



Adriana Sevahn Nichols'  
**NIGHT OVER  
ERZINGA**

**OCTOBER 9 - NOVEMBER 11, 2012**



A ROLLING WORLD PREMIERE

Written by **Adriana Sevahn Nichols**

Directed by **Lisa Portes**

# Adriana Sevahn Nichols' NIGHT OVER ERZINGA

*Night Over Erzinga*, by Adriana Sevahn Nichols, was originally commissioned and developed by Middle East America: A National New Plays Initiative created by Golden Thread Productions (San Francisco), Lark Play Development Center (NYC), and Silk Road Rising (Chicago).

Silk Road Rising's production of *Night Over Erzinga* is part of a rolling World Premiere that began at Golden Thread Productions with Artistic Director Torange Yeghiazarian and Managing Director Serge Bakalian in San Francisco in September 2011.

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All original music composed by Penka Kouneva is being used with the composer's permission courtesy of Golden Thread Productions (San Francisco, CA).



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## CAST LIST

**Rom Barkhordar\*** | Doctor, Ardavazt's father, Older Ardavazt Oghidanian

**Sandra Delgado\*** | Young Alice Oghidanian, Aghavni "Ava" Oghidanian

**Levi Holloway\*** | Ardavazt Oghidanian

**Diana Simonzadeh\*** | Alice's mother, Ardavazt's Grandmama, Older Alice Oghidanian

**Nicolas Gamboa** | Khalil, Ardavazt's Grandpapa, Bienvenido Raymundo

**Carolyn Hoerdmann** | Older Estrella, Nurse, Ardavazt's mother, Beauty on *SS France*, Sahiba, Bambi, Soprano

**Michael Salinas** | Cop, Attendant, Turkish Soldier, Alberto the Italian Immigrant, Johnny Jewels

**Allison Torf and Maliha A. Yousuf** | Young Aghavni, Anoushig, Garine, Estrella

**Mark Jacob Chaitin** | Understudy

**Catherine Dildilian** | Understudy

**Andrea Salloum** | Understudy

**Marc Rita** | Understudy

*Allison Torf and Maliha A. Yousuf play the roles Young Aghavni, Anoushig, Garine, and Estrella in alternating performances.*

\* Denotes member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers

## PRODUCTION TEAM

**Malik Gillani** | Producer

**Jamil Khoury** | Producer

**Adriana Sevahn Nichols** | Playwright

**Lisa Portes\*\*** | Director

**Matt McMullen\*** | Stage Manager

**Caitlin Duerinck** | Production Manager

**Kyle Guttelman** | Technical Director

**Lee Keenan** | Set Designer

**Sarah Hughey** | Lighting Designer

**Peter J. Storms** | Sound Designer and Composer

**Jesse Gaffney** | Props Designer

**Elsa Hiltner** | Costume Designer

**Neal Ryan Shaw** | Dramaturg

**Eva Breneman** | Dialect Coach

**Becca McCracken** | Casting Director

**Azar Kazemi** | Assistant Director

**Hillary Gibson** | Assistant Stage Manager

**Kristen P. Ahrens** | Costume Design Assistant

**Penka Kouneva** | Composer

**Lara Kalayjian** | Choreographer

**Rebecca Cagney** | Wardrobe Supervisor

**Corey Pond** | House Manager

**Al Gillani** | I.T. and Box Office Manager

**Sarah Ibis** | Program Editor

**Melissa Rose** | Child Wrangler

\*\* The Director is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.



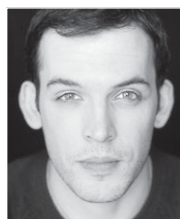
# CAST BIOS



**Rom Barkhordar** (Doctor, Ardavazt's father, Older Ardavazt Oghidanian) is honored to be working at Silk Road Rising for the first time. Some theatres he has worked with include the Steppenwolf, Writer's, Timeline, Greasy Joan, Eclipse, Griffin, and Steep theatres. Regionally, he has been seen at Baltimore Stage and Kansas City Rep. Some of his favorite past productions include *Around the World in 80 days* at Lookingglass (seven Jeff nominations), *Not About Nightingales* at Timeline Theatre (six Jeff Citation awards), *Ruined* at The Goodman (Pulitzer prize winner), and *Mother Courage and her Children* at Vitalist. Thanks to his wife, Maren.



**Sandra Delgado** (Young Alice Oghidanian, Aghavni "Ava" Oghidanian) makes her Silk Road Rising debut with *Night Over Erzanga*. Chicago credits include work at the Goodman, Steppenwolf, Victory Gardens, Lookingglass, and About Face. Regional credits include Actors Theater of Louisville and Missouri Repertory. She has been seen on television as well: *Law & Order: SVU* and *POWERS*. Sandra Delgado is an ensemble member of Collaboracion and Teatro Vista. She premiered her solo piece, *para Graciela*, in July. She is a TCG Fox Foundation Fellow in residency at the Goodman Theater where she is developing *para mis Madres*. She will star in Steppenwolf's *Motherf\*\*cker with the Hat* this winter.



**Levi Holloway** (Ardavazt Oghidanian) is honored to be working with Silk Road Rising for the first time. In Chicago, he has appeared in productions with Steppenwolf, Northlight, About Face, Provision, Shattered Globe, and Chicago Children's Theatre. He is a teaching artist with Lookingglass Theatre Company. He has appeared on TV and

film, and can be seen as Gino in *The Mob Doctor* on Fox. Levi Holloway received his BFA in acting from the Theatre School at DePaul University.



**Diana Simonzadeh** (Alice's mother, Ardavazt's Grandmama, Older Alice Oghidanian) is thrilled to reunite with her Silk Road Rising family. In 2011 she received a Jeff Award for her work in Silk Road Rising's *Scorched*. Other SRR appearances

have been invited staged readings: *Paulus, A Dress of Steel Mesh*, and *Talib*. She has worked with notable companies such as Steppenwolf, Next Theatre, and Asolo Rep. Diana Simonzadeh is active in Chicago's independent film scene; releases include *Waterwalk*, *Querty*, *Yesterday She Was Here*, *Between Western and California*, *Scrooge & Marley*, and *Remote Viewing*.



**Nicolas Gamboa** (Khalil, Ardavazt's Grandpapa, Bienvenido Raymundo) is a Colombian born actor now based in Chicago. *Night Over Erzanga* marks his debut with Silk Road Rising. With a BA in theatre, Nicolas Gamboa's other credits include *Icarus* (Bohemian Ensemble), *Beauty of the Father* (Urban Theatre), and *Changes of Heart* (Remy Bumpo). He is very thankful for this opportunity and would like to dedicate this performance to his family, friends, his loving Clarita, and all of you supporting the show.



**Carolyn Hoerdemann** (Older Estella, Nurse, Ardavazt's mother, Beauty on the SS *France*, Sahiba, Bambi, Soprano) was last seen in Timeline Theatre's *My Kind of Town* and the Goodman Theatre's *Camino Real*; before that she was in the critically acclaimed *Overweight Unimportant Mishape: A European Supper* at the Trapdoor Theatre. Other recent projects include *Venus* at the Steppenwolf Garage and the Jeff Award winning *Scorched* at Silk Road Rising. Carolyn Hoerdemann is a company member at Collaboracion and the European Repertory Company. She has also worked with The Chicago Children's Theatre and American Players Theatre in Wisconsin. She is a faculty member at The Theatre School at DePaul and is represented by Paonessa Talent.



**Michael Salinas** (Cop, Attendant, Turkish Soldier, Alberto the Italian Immigrant, Johnny Jewels) is an ensemble member of Steep Theatre where he has appeared in *Pornography*, *Festen*, *A Brief History of Helen of Troy*, *The Hollow Lands*, and *In Arabia, We'd All Be Kings* (Jeff Award for Best Ensemble). He has also worked with Pavement Group, Lookingglass, Dog & Pony, The House, Collaboracion, Steppenwolf, and The Goodman Theatre. Regional credits include Laura Eason's *The Vast In-Between* (Perry-Mansfield New Works Festival in Steamboat Springs, CO); *Spinning Into Butter* (SouthernRep). He will also be seen in *Failure: A Love Story* at Victory Gardens in November. [www.michaelsalinasactor.com](http://www.michaelsalinasactor.com)



**Allison Torf** (Young Aghavni, Anoushig, Garine, Estrella) is a 7th grader in the gifted program at Wood Oaks Jr. High. Previous credits include Stage Left Theatre, Provision Theatre, and Shedd Aquarium. When Alli's not acting, dancing, or singing, she loves to read and hang out with friends.

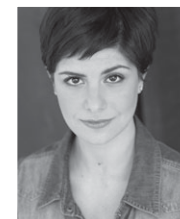


**Maliha A. Yousuf** (Young Aghavni, Anoushig, Garine, Estrella) is thrilled to be making her official Silk Road Rising debut. She most recently appeared as Dorothy, Snow White, and Epsilon in local theatres. Maliha loves to sing, swim, travel, and bake. Her favorite school subjects are math, reading, and science.



**Mark Jacob Chaitin** (Understudy) is pleased to make his Silk Road Rising debut with *Night Over Erzanga*. He has worked with Great River Shakespeare Festival, Intiman Theatre, The Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Pittsburgh Irish & Classical Theatre, Pittsburgh Shakespeare in the Park, The Zany Umbrella Circus, Unseam'd Shakespeare, and the Paris Opera Ballet. Chicago credits include work at New Leaf, Redmoon, and About Face. Mark Jacob Chaitin has classical training

from The Great River Shakespeare Festival, as well as Black Box Studio in Chicago. He is an Artistic Associate with (re)discover theater and on staff at DirectorsLabChicago. Many thanks to Lisa and Jamil.



**Catherine Dildilian** (Understudy) is the great granddaughter of genocide survivors. She received her BA in Theatre Performance from Western Michigan University. Chicago credits include *Johnny Theatre* at Chemically Imbalanced Comedy and *The Vortex* with Dead Writers Theatre Collective. Catherine Dildilian sends deepest thanks to everyone involved for the opportunity and thanks God everyday for the many blessings in her life, including her friends and family and for their encouragement and support. Love and gratitude to her best friend and husband, Matthew Sitz.



**Andrea Salloum** (Understudy) is very excited to be working with Silk Road Rising and bringing to light the stories of the Armenian people. Since 1995, she has served as the Artistic Director of Kidworks Touring Theatre, where she writes, directs and performs in shows about multicultural tolerance and world peace. In addition, she has performed with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Second City, Lookingglass, Congo Square, Lyric Opera, in the original cast of *Tony-n-Tina's Wedding...* and every Italian Mafia show in town! Most recently, she performed in Oak Park Festival Theatre's *Inherit the Wind*.



**Marc Rita** (Understudy) is thrilled to be working with Jamil, Malik, and Silk Road Rising. Marc Rita has worked with Rasaka Theater, Tinfish, Victory Gardens, Bailiwick Rep, Wisdom Bridge, Peninsula Players, and various companies in Los Angeles. Some of his acting roles include Koichi Asano in *A Majority of One*, Serge in *Art*, Kee-wau-nee in *Apparitions*, and Vijay Gupta in *The Masrayana*. Marc Rita received his training at The Organic Theatre and Steppenwolf Theatre companies many years ago. He would like to thank his family for their love and support.

# PRODUCTION TEAM BIOS



**Malik Gillani** (Producer) is Founding Executive Director of Silk Road Rising, a position to which he brings extensive experience in production, management, and business development. He is thrilled to be advancing both the rich cultural legacy of the Silk Road and greater visibility for Silk Road artists. Malik Gillani nurtured Silk Road Rising from its embryonic stage into a celebrated theatre company, integrating business acumen and fiscal responsibility within an artistic mission. He is a recognized leader in the creation of innovative arts programming that expands artistic access. Most notably, he conceived of and developed SRR's model for creating online video plays which are now being viewed across the globe. He is currently developing a new arts education program for high school students in partnership with San Diego's Playwrights Project called EPIC (Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course). Malik Gillani earned a BA from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland. He is a Kellogg Executive Scholar at Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University and has been awarded a Certificate of Professional Achievement in Nonprofit Management. He is currently pursuing a Masters in Nonprofit Administration from North Park University. He is the recipient of the IBM Business and Technology Leadership Award and was honored by Changing Worlds for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts. Recently, he received the prestigious Chicago Community Trust Fellowship Award. As a part of his CCT Fellowship, Malik Gillani has received mentorship from the leaders of ethnically specific and multi-cultural theatre companies across the nation.



**Jamil Khoury** (Producer) is Founding Artistic Director of Silk Road Rising. As a playwright, his work focuses on Middle Eastern themes and questions of Diaspora. He is particularly interested in the intersection of culture, national identity, sexuality, and class. Jamil Khoury is currently writing a new feature film/docudrama

called *Mosque Alert*, which he is developing as part of a first-of-its-kind new play development and civic engagement process. Past theatrical successes include two critically acclaimed cabarets, *Re-Spiced: A Silk Road Cabaret* and *Silk Road Cabaret: Broadway Sings the Silk Road*. He was a featured playwright in Silk Road Rising's *The DNA Trail: A Genealogy of Short Plays about Ancestry, Identity, and Utter Confusion*. His short play *WASP: White Arab Slovak Pole* inspired the short video play *bothland* and the documentary film *Not Quite White: Arabs, Slavs, and the Contours of Contested Whiteness*. His weight loss of over a hundred pounds inspired the short video play *The Balancing Arab*. Jamil Khoury's play *Precious Stones* won Gay Chicago Magazine's 2003 After Dark Award for Outstanding New Work and has been performed in ten cities across the nation. He holds a MA degree in Religious Studies from The University of Chicago Divinity School and a BS degree in International Relations from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. He was a Kellogg Executive Scholar at Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University and has been awarded a Certificate of Professional Achievement in Nonprofit Management. He is the 2010 recipient of the 3Arts Artist Award for Playwriting.



**Adriana Sevahn Nichols** (Playwright) is delighted to return to Chicago where her critically acclaimed solo show, *Taking Flight*, was a hit at the Goodman's 2008 Festival Latino. Her work has been developed and performed at the Sundance Theater Lab, South Coast Repertory, Mark Taper Forum, Kirk Douglas Theatre, Golden Thread Productions, Lark Play Development Center, LA Theatre Works, Stages Theatre, The Fountain, and INTAR. She is the recipient of the 2008 Middle East America Distinguished Playwright Award, a San Diego Theatre Critics Circle Award, Los Angeles Women's Theatre Festival Award, and is a finalist for the upcoming William Saroyan Playwright's Prize. Her plays have been published by Samuel French, Smith & Kraus, and Northwestern Press. As an actress, her TV credits include *Law & Order*, *The Unit*, *Sex & The City*, and *Law & Order: Criminal Intent*. Theatre credits include work at SCR, Public Theatre, Boston Court, Goodman, Shakespeare & Co., Yale Rep, Classic Stage Company, and ACT. She has taught workshops

nationally and internationally, at ORRAN center for at risk youth in Yerevan, Armenia, Goodman, CalArts, UCSB, and mentored girls living in group homes through personal myth-making workshops. She is currently working on her new play, *Running On Roller Skates*. For my family with love.



**Lisa Portes** (Director) is happy to return to Silk Road Rising where she most recently directed the staged reading of *Calligraphy* by Velina Hasu Houston. Recent credits include *Highway 47* by KJ Sanchez (Yo Solo Festival), *The Piano Teacher* by Julia Cho (Next Theatre), *Barrio Grrrl* by Quiara Alegria Hudes (Chicago Playworks), the world premieres of *Ghostwritten* (Goodman Theatre) and *After a Hundred Years* (Guthrie Theatre) both by Naomi Iizuka, *Ski Dubai* by Laura Jacqmin and *Spare Change* by Mia McCullough (Steppenwolf Theatre, First Look), *Elliot, A Soldiers Fugue* by Quiara Hudes (Teatro Vista and Rivendell Ensemble), *Permanent Collection* by Thomas Gibbons (Northlight Theatre), *In the Blood* by Suzan-Lori Parks and *Far Away* by Caryl Churchill (Next Theatre), and *Wilder* by Erin Cressida Wilson and the Red Clay Ramblers (Playwrights Horizons). Lisa Portes has developed new American plays at The Vineyard Arts Project, Victory Gardens Sundance Summer Theatre Lab, Eugene O'Neill Playwrights Conference, Steppenwolf Theatre, Goodman Theatre, the Public Theatre, New York Theatre Workshop, South Coast Repertory Theatre, the Kennedy Center, and McCarter Theatre. Lisa Portes heads the MFA Directing Program at The Theatre School at DePaul University. Upcoming work includes *Concerning Strange Devices from the Distant West* by Naomi Iizuka at Timeline Theatre this winter.

**Matthew McMullen** (Stage Manager) is excited to be working for Silk Road Rising! Matthew McMullen's stage management credits include Paramount Theatre's *Route 66*, Goodman Theatre's *RED*, Provision Theater Company's *The Foreigner*, *Shadowlands*, and *Godspell*, and the Huron Playhouse's *Kiss Me Kate*, *Nunsense-The Mega Musical*, and *Leading Ladies*. In addition, he works part time as a Lighting/Rigging Supervisor at McCormick Place, and has toured North America and Latin America as an Assistant Electrician with Disney on Ice. Matthew McMullen would like to thank Missy for her love and support. Proud Equity member.

**Caitlin Duerinck** (Production Manager) is thrilled to be working with Silk Road Rising again! This is her second main stage production with Silk Road Rising, where she previously worked on *Re-Spiced*. Other credits include house management for Silk Road Rising's summer staged readings and a large variety of technical roles at Saint Mary's College. Caitlin Duerinck holds a BA in Writing and a BFA in Sculpture from Saint Mary's College. She is currently pursuing a Masters degree in Arts Management from Columbia College.

**Kyle Kevin Gettelman** (Technical Director) is pleased to join Silk Road Rising for his first production with the company. His recent Technical Director credits include *Merchant of Venice*, *Turn of the Screw*, and *Tea at Five* for First Folio Theatre; and *Heddatron* as part of the 2011 Steppenwolf Theatre Garage Rep, and *Theories of the Sun* for Sideshow Theatre Company. Kyle Kevin Gettelman is currently Technical Director for the Theatre Department at North Central College in Naperville and holds an MFA from the University of Virginia.

**Lee Keenan** (Scenic Designer and Artistic Associate) has called Silk Road Rising home since 2006. Scenic designs include *Back of the Throat*, *Golden Child*, *Merchant on Venice*, *Caravaggio*, *Silk Road Cabaret*, *Our Enemies*, *Yohen*, and *The DNA Trail*. Lee has also designed scenery for Collaboration, The Hypocrites, and The House Theatre of Chicago, where his is also a company member. His lighting designs have appeared at Court Theatre, Griffin, House, Lookingglass, Chicago Shakespeare, Steppenwolf, Circle, Next, Eclipse, Baliwick, The Building Stage, and 500 Clown.

**Sarah Hughey** (Lighting Designer) designed lights for Silk Road Rising's *Yellowface* and *Scorched* (2011 Jeff Award for Lighting Design). Other Chicago credits include House Theatre of Chicago, Writers' Theatre, Northlight Theatre, Chicago Children's Theatre, Chicago Dramatists, Fox Valley Rep, Griffin Theatre, Lifeline Theatre, The Gift, A Red Orchid Theatre, Lookingglass, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Steep Theatre. Sarah Hughey earned her MFA from Northwestern and teaches at Northwestern and Columbia College Chicago.

**Peter J. Storms** (Sound Designer and Composer) would like to thank you for supporting live theater. Previously at Silk Road Rising, Peter J.



Storms sound designed *Yellowface* and *Scorched*, for which he received a 2011 Joseph Jefferson Equity Award for Outstanding Sound Design. His sound design and music direction have also been heard at Circle, Noble Fool Theatricals, Theatre Building Chicago, Raven, and TimeLine, among others. He serves as the accompanist for Unity Temple in Oak Park and is the touring keyboardist for Michael Londra and Beyond Celtic. Special thanks to Juliana for her love and support. [www.peterstorms.com](http://www.peterstorms.com)

**Jesse Gaffney** (Props Designer) is happy to be back at Silk Road Rising. Elsewhere in the Chicago area she has worked with 16th Street, Immediate Family, Congo Square, Lifeline, Chicago Children's, Apple Tree, and Noble Fool Theatre Companies, among others. Outside of Chicago Jesse Gaffney has worked for Allenberry Playhouse in Pennsylvania, Stages St. Louis, and The Arrow Rock Lyceum. You can follow her work on her blog at [www.theatreprojects.blogspot.com](http://www.theatreprojects.blogspot.com). Thanks and love to Warwick.

**Elsa Hiltner** (Costume Designer) is delighted to be working with Silk Road Rising on *Night Over Erzinga*. Favorite Chicago theatre credits include Signal Ensemble Theatre, Walkabout Theater, First Folio Theatre, Eclipse Theatre, Collaboration, and Teatro Vista. Regional credits include Next Act Theatre (Milwaukee), Balagan Theatre (Seattle), and Book It Repertory Theatre (Seattle). Elsa is a company member of Collaboration and an artistic associate of First Folio Theatre. Recently, Elsa Hiltner was living in the Middle East studying costume history. For more information about her designs please visit [www.elsahiltner.com](http://www.elsahiltner.com).

**Neal Ryan Shaw** (Dramaturg) is thrilled and grateful to continue working with Silk Road Rising. Previous productions include *Re-Spiced*, *Yellowface*, and *Scorched*. He has also worked with A-Squared Theatre Workshop as a writer on *My Asian Mom*, Fifth House Ensemble as writer of *In Transit: #iwtiness*, and Halcyon Theatre as dramaturg on *Family Devotions*. Neal Ryan Shaw is a member of the Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas and holds an MA from Illinois State University. Visit [nealryanshaw.com](http://nealryanshaw.com) for more information.

**Eva Breneman** (Dialect Coach) has numerous Chicago credits, including *Immediate Family* (Goodman), *The March* (Steppenwolf), *Elizabeth Rex* and *The Madness Of King George* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Eastland* and *The Great Fire* (Lookingglass), *Angels in America* (Court), *The Caretaker* (Writer's Theatre), *The History Boys* (Timeline), and *The Light in the Piazza* (Theo Ubique, Jeff Award for Dialect Coaching). Other credits include *Mamma Mia!* (National Tour; Las Vegas). Television credits include *The Chicago Code* (Fox) and *The Beast* (A&E). Eva Breneman is an Associate Artist at Timeline Theatre and a Production Affiliate of Lookingglass Theatre.

**Becca McCracken** (Casting Director) has worked with Silk Road Rising on *The DNA Trail*, *Yellowface*, *Scorched*, and *Re-Spiced*. Other regional credits include American Blues, Asolo Rep, Clarence Brown Theatre, Cleveland Playhouse, Fox Valley Rep, Guthrie Theater, Indiana Rep, Jupiter Theatre, Kansas City Rep, Madison Rep, Milwaukee Rep, New Theatre, Shattered Globe, Syracuse Stage, and Writers' Theatre. Other theatre credits include *How To Train Your Dragon*, *Working*, *Peter Pan The Show*, *Doyle & Debbie Show*, as well as the Tony Award Winning musical *Million Dollar Quarter*, and *Shouboat* for the Lyric Opera of Chicago. She is a proud member of the Jeff Committee and a director at Simon Casting.

**Azar Kazemi** (Assistant Director) most recently directed *Crave* by Sarah Kane at The Blind Owl, where she also serves as the founding artistic director. Last winter she directed the midwest premiere of *Jack's Precious Moment* by Samuel D. Hunter at Will Act For Food. She is a graduate of DePaul University's MFA directing program and has worked at Victory Gardens, Next Theatre, and Chicago Shakespeare Theatre. Azar Kazemi has also assisted Ethan Hawke on two Off-Broadway productions. This fall she will direct the world premiere of *Something Blue* by Julie Proudfoot at Artemisia.

**Hillary Gibson** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a proud graduate of Bowling Green State University, where she holds a degree in Technical Design and Acting/Directing. Stage Management credits include *Leap Fest 9* (Stage Left), *The Boys Next Door* (Metropolis), *Dream of a Common Language* (Prologue), *Disney's Beauty and the Beast* (3B

Productions), *The North Plan* (Theatre Witt, as Assistant Stage Manager), and *Andrew's Brothers* (Metropolis, as ASM). Company Management credits include Northern Stage, WV Public Theatre (as Assistant Company Manager), and Florida Studio Theatre (as ACM). Thanks to friends and family!

**Kristen P. Ahern** (Assistant Costume Designer) is excited to work with Silk Road Rising for the first time! Some of her favorite credits include *Floyd Collins* (Bohemian Theatre Ensemble), *The Art of Dining* (Dominican University), and *The Fever Chart* (Eclipse Theatre Company). Kristen P. Ahern also manages the costume shop at Dominican University. She would like to thank Elsa for launching her career in the Chicago theatre community two years ago; she would not be here without her mentorship. For more information, see [www.behance.net/kristenp](http://www.behance.net/kristenp).

**Penka Kouneva** (Composer) is a Sundance Fellow and Hollywood film composer. She scored the video games *Prince of Persia: Forgotten Sands* and *Transformers '09*, and also orchestrated on *Pirates of the Caribbean 3*, *Angels and Demons*, and *The Matrix*. In 1990 she received Duke University graduate fellowship. Her blues musical *John Henry and the Shaker* was produced at Ford Theater in 2002. Penka Kouneva's awards include two Ovation Awards, Platinum Remi, Aaron Copland Award, and Meet the Composer Fellowship. She just released an instrumental album, *A Warrior's Odyssey*.

**Lara Kalayjian** (Choreographer) is a graduate of Loyola University, Chicago. She currently teaches English at The College of Chicago in Mount Prospect, and High School District 211 in Palatine. Having performed in Armenian folk dance groups their whole lives, she and her brother, Karnig Kerkonian, created the Armenian Dance Company of Chicago in 2008. Their 2010 debut performance *Vank, A Tribute to the Armenian Quarter in Jerusalem* proved a huge success! Lara Kalayjian believes that Armenian dance has allowed these young people the opportunity to fulfill their Armenian spirit and recognize their true identities.

**Rebecca Cagney** (Wardrobe Supervisor) is excited to be working at Silk Road Rising for the first time. Chicago shows include *Symmetry Breaking* (On the Spot Theatre), *Interrogation*

*Primer* and *Through the Middle Ground* (the side project), *Shadowlands* (Provision Theatre), and *Low Pay Don't Pay* (Piccolo Theatre). Rebecca graduated from the University of Wyoming where she worked on shows such as *Hamlet*, *Into the Woods*, *A Chorus Line*, and many more. She would like to thank her family for their continued support.

**Corey Pond** (House Manager) is a recent graduate from Illinois State University where he studied theatre with an emphasis on directing. Since beginning work with Silk Road Rising, Corey Pond has assistant directed *Re-Spiced*, staged managed a few staged readings, and house managed two productions. Most recently, he was the dramaturg for *Savage Land* by Josh Nordmark, produced by Nothing Special Productions.

**Al Gillani** (I.T. and Box Office Manager) is proud to assist Malik and Jamil in managing Silk Road Rising's information technology needs and the theatre's box office functions. Al Gillani enjoys learning about and applying I.T. functionality. This year, he will be helping the theatre move to a cloud platform. He loves talking to patrons and hopes you'll be calling soon to buy SRR's three-play 2013 subscription!

**Sarah Ibis** (Program Editor) is happy to be working with Silk Road Rising once again! Previously, Sarah Ibis has been house manager, program editor, and an understudy for Silk Road Rising. She has appeared in many stage productions in the Chicago area, but is now relocated to the Los Angeles area. Thanks to Jamil, Malik, Sean, and Samuel for the opportunity to work from the best office ever: home.

**Melissa Rose** (Child Wrangler) is a graduate of Indiana University with degrees in Arts Management and Stage Management. She is thrilled to be back in the Midwest after spending a year in Vermont with Northern Stage. Last December, Melissa Rose had the privilege of working with twelve young actors playing the orphans in *Annie*, and she's excited to work with young actors again. When she's not backstage or working in arts administration, She enjoys practicing bikram yoga, running, and exploring the windy city.

# ARTISTIC RUMINATIONS

by Jamil Khoury, Founding Artistic Director

*Our strength is our quickness and our brutality. Genghis Khan had millions of women and children hunted down and killed, deliberately and with a gay heart. History sees in him only the great founder of States. What the weak Western European civilization alleges about me, does not matter. I have given the order—and will have everyone shot who utters but one word of criticism—that the aim of this war does not consist in reaching certain geographical lines, but in the enemies' physical elimination. Thus, for the time being only in the east, I put ready my Death's Head units, with the order to kill without pity or mercy all men, women, and children of the Polish race or language. Only thus will we gain the living space that we need. Who still talks nowadays of the extermination of the Armenians?*

The above quote is attributed to Adolf Hitler. While some historians insist the quote is authentic and others believe it to be a fabrication, the final question it poses, “Who still talks nowadays of the extermination of the Armenians?” remains, to this day, tragically relevant. It is estimated that in the period between 1915 and 1923, as the Ottoman Empire collapsed and Turkish nationalism birthed the modern Republic of Turkey, over one and a half million Armenians were brutally killed through systematic campaigns of massacres, death marches, mass rapes, decapitations, and forced starvation. Over a million additional Armenians were forcibly expelled from their ancestral towns and villages. Over two thirds of Armenia was annexed to Turkey.

According to the World English Dictionary, genocide is “the policy of deliberately killing a nationality or ethnic group.” What happened to the Armenians was genocide. The perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide were primarily ethnic

Turks and Kurds. It is important to note that official representative bodies of the Kurdish people have acknowledged both the Armenian Genocide as well as Kurdish culpability in this great human tragedy. The government of Turkey, on the other hand, officially denies that the Armenian Genocide ever occurred and actively prosecutes citizens who demand Turkey's recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

My father is originally from Syria; we are Syrian Christians. Ottoman Turks also persecuted my ancestors, though not nearly to the extent of the Armenians. Many in today's global Syrian Christian Diaspora trace their exodus from Syria to the discrimination and cruelty suffered under Ottoman rule. But my connection to the Armenian Genocide and the Armenian people runs deeper than a shared antagonist. Syria opened its lands to tens of thousands of Armenians who fled the Genocide. In fact, Syria, and what was later to become Lebanon, helped save the Armenian people from extinction. I am deeply proud to be connected to that history. Many of those Armenians made Syria their home and remain there to this day. As a Syrian American, I am enormously grateful for the many contributions that Syria's Armenian community has made to Syrian society, to Syria's cultural and economic development, and to the rich fabric of Syria's ethnic and religious mosaic. Although Syria today is mired in tragedy and unspeakable violence, the truth remains that Syria has been greatly enriched by its Armenian community. I believe I speak for many Syrians when I express my affection and appreciation for that community.

But commitment demands more than affection. I stand in solidarity with the Armenian nation in demanding that the government of Turkey recognize the Genocide. In fact, we want the entire world community to recognize the Genocide. Healing and reconciliation between Armenians and Turks can only truly begin once

Turkey admits to its past crimes. Turkey is big enough and strong enough and secure enough to own its own history, both the glory and the shame. All countries should. Turkey will be a greater nation for doing so. For just as there are Armenians who do not want their identity distilled through the prism of victimhood, it is also unfair to distort Turkish identity through the prism of past brutality. Every human tragedy produces villains and heroes and it is important that we not diminish or deny the heroism of the many Turks and Kurds who resisted this horrific onslaught. We need to recognize and honor all those brave Turkish intellectuals and writers and artists and dissidents and ordinary citizens who at great personal risk have stepped forward and declared, “Yes, indeed, there was an Armenian Genocide.” We need to remember and pay tribute to the “Turkish Schindlers”: Turks who risked life and limb to not only hide and protect Armenians, but to help Armenians escape their Turkish tormentors. We cannot change the past, but we can build a new era in Armenian-Turkish relations, one that is healthy and enterprising. But first, we must acknowledge and atone for the past.

I have traveled to Turkey twice. I have dear Turkish friends. In fact, as a tourist and a history buff, I love Turkey! More so, as a theatre artist and a theatre producer, I want to work with theatre professionals in Turkey. If we believe in the transformative power of theatre, then let us build a 21<sup>st</sup> century Ottoman Theatre right in the heart of Istanbul that serves theatre artists and theatre goers from all the parts of the former empire: Armenians, Albanians, Arabs, Assyrians, Bosnians, Bulgarians, Circassians, Cypriots, Greeks, Gypsies, Jews, Kurds, Romanians, Serbs, and of course, Turks! Who better than artists to build bridges out of grievances? Throw in English subtitles and the place would be golden!

And it is precisely that desire to evolve, to move beyond our inherited pain and inherited enemies that brings us to *Night Over Erzinga*. If the recorders of catastrophe are its survivors, then the orators of survival are their descendants. Genocide may reside in the narrative DNA of *Night Over Erzinga* but *Night Over Erzinga* is not

a genocide play. There is no hope and redemption in genocide, only horror and death. Humanity is found in living and loving and building families. By sharing the story of three generations of Armenians, Dominicans, and Americans, stories of dancers, singers, actors, writers, entrepreneurs, bakers, and homemakers, playwright Adriana Sevahn Nichols is sharing her heart. And it is from the heart that great stories emerge.

These past few years I have had the distinct privilege of watching Adriana Sevahn Nichols evolve as both a storyteller and a truth seeker. The proof is in the pudding, as they say, and pudding is sublime! Adriana Sevahn Nichols' set out to discover her own family's history, and to honor their many sacrifices and triumphs. She also set out to weave a whole new stitch in the Armenian embroidery by chronicling yesterday and imagining tomorrow. But if the soul of *Night Over Erzinga* is Armenian, its spirit is undoubtedly American, as channeled by an Armenian Basque Dominican American playwright! I believe *Night Over Erzinga* makes an invaluable contribution to our literature and theatre. In its many threads lies the tapestry that is America. Perhaps this is because *Night Over Erzinga* is ultimately Adriana's story. And therein we find its exquisiteness and heart. Adriana understands that in seeking truth one must channel memory and consciousness and knowledge and courage. When the truth is painful, the seeker must experience the pain, actually *feel* the pain. Adriana also understands that storytelling transforms truth, enriches truth with passion and creativity, subjectivity and self. “The truth will set you free” is so much more than mere cliché for Adriana Sevahn Nichols. It is her road map.



## More Than Survivors: Armenia's People

If anyone knows the least bit about Armenia, that bit likely has to do with the tragic genocide committed by the Ottoman Empire during the First World War. The importance of that event notwithstanding, Armenia's history goes back to ancient, pre-Biblical times, back to when its people referred to themselves as the "Hayk", when it became the first nation to officially adopt Christianity as a national religion, and subsequently survived invasion and conquest time and again. If any one idea can be taken from studying the history of Armenia, it is the tenacity of its people to persist in the face of numberless adversities, challenges, and threats.

### The Lands of Armenia

Although the modern Republic of Armenia is quite small, historic Armenia enjoyed dominion over a region in Eastern Europe ten times the nation's current size, stretching from between Iran and Asia Minor, to between the Transcaucasian plains and the Mesopotamian plains. A characteristically mountainous land, historic Armenia was also where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers begin.

In the first century B.C., Tigranes the Great created a united Armenian Empire, only to be conquered by the Roman general Pompey. Later, Rome and Persia partitioned the Armenian lands between them. Byzantium then conquered and ruled Armenia, followed by various Islamic caliphates. Centuries on, Armenia suffered invasions by the Seljuk Turks, Genghis Khan, and the Turkish ruler Timur.

Beginning around the fifteenth century, the lands of Armenia were controlled by the Ottoman Empire in the west and the Persian Empire in the east. Russia took over the Persian-controlled territories in the nineteenth century. Yet through all of this turmoil, the character of the Armenian people survived.

### Religion

The Armenian spirit has no doubt endured its many hardships thanks to an identity strongly rooted in the Christian faith. Armenia has the distinction of being

the first state to adopt Christianity—in 301 A.D.—as its official religion. Indeed, the Church is a major aspect of Armenian culture and the most significant part of the nation's identity. Members of other religions and Christian denominations are also represented in Armenia, although to a much lesser extent. Today the Orthodox Armenian Apostolic Church is the nation's official church, although in 1991 the republic passed the Law on Freedom of Conscience, effectively establishing the separation of church and state.

The country's strong Christian faith has nevertheless been a source of contention over the years. Under the Soviets, the practice of religion was discouraged in favor of atheism. More memorably, Armenians' Christianity made them second-class citizens in the eyes of the Ottoman rulers, who were Muslim.

### Language

Armenian is an Indo-European language that bears Greek, Latin, Persian, Arabic, and Turkish influences. Its alphabet, which is modeled after Greek and Persian characters, contains 38 symbols and was invented by Mesrob, a monk, around 400 A.D.

The language includes two standardized forms, Western and Eastern. Western Armenian survives from the Ottoman reign and is mainly spoken in the Diaspora, whereas Eastern Armenian developed in the Caucasus mountains, and since the genocide has been stripped of its Turkish influences. Eastern Armenian is spoken both within Armenia and around the world, and is the de facto language of the Republic.

### Genocide

Armenians living in the Ottoman Empire were second-class citizens. Protests for equal rights were met with massacre: 100,000 to 300,000 Armenians were murdered by the sultanate between 1894 and 1896. Turkish-Armenian relations faced another turning point when the Committee of Union and Progress, colloquially known as the Young Turks, took control of the Ottoman government in 1913. The Young Turks would implement reforms that were highly radical, ultra-nationalistic, and unapologetically xenophobic. Hoping to turn the Ottoman Empire into a singularly Turkish nation, the Young Turks set about the expulsion and extermination of

its Armenian population, whose Christianity and suspected ties to Russia made them apparent threats.

In order to succeed in establishing and expanding a purely Turkish nation, the Young Turks needed to take back the control of its Armenian-populated territories. The war in Europe was the perfect excuse to drive into Russia, which held lands the Young Turks desired and which also contained a significant Armenian population. While the goal was to deport the Armenians, the Turks began by murdering every Armenian soldier serving in the Turkish Army, thus mitigating the potential resistance. Then, in 1915, the Turks marched their Armenian subjects out of its lands and into Syria, starving, torturing and killing them along the way.

Prior to World War I, around two million Armenians lived in the Ottoman Empire. Over a million were deported; most of those were systematically murdered, while many others were simply left to die of starvation, dehydration and disease. The genocide resulted in one and a half million Turkish Armenian deaths. Thousands managed to flee to Russia, although this would turn out to be a mistake, as the Young Turks would go to war with Russia in 1918 in order to target the Russian Armenian population.

This is not to say that the Young Turks got off scot-free, however. In fact, word spread quickly about their plan to exterminate its empire's entire second class, with Great Britain, Russia and France officially warning the Turks in 1915 that they would be held accountable for their actions. Even so, the horrors endured until 1923. While individual members of the Young Turks were tried and convicted for their crimes, there has been no large-scale efforts toward restitution, nor has the Republic of Turkey recognized the genocide as having even occurred.

### Armenia Today and Armenians Abroad

Clearly unable to return to their homes, most of those Armenians who survived the genocide sought refuge in Western Europe and North America. Most who had remained in Turkey had been forced by their Turkish captors to convert to Islam, effectively losing their identities. An Armenian state was founded in 1918 under the USSR. In 1988, its citizens requested a reunification with the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh and demanded independence. The Republic of Armenia was formed on September 21, 1991.

Today roughly nine million Armenians exist, though this is a conservative estimate; some sources have the number closer to 10 or 11 million. Three million live

in the Republic, with over one and a half million in Russia and the rest of the former USSR and close to two million in North America. Sizable populations are also in Europe, the Middle East and Africa. Much smaller populations are found in South Asia and the Far East. No matter where they have settled, Armenians maintain strong ties to their cultural and ethnic roots. Armenian Diaspora community organizations foster relations with other Diaspora groups as well as with the homeland, ensuring that the Armenian spirit will continue to endure for generations to come.

### Timeline of Armenian History

**1st Century B.C.:** Tigranes the Great forms the first united Armenian Empire.

**301:** Armenia officially adopts the Christian religion.

**5th Century A.D.:** Mesrob invents the 38 character Armenian language.

**1894 to 1896:** The Hamidian Massacres kill 100,000 to 300,000 Armenians.

**1909:** The Turks in the province of Adana kill 30,000 Armenians.

**1913:** The Young Turks take control of the Ottoman Empire.

**1915:** The death marches begin, resulting in 1.5 million Turkish Armenian deaths. The Allied powers accuse the Young Turks of crimes against humanity.

**1918:** Armenia declares independence.

**1920:** The Treaty of Sevres recognizes Armenia as an independent state, but Russia soon conquers it.

**1922:** Armenia is incorporated into the Soviet Union.

**1988:** Armenians seek to reunite with the region of Nagorno Karabakh.

**September 21, 1991:** The Republic of Armenia gains its full independence.

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*Europe Since 1914: Encyclopedia of the Age of War and Reconstruction*

nationmaster.com

*Worldmark Encyclopedia of the Nations*

# LETTER FROM THE CO-FOUNDERS

by Malik Gillani and Jamil Khoury

*I should like to see any power of the world destroy this race, this small tribe of unimportant people, whose wars have all been fought and lost, whose structures have crumbled, literature is unread, music is unheard, and prayers are no more answered. Go ahead, destroy Armenia. See if you can do it. Send them into the desert without bread or water. Burn their homes and churches. Then see if they will not laugh, sing and pray again. For when two of them meet anywhere in the world, see if they will not create a New Armenia.*

-William Saroyan, Armenian American dramatist and author

If silence equals death and storytelling equals life, then that indomitable will to survive expressed so beautifully by William Saroyan affirms storytellers as a nation's life givers. The Armenian spirit that Saroyan animates, indestructible and regenerating, pays tribute to us all.

Yes, we are all Armenians! Yes, we all reside along the Silk Road! Yes, we are all storytellers! For it was in recognizing man's shared narratives that Silk Road Rising was born. And it was in experiencing how we, as Middle Eastern and Muslim Americans, were being cordoned off from those narratives that Middle East America: A National New Plays Initiative was born. If Middle Eastern Americans are to have a seat at the table, then the material to build that seat will be our stories.

The initiative emerged out of a tri-coastal partnership between San Francisco's Golden Thread Productions, New York City's Lark Play Development Center, and Chicago's Silk Road Rising. It was designed to encourage and support the development of Middle Eastern American playwrights writing Middle Eastern American plays, plays of

the highest artistic caliber that would enrich the canon of American theatre. The initiative provides a \$10,000 commission fee to an American playwright of Middle Eastern descent to write a new play. The emerging play then receives extensive development support at all three theatre companies, culminating in a rolling World Premiere at Golden Thread Productions and Silk Road Rising.

To date, two playwrights have received the Middle East America Distinguished Playwright Award: Adriana Sevahn Nichols for *Night Over Erzinga* and Yussef El Guindi for *The Mummy & the Revolution*. If any two writers put the distinguished in distinguished playwright, it's Adriana and Yussef!

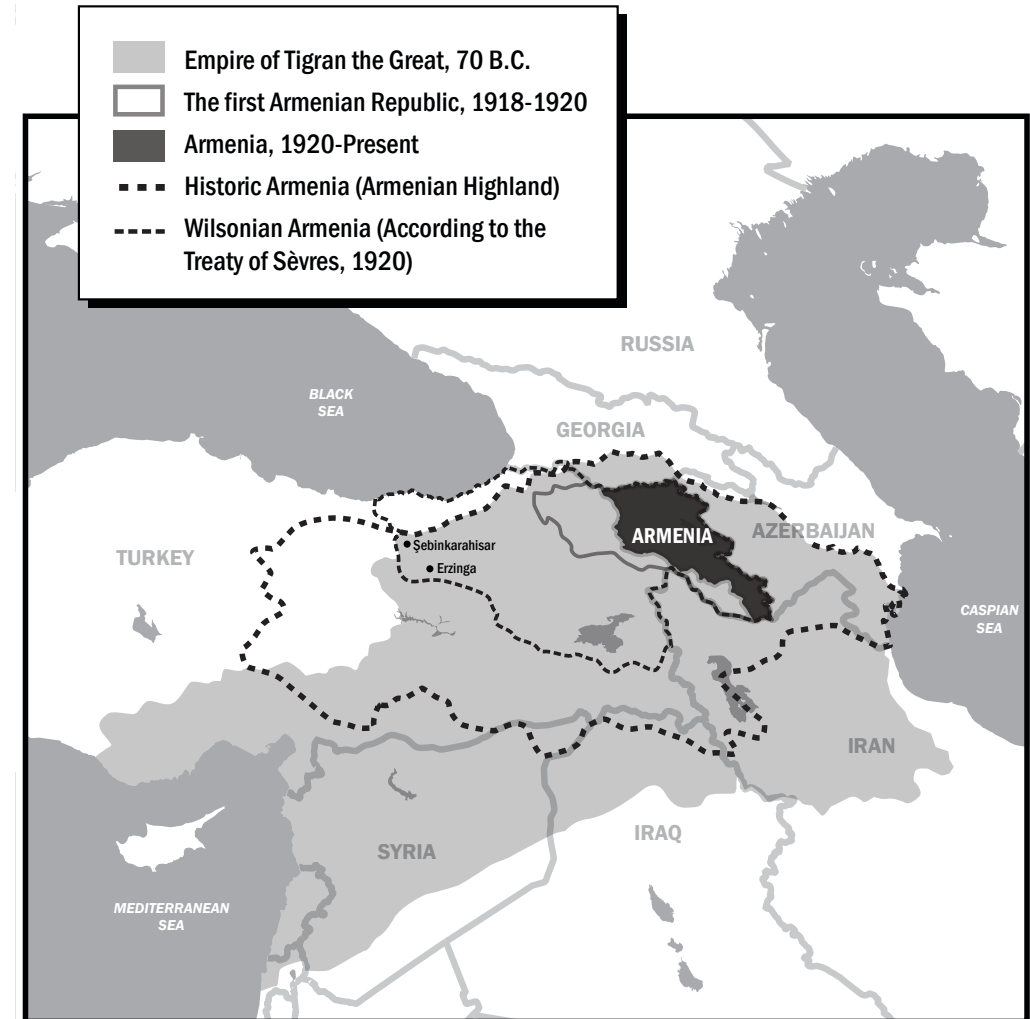
At last, *Night Over Erzinga* has arrived on our stage, and Middle East America has lived up to its promise. Our seat at the table is looking more like a throne!

As Proud as Any Two Dads Can Be,  
Jamil and Malik

## GO ADRIANA!

The Armenian Dramatic Arts Alliance (ADAA) has nominated playwright Adriana Sevahn Nichols as one of three finalists for its Third Biennial William Saroyan Prize for Playwriting Award for her play *Night Over Erzinga*. The \$10,000 Saroyan grand prize winner will be announced at an awards ceremony on Saturday, December 8, 2012, at California's Pasadena Playhouse.

## Armenia Throughout History



Map showing the shifting borders of Armenia throughout history. Erzinga and Şebinkarahisar are the home villages of the characters Ardavazt and Alice, respectively.



# INVITATION TO DIALOGUE

Thank you for attending *Night Over Erzinga*. We would like to extend this theatrical experience beyond our stage, and to learn more about your reactions to the play. We invite you to share your thoughts with us by posting them on our website at [www.silkroadrising.org](http://www.silkroadrising.org). We also hope that you will discuss the play with your family, friends, and colleagues.

Here are a few ideas of our own to get you started.

---

*Night Over Erzinga* raises a number of questions about narrative and history. Ava tells Benny that in America “you get to decide what to tell and show the world about who you are.” Alice tells the doctor that “you have to forget who you are to be free.”

- *In writing about yourself, what would be the focus of your story?*
- *How would you reconcile the past with the present?*
- *How would you connect with your ancestors or your family's history?*

---

*Night over Erzinga* is filled with unspeakable tragedy. Ardavazt asks Alice “If you cannot let the past die, then what good was it to have survived?” To which Alice responds, “what do you know of survival?...You witnessed none of it.” Obviously, for these characters, survival means different things.

- *What does survival mean to you?*
- *How does one not only survive, but thrive, in the face of such trauma?*

---

We look forward to hearing your thoughts on these questions and on any others that move you to speak, share, and interact!

---

## CONTACT SILK ROAD RISING

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# ABOUT SILK ROAD RISING

## MISSION

Silk Road Rising (formerly known as Silk Road Theatre Project) creates live theatre and online videos that tell stories through primarily Asian American and Middle Eastern American lenses. In representing communities that intersect and overlap, we advance a polycultural worldview.

## VISION

Silk Road Rising understands that cultures are inherently linked. We seek the intersection of cultures without denying the specificities of cultures. And we strive to create a world that values art over ideology and inquiry over dogma.

## ARTISTIC GOALS

1. To showcase playwrights of Asian and Middle Eastern backgrounds by staging productions and readings of their work.
2. To commission and develop new plays that will enrich the fabric of American storytelling.
3. To support Artistic Director Jamil Khoury in writing and producing online video plays, documentaries, and video essays.
4. To develop projects that advance civic engagement and public discourse.

## AN AMERICAN INSTITUTION

The Silk Road stretched from Japan to Italy. We're extending it to America.

In many respects, Silk Road Rising is a love letter to the United States of America. We know that the work we do and the issues we dramatize can only exist under the protections and guarantees of our country's First Amendment. We also know that in many nations along the Silk Road today, our voices would be censored, banned, or worse. We believe that the work of Silk Road Rising contributes to making America a better country for us all: a more inclusive country, a more just country, and a more peace loving country. The United States of America that we strive for is one in which peoples of all races and ethnicities, all religions, all genders, and all sexual orientations, regardless of socio-economic status, feel valued and loved.

## GET INVOLVED WITH SILK ROAD RISING

### DONATE

Be a part of the exciting things happening at Chicagoland's only theatre company dedicated to telling the stories of Asian and Middle Eastern peoples. Your tax-deductible contribution will support the production of our main stage season, as well as staged readings, new play commissions, community outreach, educational programs, and more. Check this program for a donation envelope, visit [www.silkroadrising.org](http://www.silkroadrising.org), or mail your donation to Silk Road Rising, 680 S. Federal Street, Suite 301, Chicago, IL 60605. Thank you!

### VOLUNTEER

As a community based arts organization, we look to community members in helping us fulfill our mission. Volunteers provide pro bono professional services in the areas of graphic design, social media marketing, public relations, and event planning, amongst other needs. Contact us today at [info@silkroadrising.org](mailto:info@silkroadrising.org) to learn about current volunteering opportunities.

### LEAD

Silk Road Rising's most active supporters can be found on our Board of Directors, a dynamic group of individuals dedicated to sustaining the mission and goals of this acclaimed young company. Others show their leadership by joining a steering committee or an honorary committee for our annual fund campaigns and benefit events. If you wish to discuss leadership opportunities at SRR, please contact Executive Director Malik Gillani at [malik@silkroadrising.org](mailto:malik@silkroadrising.org).

### RECEIVE

Get advance news about SRR's activities, productions and events from our e-newsletter. Send us an email at [info@silkroadrising.org](mailto:info@silkroadrising.org) or just stop by the Box Office—no spam or selling of lists, we promise!

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This project is partially supported by a CityArts grant from the City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events.

And by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.

## SPECIAL THANKS

To our gracious hosts at the **First United Methodist Church at The Chicago Temple**, who exhibit hospitality and generosity towards us on a daily basis, and provide us a space in which we can flourish and grow.

To **Carlos Murillo**, for his support.

To **Gary Rejebian**, **Aline DerAlexanian**, and **Nairee Hagopian**, our Armenian angels, for being such gracious and enthusiastic supporters of *Night Over Erzinga*.

To **Kernig Kekonian** and **Armenian Dance Company of Chicago**.

To **Matt Gorman**, for Gala photography.

To **Sydney Gorman**, for conducting Armenian community outreach while on her summer break!

To **Christina Wong**, for creating our Armenian community outreach brochures.

To **Jan and Aristides Inchaustegui**, **Alice Sterling**, **Adrena Clemmer**, **Daniella Topol**, **Maggie Goschin-Mangassarian** of the **Ararat Eskejian Museum**, **Pier Carlo Talenti** and the **2009 Mark Taper Forum Writer's Lab**, **Lark Play Development Center**, and **Golden Thread Productions**.



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## Sayat Nova

Sayat Nova restaurant is a small and cozy Armenian establishment where locals have been flocking for 40 years. Located just steps from Michigan Avenue in the heart of Chicago's thriving Streeterville neighborhood, Sayat Nova is a romantic family-run enclave tucked back from the city's urban sprawl. Armenian cuisine presents a slightly earthier variation on typical Mediterranean fare. This is dining the way the Ottoman Empire intended: timeless, authentic, and fiercely delicious.

## Catch 35 Chicago

Serving the freshest seafood, steaks and daily specials: the perfect prelude to a great performance. Catch 35 is now featuring the Special Pre-Fixe 3 Course Value Dinner for \$29.95. Business or pleasure, lunch or dinner, casual or dressy, join us any time you want a delectable dining experience. Show your electronic ticket confirmation to your server and the price of valet parking will be deducted from your guest check.

## Bella Bacino's

Chef Dan Bacin's motto is "Give me the Best." Bacino's provides the best--the best ingredients, the best meals, the best service, the best dining experience. This quality is what makes Chef Bacin one of Chicago's top chefs. Bacino's pizza is always hot, fresh, and fast. Italian food as it was meant to be: delicious!

## Comfort Suites

We encourage you to select the Comfort Suites Michigan Avenue, a gorgeous property located in Chicago's city center, steps from the Magnificent Mile, the theater district, fine dining restaurants, and all the best Chicago has to offer. The hotel has beautifully appointed oversized suites with some of the best views in Chicago.

## System Parking

System Parking, on the northeast corner of Washington and Franklin Streets, is the official parking lot sponsor of Silk Road Rising. To receive discounted parking, be sure to ask the box office manager to provide you with a discount coupon. Then, when exiting the parking lot, insert your ticket followed by the coupon into the charge machine at the parking lot. You will only be charged \$6 for your visit.



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FIRST UNITED  
**METHODIST**  
CHURCH  
THE CHICAGO TEMPLE

# Welcome!

Chicago's Oldest Church (b. 1831) is alive with new ideas!

*"Come and see..."*

There are many key words that describe this congregation. Words like these:

**URBAN.** From Day One, we have been in the heart of Chicago.

**DIVERSE.** Our staff is diverse - white and black, female and male, Asian and Caucasian. Our congregation is diverse, like the city itself. Our official Statement of Welcome and Inclusion makes it clear that "we welcome and encourage all persons, including persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities, in every aspect of our Christian life together."

**TRADITIONAL and CONTEMPORARY.** Our roots are in the Methodism of John and Charles Wesley, but our traditional services are enriched by music from classical, modern, Gospel and jazz sources.

**INTERFAITH and ECUMENICAL.** Each year the Temple hosts an interfaith Thanksgiving service, bringing together the city's broad spectrum of faith communities.

**GLOBAL.** "The world is my parish," said John Wesley. In that spirit our laypeople and clergy have been involved personally in mission projects in such countries as China, Ghana, Haiti and the Philippines.

**COSMOPOLITAN.** Our church hosts the award winning Silk Road Rising, the Chicago Humanities Festival, guest lecturers from National Public Radio, concerts and pre-election debates.



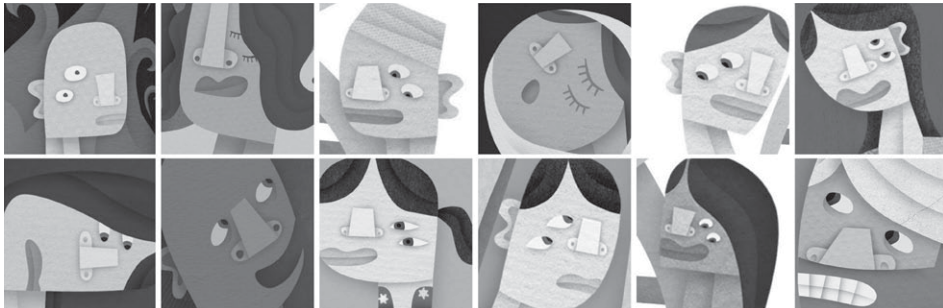
**Philip Blackwell**  
Senior Pastor  
First United Methodist Church  
at the Chicago Temple

**We invite you to come and see us at the Temple.**  
**You are more than welcome.**



**SUPPORT arts diversity!**

## MONTHLY CONTRIBUTIONS PROGRAM



Silk Road Rising contributes uniquely to Chicago's theatre community by focusing on the Asian American and Middle Eastern American experiences. Through becoming a monthly donor, your contribution will support these programs:

► **SEEK CIVIC ENGAGEMENT**

Our online arts and civic engagement programs encourage participants to seek new lenses through which to view our ever-changing American landscape.

► **EXPLORE ONLINE VIDEOS**

Our online video plays, documentary films, and video essays provide global access to stories and analyses that explore the human condition.

► **DISCOVER NEW PLAYS**

Enjoy world and regional premiere productions written by American playwrights of Asian and Middle Eastern backgrounds—and discover our shared humanity.

Join a select group of dedicated arts supporters by committing to one of the following monthly contributions program:

► **SEEKER: \$25/month** ► **EXPLORER: \$50/month** ► **DISCOVERER: \$100/month**

Sign up on our website at [silkroadrising.org/donate](http://silkroadrising.org/donate) or call Executive Director Malik Gillani at 312-857-1234 x202.

**VIEW online video plays!**

## THE BALANCING ARAB



Jamil Khoury's ***The Balancing Arab*** tells the story of Heidi (played by Leslie Frame), an Irish American personal fitness trainer, and Hanan (played by Amira Sabbagh), her once morbidly obese Arab American client. Set in a downtown Chicago gym amidst a strenuous training session, the mood turns tense as the two women recount an event at the Arab American Cultural Center a few nights earlier, an event at which the evening's political discourse got filtered through decidedly different lenses.

Visit [www.silkroadrising.org](http://www.silkroadrising.org)  
to view *The Balancing Arab*

[Video Length 00:15:00]

Free to view and easy to share!



## SUPPORT by example

### JUST LOOK AT THESE HAPPY PEOPLE!



They are members of our Board and Alumni Board—an amazing group of people who help Silk Road Rising reach new heights.

Is this the sign you've been waiting for?

Have you been wondering why you have a terrific job, a great skill set, a healthy bank account, tons of friends, and endless curiosity about our world? It's not an accident - the universe has been preparing you to serve on the Board of Silk Road Rising!

Let's be honest: running a nonprofit polycultural theatre company takes more than artists - it takes great business people who want to apply their experience to help us grow our company and create sustainable practices.

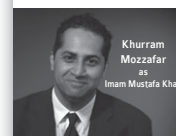
Call Executive Director Malik Gillani at 312-857-1234 x202 or email him at [malik@silkroadrising.org](mailto:malik@silkroadrising.org) to discuss your interest in helping change the world!



## CO-CREATE online!

### BECOME PART OF JAMIL'S NEW PLAY-IN-PROGRESS

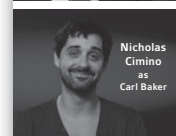
#### A PLAY BY JAMIL KHOURY MOSQUE ALERT



Khurram  
Mozzafar  
as  
Imam Mustafa Khan



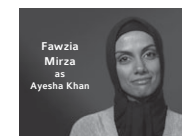
Don  
Bender  
as  
Charles Baker



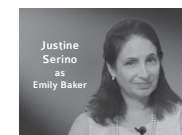
Nicholas  
Cimino  
as  
Carl Baker

**Mosque Alert** tells the story of two suburban American families living in Naperville, Illinois. One family's Christian, the Baker family, and the other family's Muslim, the Khan family. The Bakers and the Khans find their lives torn apart by a proposal to build a mosque in their community.

Join Silk Road Rising and playwright Jamil Khoury for this first-of-its-kind, eight step, online, interactive, new play development and civic engagement process. Be part of creating a brand new piece of theatre by engaging Jamil and all six of the *Mosque Alert* characters.



Fawzia  
Mirza  
as  
Ayesha Khan



Justine  
Serino  
as  
Emily Baker



Melissa  
Kong  
as  
Jennifer Baker

Visit [www.silkroadrising.org](http://www.silkroadrising.org) and click on *Mosque Alert* under ENGAGE.

Engage with Mosque  
Alert





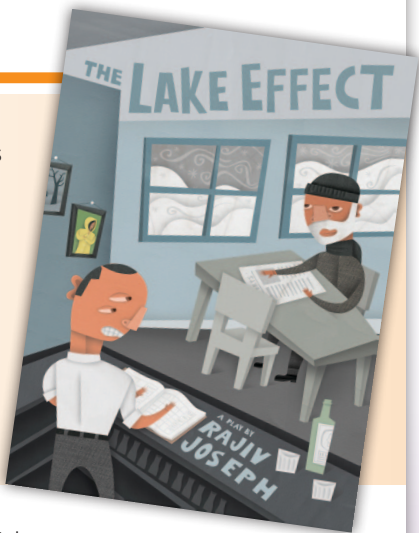
## SUBSCRIBE TODAY TO 2013 SEASON

### *The Lake Effect*

Written by Rajiv Joseph • Directed by Timothy Douglas

**April 23 - May 26, 2013**

In a depressed Cleveland neighborhood amidst a fierce winter storm, an Indian American brother and sister, long estranged, are reunited by the sudden death of their father. Enter their father's African American confidante and gambling bookie, and a slew of family secrets get unearthed. *The Lake Effect* sets in motion a complicated web of relationships and plot twists that challenge our perceptions of race, gender, and material success.



### *Invasion!*

Written by Jonas Hassen Khemiri • Directed by Anna Bahow

**July 30 - September 01, 2013**

*Invasion!* is a tornado of words, images and ideas, all centered around a magical name: Abulkasem. At once hilarious, disturbing and poignant, this deeply subversive play by Jonas Hassen Khemiri deconstructs a "threatening" identity while forcing us to confront the perplexities of our own "safety" zones.

### *PAULUS*

Written by Motti Lerner • Directed by Jimmy McDermott

**November 12 - December 15, 2013**

*Paulus* explores Paulus of Tarsus, the bridge of Christianity from a Jewish sect to a Gentile religion, and his vision to universalize monotheism in the face of strong opposition by the Jewish Establishment, the Jerusalem Church, and the Emperor Nero.

Season subscription is just \$99.

Flexible Tickets - buy subscription now, choose dates later!

Call 312-857-1234 x201 or buy online [www.silkroadrising.org](http://www.silkroadrising.org)