

Zimbabwe: Comedian Long John Bags Us Award

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Multii — award winning Zimbabwean stand-up comedian cum actor Learnmore Mwanenyeka, known as 'Long John The Comedian', is basking in glory after scooping the Best Stand Up Comedy award at a show hosted virtually in Atlanta, United States.

The award show was held for three days online, celebrating comedic content creators from all over the world.

Long John received a laurel, certificate, and the personal engraved coveted Golden Pitcher.

This statuette is crafted by Society Awards, the world's most prestigious designer and manufacturer of custom awards such as the Emmys®, Clio Statuette, MTV's VMA Moon Person, Academy of Country Music Awards, and the American Music Awards gongs.

Excited and shocked at the same time, Long John revealed said the award meant a lot to him considering he was nominated against other talented comics from the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia and Asia.

"I didn't think I was going to win anything this year because all my plans to travel the world where cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic, so winning this is actually a reminder or motivation to keep going no matter," he said.

"For a Zimbabwean comedian to win this is a sign that our comedy sector is ready for the world stage. We have so many talented comedians in this country and it is about time the world knows about them so we should create opportunities as a stepping stone."

Long John said since the awards were hosted virtually, he was watching them from the comfort of his home, but only knew he had won the following day.

"This was the first edition of the show and because of the pandemic it was held virtually," he said. "I was watching the ceremony at home and my wi-fi developed a problem. I couldn't finish the ceremony and again thought I didn't win, then the following day around 7pm I received an email congratulating me."

Asked how he has been performing and surviving during the Covid-19 lockdown, Long John said it had been a tough period, but one needed to be creative.

"It has been very tough because as a comedian you need stage time to be able to release all the stress, and comedy is addictive, but we thank God for the internet," he said. "I have been doing a lot of international virtual shows and making connections in different countries around the world.

"At first, doing shows online felt like something was missing because there was no live audience. It was just wired, but I got used to it and I have started enjoying it so much."

Long John said he was working on his new show titled, 'Happily Uneducated' which will be premiered on October 31 in Durban.

"I am looking forward to return on stage soon," he said. "I have my new show and it will be hosted in Durban and was thinking too on taking it to Cape Town. I am waiting for easing of restrictions on the global pandemic so that I can begin my planned United States tour."

Last year, Long John bagged the popular Steve Harvey's Spotlight Award, putting the country on the international map.