERE I COME FROM IF NOT THEN BE PREPARED TO TRULY TEST YOUR REAL VISION I AM A SIKH WALKING THE PATH OF COMPASSION HOPING TO FIND THE LIGHT IN OUR HEARTS THAT BINDS US ALL

2021 CALENDAR

## GO BACK HIME

1.

MY NAME IS VISHAVJIT SINGH. I HAVE BEEN TOLD TO GO BACK HOME A LOT OVER THE YEARS. I ALWAYS GO HOME. BUT HOME IS NOT AS SIMPLE AS IT SOUNDS. I HAVE HAD MANY HOMES. IT ALL STARTED IN WASHINGTON DC.

BERKELEY

SANTA BARBARA

LOS ANGELES

I-WAS-BORN-AT COLUMBIA WOMEN'S
HOSPITAL WHICH WAS BUILT IN-CIVIL WAR
ERA TO SERVE WIVES OF SOLDIERS.

MY PARENTS CONCEIVED ME
IN HYATSVILLE, MARYLAND,
A NORTHEAST SUBURB OF
WASHINGTON DC.



9.
ON THE WAY TO BERKELEY,
FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL,
I DISCOVERED BUDDHISM

SANTA BARBARA IS WHERE I LOST MYSELF. TOOK OFF MY TURBAN & CUT MY HAIR. STARTED ON A JOURNEY TO DISCOVER WHO I REALLY WAS.

AND TAOISM.

I MOVED WITH MY PARENTS TO INDIA WHEN I WAS 4 YEARS OLD.

I STARTED COLLEGE AT OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY.
AFTER FRESHMAN YEAR I TRANSFERRED TO UC SANTA BARBARA.

COLUMBUS

I COMPLETED PRIMARY SCHOOLING IN THE CAPITAL CITY OF DELHI.
ALONG THE WAY, I SURVIVED A GENOCIDAL MASSACRE OF SIKHS IN NOVEMBER 1984, THE SMALL RELIGIOUS MINORITY MY FAMILY BELONGS TO.



NEW YORK

WASHINGTON DC

MADE A CAREER MOVE TO THE EAST COAST TO WORK AS AN ENGINEER, FIRST IN CONNECTICUT. THE YEAR WAS 2000 AND I HAD EMBRACED THE SIKH PATH WITH MY TURBAN AND LONG HAIR BACK.



THE TRAGEDY OF 9/11 BROUGHT NEW CHALLENGES. FELLOW AMERICANS CALLED ME 'OSAMA', 'TALIBAN' AND 'TERRORIST', AS I MADE MY WAY DOWN TO NEW YORK VIA STAMFORD AND WHITE PLAINS.

#### 12.

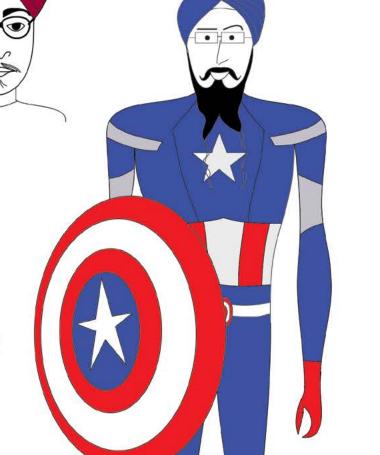
MANY HAVE TOLD ME TO GO BACK HOME, WHICH I DO. NEW YORK CITY IS HOME NOW. I TRANSITIONED TO BECOME A CARTOONIST & STARTED SIKHTOONS.COM. THEN DONNED THE UNIFORM OF CAPTAIN AMERICA TO CONFRONT STEREOTYPES & BIAS.

6.

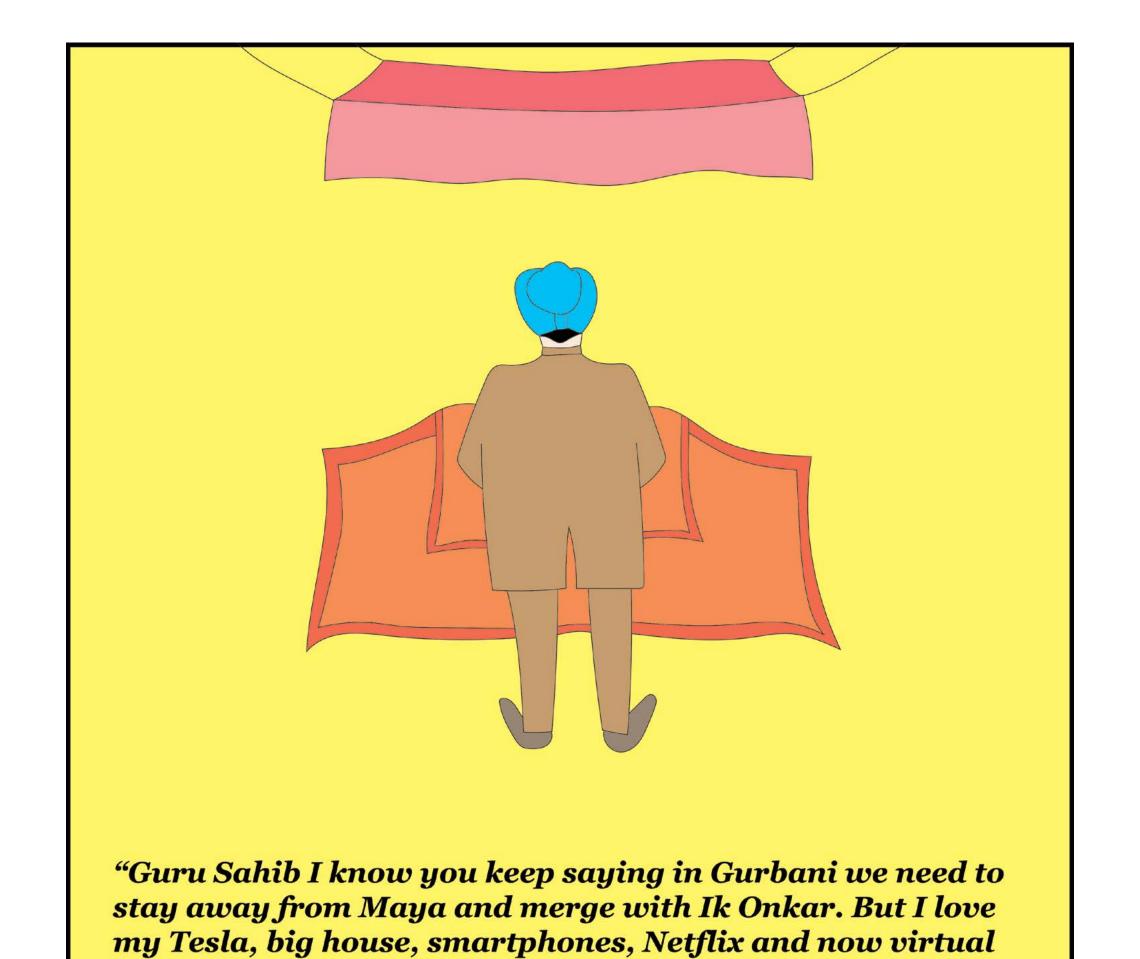
I MOVED TO LOS ANGELES
AFTER HIGH SCHOOL. I WAS
GREETED ON THE STREETS WITH
CALLS OF 'GENIE', 'RAGHEAD',
'CLOWN' AND SOME JUST
LAUGHED IN MY FACE.

#### **13**.

I TRAVEL FROM SCHOOLS, COLLEGES,
COMPANIES, LIKE GOOGLE, APPLE,
GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, LIKE NASA,
LIBRARIES, GIVING TALKS ON DIVERSITY,
EQUITY, VULNERABILITY, BIAS & THE POWER
OF ART. I AM A STORYTELLER WHO CREATES
A LITTLE CONFUSION, PROVOKING
QUESTIONS & EXPLORATIONS.



SIKHTOONS.COM



Ardaas is a supplication based prayer in the Sikh tradition wherein you humbly ask for offerings/offer gratitude from the creator energy, lk Onkar while mired in the world of material attachments which is known as Maya.

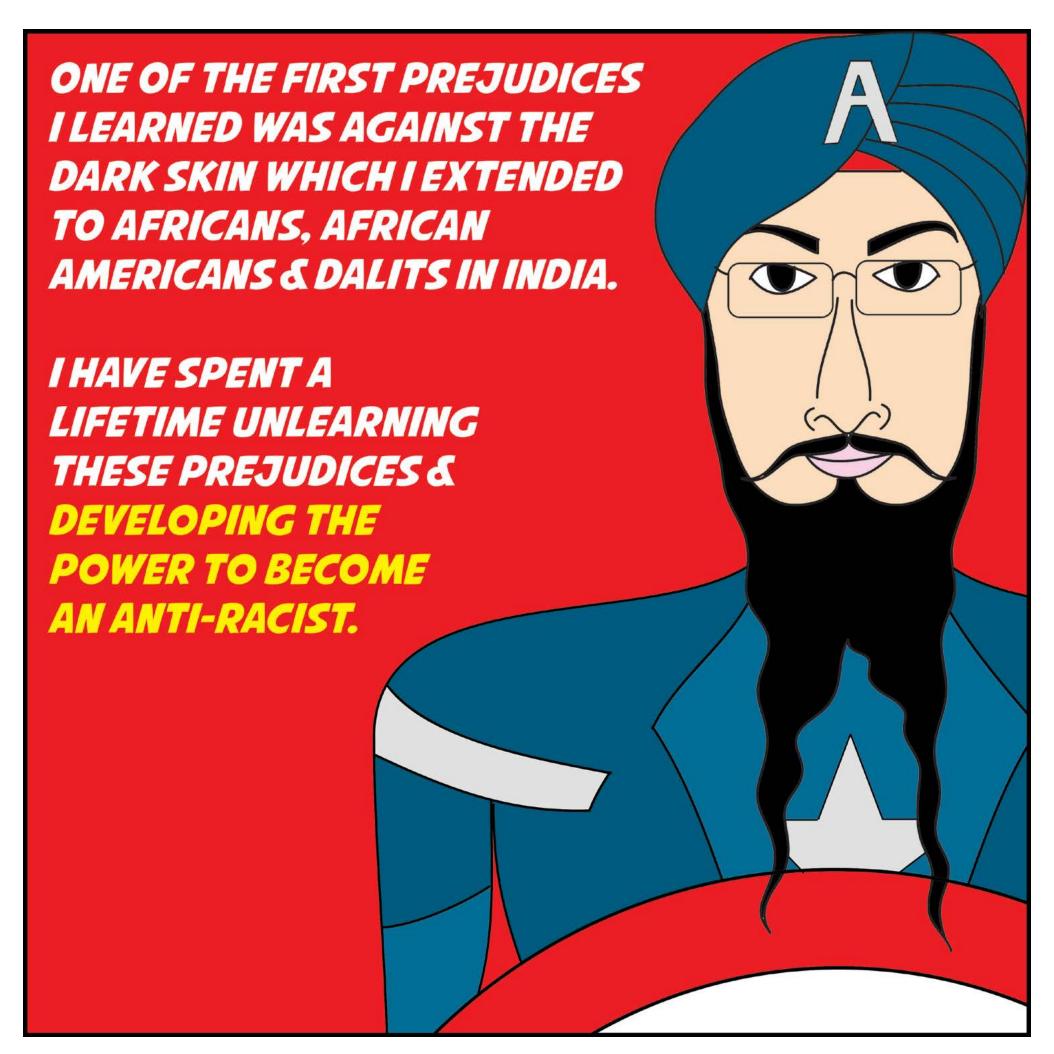
reality. I don't drink but this is all so intoxicating."

> This was was taken at my home cleaning my Captain America shield by photojournalist Rene Clement as part of a photoshoot essay project for a Belgium newspaper, De Standard.

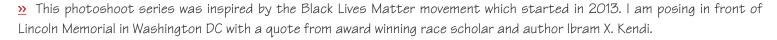


#### **JANUARY**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					New Year's Day	2
3	4	5	6 Epiphany - Christian	7	8	9
10	11	12	13 Maghi - Sikh	14 Makar Sakranti - Hindu	15	16
World Religion Day - Baha'i	18 Martin Luther King Jr. Day	19	20 Guru Gobind Singh Ji's Birthday - Sikh Bodhi Day - Buddhist	21	22	23
24/31	25	26	27 Tu B'Shavat - Jewish	28	29	30



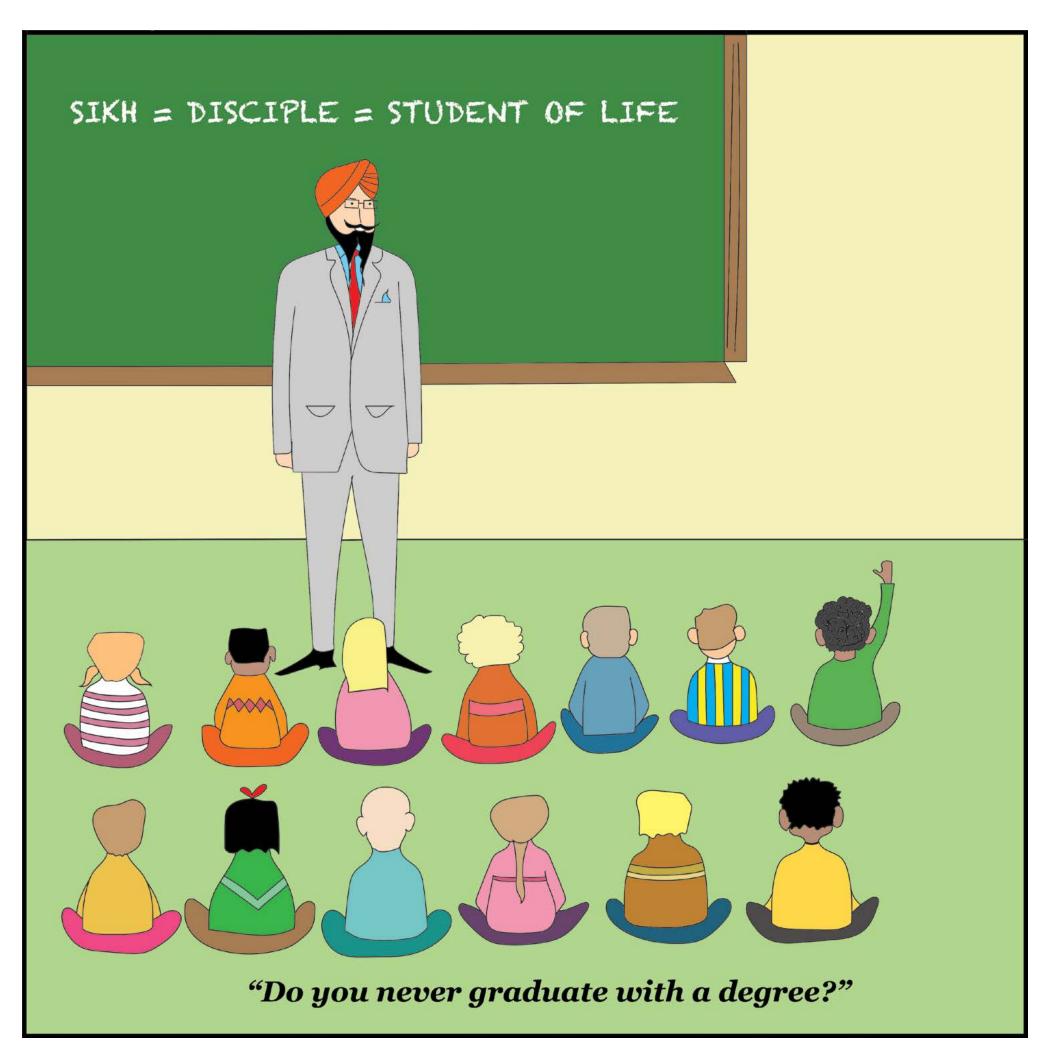
• South African Anti-Apartheid revolutionary and Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela shared this wisdom: "No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin, or his background, or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than its opposite." To unlearn hate and to learn to love we have to make compassion a daily mediation in our lives. The one who paved the Sikh path, Guru Nanak Dev Ji describes living as a genuine Sikh a 'Game of Love'. It is about the love that the creator of this cosmos pours out over us, without limit, without condition, and the unconditional love that we should try to develop for it and its creation.





#### **FEBRUARY**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					_	
	I	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 Chinese New Year - Buddhist	13
St. Valentine's Day - Christian	Nirvana Day - Buddhist Presidents' Day	16 Basant Panchami - Hindu	17 Ash wednesday - Christian	18	19	20
21/28	22	23	24	25	26 Purim - Jewish	27 Magha Puja Day - Buddhist



- <u>^</u> The word Sikh literally means disciple or learner. The Sikh faith is really a path, a journey one takes to find the essence of our existence. The secret resides within the body referred to as a temple. A good student eventually finds their way home.
- $\underline{\mathbf{y}}$  I went to Cleveland in 2016 for the Republican National Convention with a group of cartoonists. I decided to take my Captain America persona with a few punchy banners.



#### MARCH

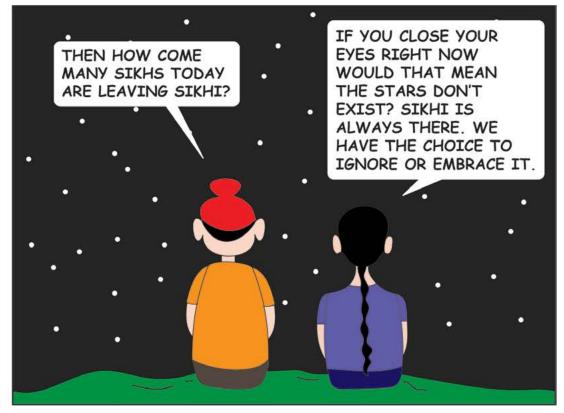
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8 International Women's Day	9	10	Laylat al Miraj - Islam Maha ShivRatri - Hindu	12	13
Sikh New Year Daylight Savings Begins	15	16	17 St. Patrick's Day - Christian	18	19	Naw-Rúz (New Year) - Baha'i First Day of Spring
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Passover Starts - Jewish Palm Sunday - Christian		30	31			

#### LIGHT OF SIKHI

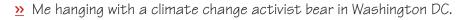








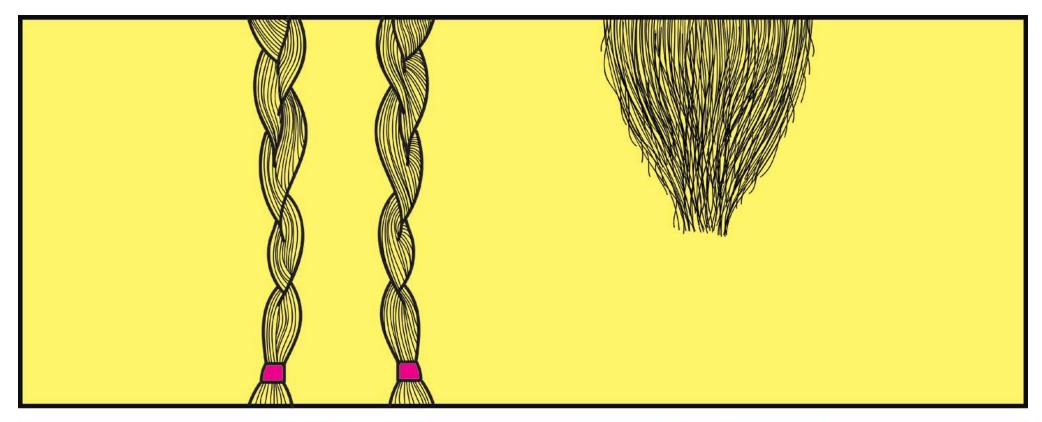
^ Vaisakhi which historically signals the spring harvest in the Indian subcontinent, has a special significance for the Sikh community. The tenth Sikh Guru - Guru Gobind Singh Ji formally established the Khalsa Panth, community of Sikhs and publicly entrusted it with communal leadership. Sikh men were entrusted with last name 'Singh' meaning lion and Sikh women 'Kaur' meaning princess. The tradition carries to this day rooted in living and practicing genuine diversity, inclusion and equity.

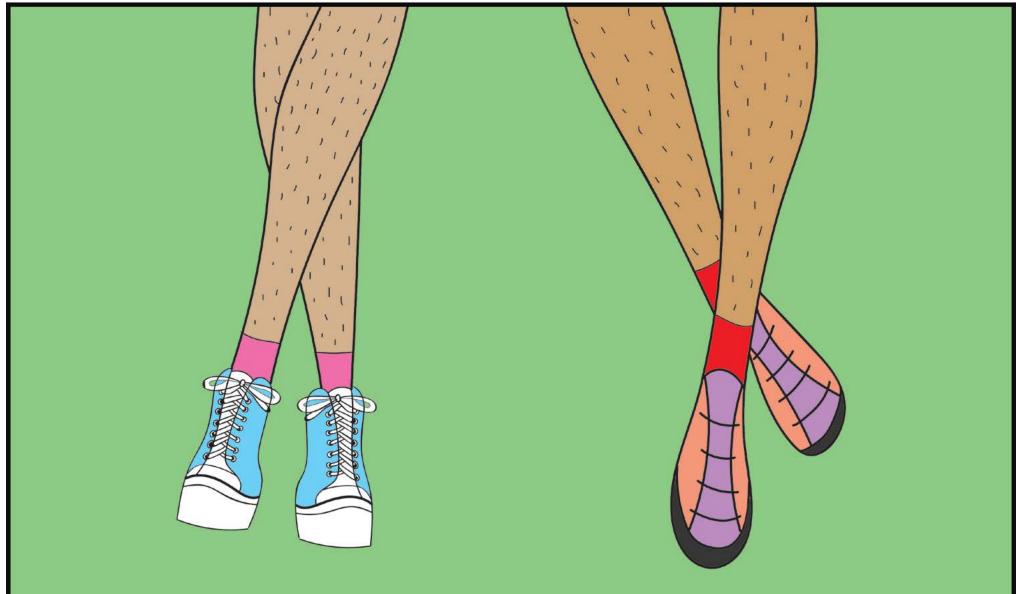




#### APRIL

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2 Good Friday - Christian	3
Passover Ends - Jewish Easter - Christian	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	Valsakhi - Sikh Ramadan Begins - Islam	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21 Ram Navami - Hindu	22 Earth Day	23	24
25 Mahavir Jayanti - Jain	26	27	28	29	30	





Alair has a special significance in the Sikh way of life. Considered as as extension of the body, followers of the faith are beckoned by tradition and practice to don unshorn hair. Many do and many don't. It's a knotty situation.

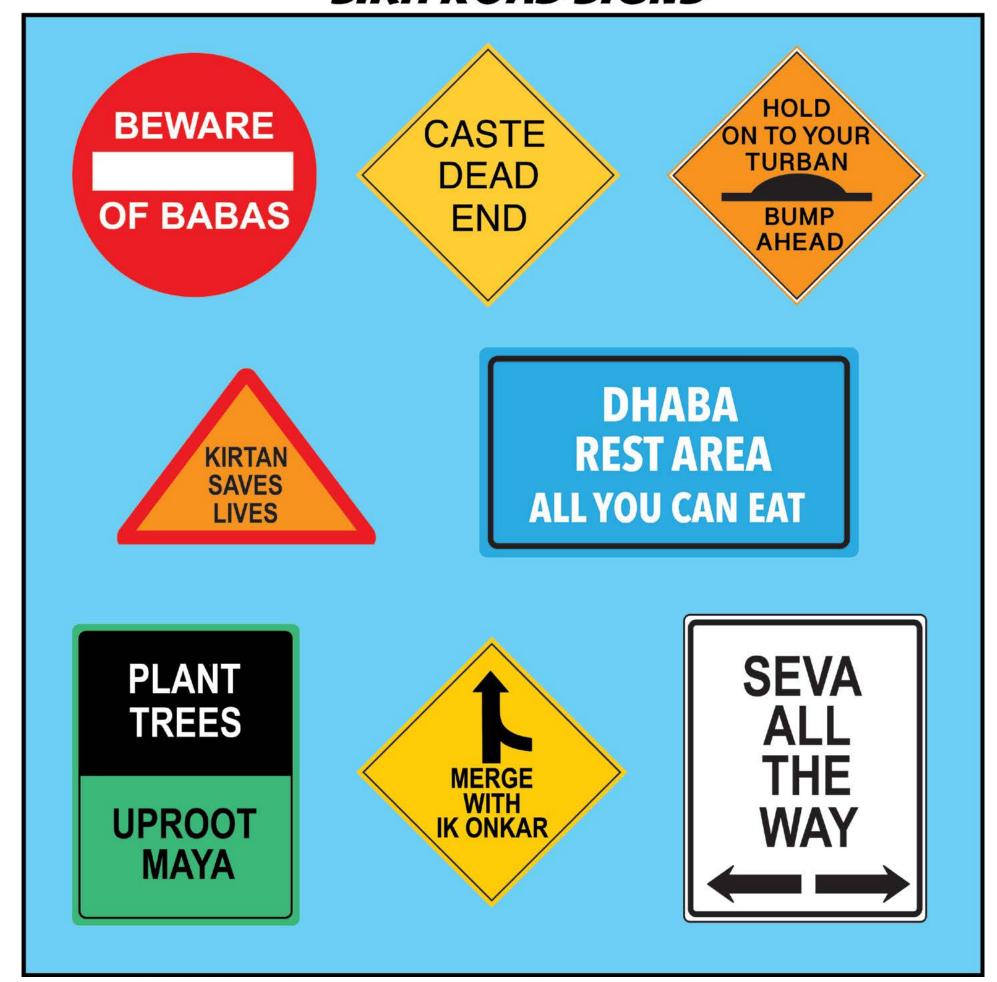


I attended the Memorial Day parade in Great Neck, New York in 2016.

#### MAY

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3	4	5	6 National Day of Prayer USA - Interfaith	7	8 V-E Day
9 Mother's Day	10	11	12	13 Eid al-Fit - Islam	14	15
16	17 Shavuot - Jewish	18	19 Buddha Day - Buddhist	20	21	22
23/30 Declaration of the Bab-Baha'i	24/31 Memorial Day	25	26	27	28	Ascension of Baha'u'llah - Baha'i

#### SIKH ROAD SIGNS



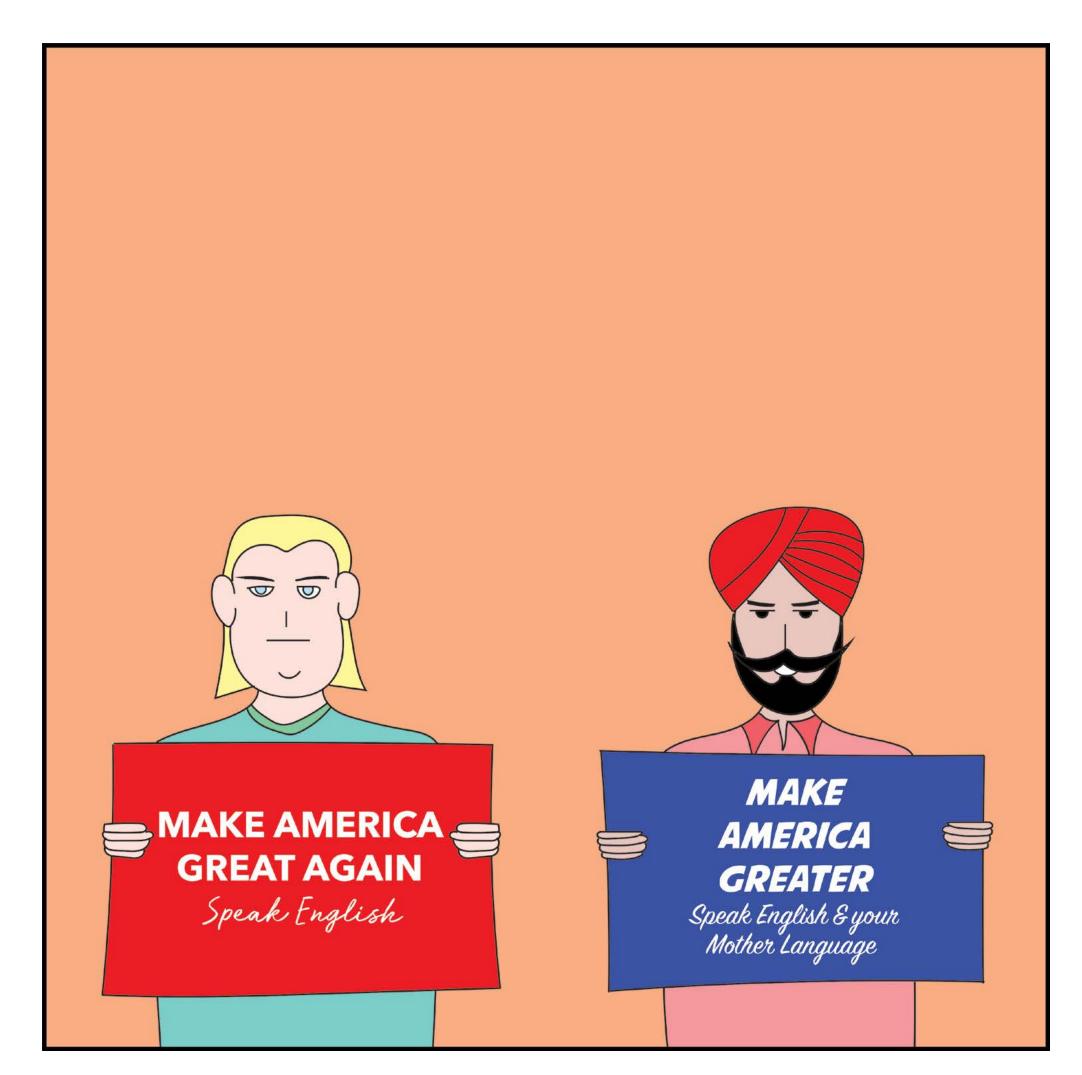
The living spiritual guide of the Sikhs is Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. In appearance it is a 1430 book of poems but it is a well of lived experiential wisdom of Sikh Gurus and other prophets from the Indian subcontinent spanning other faith traditions. The poetic verses describe the essence of life and our conscious purpose to connect with the eternal energy known to Sikhs as Ik Onkar.



In late 2013, I made my first appearance on a late night comedy show on FX, Totally Biased with Kamau Bell teaming up with correspondent, Hari Kondabolu.

#### JUNE

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6 D-Day	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14 Martyrdom Guru Arjan Dev Jī - Sikh	15	16	17	18	19
First Day of Summer Father's Day	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			



^ Punjabi is the native tongue of many Sikhs hailing from the India subcontinent. Latest research findings show that learning multiple languages are good for the brain. What makes English an amazing language is how much it has borrowed from other languages as it has travelled around the world.



<u>></u> My first photoshoot in uniform was in June 2013 in New York City. This image was taken in Central Park by NYC photographer Fiona Aboud who inspired the idea of me dressing up as Captain America.

#### **JULY**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
				1	2	3
4 Independence Da	5 Guru Hargobind Singh Ji's Birthday - Sikh	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18 Tisha B'Av - Jewis	19	20 Eid-al-Adha - Islam	21	22	23	24 Asalha Puja Day - Buddhist
25 Parents Da	26	27	28	29	30	31

#### SIKH BUSINESS CARDS

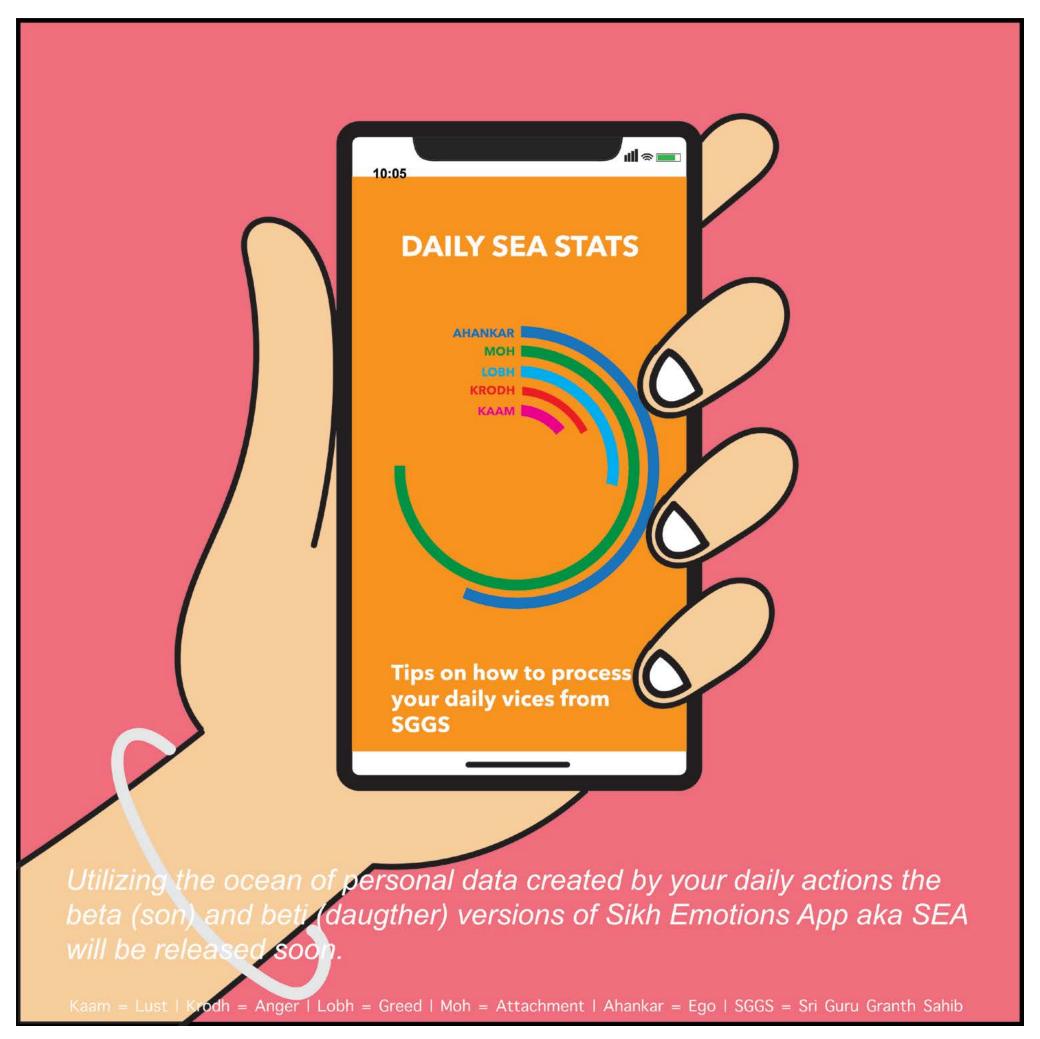


- <u>^</u> There is a vibrant tradition of nicknames among those hailing from the Punjab region of the Indian subcontinent. Many of these nick names do not have a literal meaning but hold an emotional linguistic place in Punjabi hearts and minds.
- > Standing with the Capitol building in the background, in Washington DC, on the day of the inauguration of the 45th President of the United States.



#### AUGUST

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10 Hijra (New Year) - Islam	11	12	13 Obon Begins - Buddhist	14
15 Obon Ends - Buddhist	16	17	18	19	20	21 Raksha Bandhan - Hindu
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29 Krishna Janmashtami - Hindu	30	31				

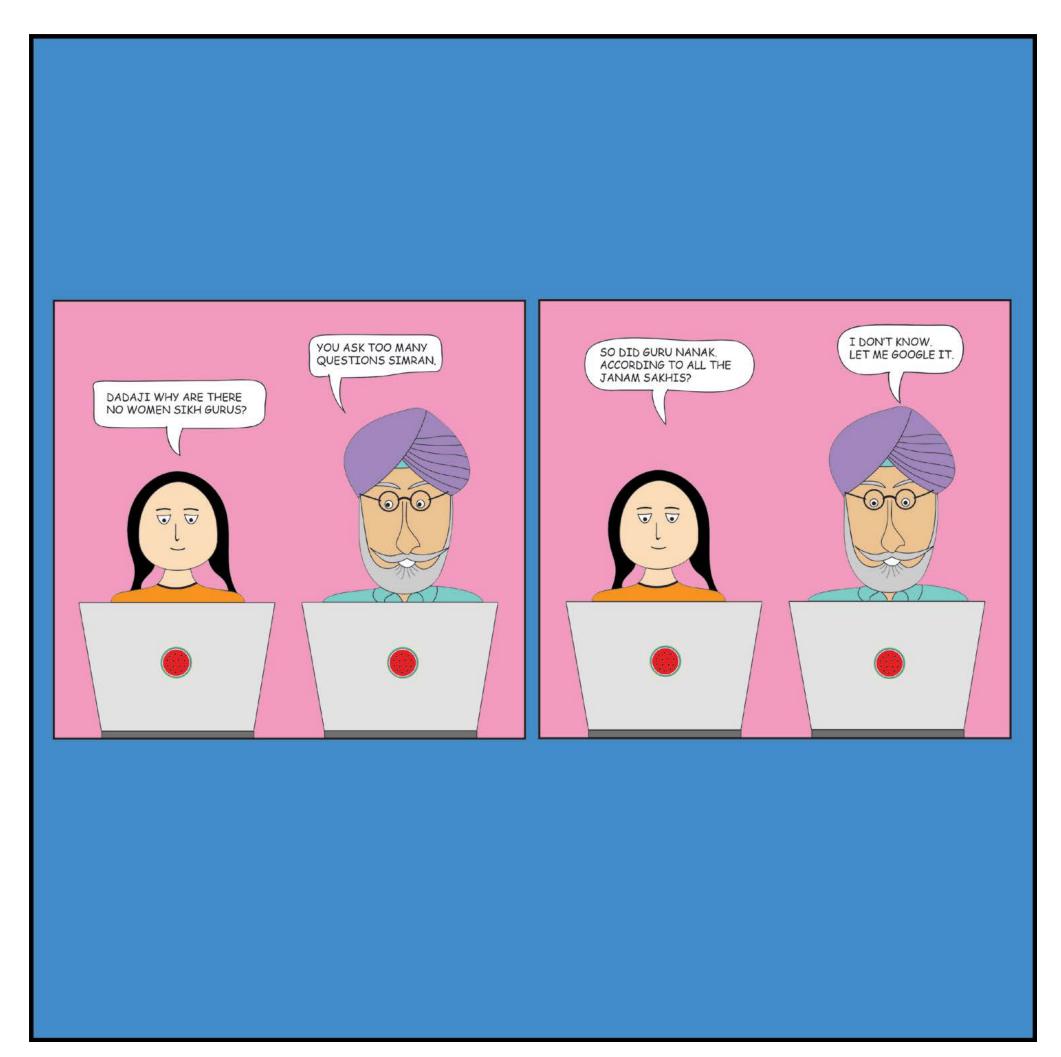


- 1 In the Sikh tradition, five human emotional states are also described as five vices or thieves that are constantly battling for attention as one seeks a way back to merge with the divine eternal energy, lk Onkar.
- <u>></u> In June 2013 during the first photoshoot in uniform photographer Fiona Aboud asked fire department officials if we can borrow their truck for the photoshoot. They let me have the truck to pose in for 20 minutes.



#### SEPTEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Labor Day	<b>7</b> Rosh Hashanah - Jewish	8 First Parkash Guru Granth Sahib Ji - Sikh	9 Ganesh Chaturthi - Hindu	10	11 Patriot Day
12 Grandparents Day	13	14	15	16 Yom Kippur - Jewish	17	18
19	20	21 Sukkot - Jewish	22 First Day of Fall	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		



- 1 In the Sikh tradition which starts with Guru Nanak Dev Ji in 15th century, there were ten Sikh masters/teachers who passed the torch of this way of life to eventually Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji. All Sikh Gurus were male.
- 🥦 Posed with these two young ladies who were attending the Women's March in Washington DC on Jan. 21st, 2017.



#### **OCTOBER**

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3	4	5	6 Birth of the Báb - Baha'i Navaratri Starts - Hindu	Birth of the Bahá'u'lláh - Baha'i	8	9
10	11 Columbus Day	12	13	Dussehra - Hindu Navaratri Ends - Hindu	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24/31 Halloween	25	26	27	28	29	30



1984 marks one of the most poignant and tragic years in the young 550 year Sikh history. The first week of June saw the Indian state and its security apparatus use its military to attack dozens of Sikh places of worship in Punjab as a response to a political struggle. The first week of November following the assassination of the Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi by her two Sikh bodyguards was witness to a Pogrom across cities in the nation. Tens of thousands of Sikhs perished in June and November. Justice was never served and 1984 serves as a turning point in Sikh psyche.



 ${\color{red} \underline{\scriptscriptstyle y}}$  At the NYC Comic Con in 2016 with another Captain America.

#### NOVEMBER

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	Diwali - Hindu, Jain and Sikh Bandi Chorr Divas - Sikh	5	6
7	Daylight Savings Ends	8	9	10	11 Veterans Day	12	13
14		15	16	17	18	Guru Nanak Dev Jī Birthday - Sikh Sikhlens: Sikh Arts & Film Festival	20 Sikhlens: Sikh Arts & Film Festival
21	Sikhlens: Sikh Arts & Film Festival	22	23	24	25 Thanksgiving Day	26	27
28	Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha - Baha'i	29 Hanukkah Begins - Jewish	30				



^ A big gratitude to Sikhlens for supporting artists and their art via this calendar series and film festival. Most Sikhs will catch the sentiment behind this illustration. To others it would suffice to say that broadly as a community we Sikhs leave a lot to be desired when it comes to nurturing the arts and artists.



> Celebrating women, some cherished basic human rights and the power of resistance.

#### DECEMBER

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5	6 Hanukkah Ends - Jewish	7	Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahdur Ji - Sikh Bodhi Day - Buddhist	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21 First Day of Winter	22	23	24	25 Christmas Day
<b>26</b> Kwanzaa Be	19ins <b>27</b>	28	29	30	31 New Year's E	ve



Covid-19 pandemic has been one of the biggest global challenges humanity has faced in the 21st century.

As our lives have been transformed confronting this public health emergency, a few superheroes have emerged in our midst.

These real life superheroes have gone to work from day one of the pandemic despite all the risks to make sure we can confront this pandemic with courage, grace, humility and hope.

We call them frontline or essential workers. They work in hospitals to take care of the sick ones, they work on farms to keep us fed, they deliver supplies to keep our lives as normal as possible, they package essential supplies for us, they keep our transportation systems running, they have responded to emergencies in our communities.

The pandemic has taken a heavy toll on their lives. Many have contracted Covid-19. Many have died from this infectious disease.

Still they continue to serve us.

They are real life superheroes. We are in deep gratitude to their service. We want to extend our hands to support them in any way possible.

They epitomize the principle of 'Seva' in Sikh way of life, to do selfless community service for the good of humanity and all living beings.

- Vishavjit Singh



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

Submission Deadline: September 1, 2021

For more information and to submit your film online go to www.filmfreeway.com/sikhlens

For art submission please email us at <a href="mailto:info@sikhlens.com">info@sikhlens.com</a>

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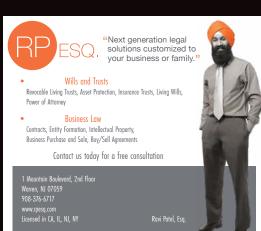
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