

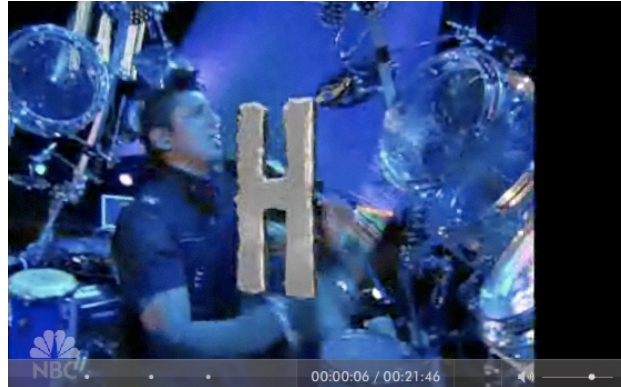
## SAJAforum

February 05, 2009

### TV: DJ Ravi Drums is musical director of NBC's "Howie Do It"

That's a screen grab from NBC's reality-comedy-hidden-camera show, "Howie Do It," which airs on Friday nights at 8 pm. Howie is Howie Mandel, the star of "Deal or No Deal," but this post is about the gentle next to the H, who's banging away on an elaborate set of drums.

His name is DJ Ravi Drums - talk about being tying up your identity in your work - and is the first South Asian to be the musical director of a primetime show on a major U.S. network. His real name is Ravi Jakhotia. From [a profile in the Orange County Register by Peter Larsen](#):



...singer Paula Abdul approached him after catching his high-energy act in the Los Angeles club Mood.

"She said, 'Do you want to be on TV?' Jakhotia says. "I said, 'Doesn't everyone in L.A.?' And she gave me her number – and it was her real number, too!"



Abdul helped him land a spot performing on the pilot of "So You Think You Can Dance," and later added him to her band for a high-profile spot on the pregame show of the Super Bowl a year ago.

"And that's where Howie first spotted me," Jakhotia says.

Comedian Howie Mandel noticed the manic drumming of Jakhotia behind Abdul on the Super Bowl but it took a chance encounter in Las Vegas a few months later for the comedian and the drummer to finally meet.

Jakhotia, backed by a band and a dance ensemble, had been booked to play a corporate gig for Hewlett-Packard, with Mandel slated to entertain later on the bill, Jakhotia says.

"It was early in the morning, for 5,000 computer geeks, and I got them rocking," he says. "And Howie saw me and goes, 'Who's this killing it at 9 a.m.?'"

"Backstage he says, 'I love it! We've got a couple of things going, give me your contact information.'"

Within a week or so, Mandel's producers had quietly checked out Jakhotia's show in Toronto and made contact with his agent.

Very quickly, Mandel decided to hire Jakhotia to be the one-man band on his new hidden-camera-prank show, "Howie Do It," which debuted on NBC on Jan. 9.

On the show – which continues Fridays at 8 p.m. – Jakhotia is seen blazing away at his drums as Mandel introduces each segment, providing him with steady, high-profile work to help support his family, wife Jerusha and 4-year-old son Soren.

Journalists interested in contacting DJ Ravi can do so by e-mailing Vijay Chattha at [vijay\[at\]vsconconsulting.com](mailto:vijay[at]vsconconsulting.com) - tell him SAJA sent you.

See a clip via Hulu below. And post your comments below.