a play by FOUAD TEYMOUR TWICE, THRICE, FRICE...

THE WORLD PREMIERE OCTOBER 1–NOVEMBER 10, 2019 Written by FOUAD TEYMOUR Directed by PATRIZIA ACERRA





TWICE, THRICE, FRICE...

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THE WORLD PREMIERE

Written by FOUAD TEYMOUR Directed by PATRIZIA ACERRA

The use of cameras, video recorders, or audio recorders by members of the audience during the course of this production is strictly prohibited.

Silk Road Rising is proudly affiliated with:



CAST

Catherine Dildilian | Amira Marielle Issa | Samara Annalise Raziq | Khadija

PRODUCTION TEAM

Malik Gillani | Producer Jamil Khoury | Producer Corey Pond | Associate Producer Fouad Teymour | Playwright Patrizia Acerra | Director Andy Lynn | Production Manager S.G. Heller* | Stage Manager José Manuel Díaz-Soto | Set Designer **Noël Huntzinger** | Costume Designer Lindsey Lyddan | Lighting Designer Andrew Hopson** | Sound Designer and Composer Jonathan Berg-Einhorn | Props Designer **Jon Beal** | Fight Choreographer Marina J. Bergenstock | Assistant Director and Dramaturg Andrew Glasenhardt | Technical Director Jordan Affeldt | Assistant Stage Manager Allyson Leisure | Assistant Costume Designer **Tina El Gamal** | Understudy for Amira **Alyssa Fantel** | Understudy for Samara **Talia Langman** | Understudy for Khadija

Spencer Fritz | Wardrobe Supervisor Beth Albrecht | Scenic Painter Benjamin Carne | Master Electrician Al Gillani | Box Office Manager Julia Sears | Daytime Box Office Attendant Darby Fitzsimons | House Manager Kristin Mazzocca | House Manager Christian Walker | House Manager Phil Shayne | *The Saints* Coordinator Sarah Ibis | Program Book Editor Airan Wright | Press and Archive Photographer Alex Groesch, Butterfly Productions | Videographer

- * Member of Actors' Equity Association, the union of professional actors and stage managers in the United States.
- ** Member of United Scenic Artists, the union of professional designers, artists, and craftspeople.

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Thank you for supporting great art!

CAST BIOS



Catherine Dildilian

(Amira) is pleased to return to Silk Road Rising after performing in last season's *Through the Elevated Line*. She has also appeared in a number of staged readings at Silk

Road Rising, and as an understudy in *Mosque Alert* and *Night Over Erzinga*. Notably, she performed in the solo piece *Avenge Our Blood*, originating the roles of a young woman and her family escaping persecution during the Armenian Genocide. The play was written for her by David Finney and produced by Three Cat Productions. In Chicago, Catherine has worked with Court Theatre, Broken Nose Theatre, and several other companies, and has performed with the International Voices Project at Victory Gardens. Catherine holds a BA in theatre performance from Western Michigan University.



Marielle Issa (Samara) is a recent graduate of Northwestern University's theatre program. She is excited to be making her Chicago debut with Silk Road Rising! Previous credits include A

Chorus Line, The Orange Garden, The Cherry Orchard, Company, and The Waa-Mu Show (Northwestern University); The Sophie Scholl Project (New York Musical Festival); Marie in Tomorrowland (American Music Theatre Project); and Atlantic: A Scottish Story (Edinburgh Fringe Festival). For more, visit marielleissa.com.



Annalise Raziq (Khadija) runs the gamut! She is a three-time Moth Story Slam winner and had a story featured on the national storytelling show The Moth Radio Hour (available on

their podcast). She was a featured storyteller at Chicago Public Media's fundraising gala at the

Four Seasons. She has also told stories for Risk!, 80 Minutes Around the World, Story Jam, Story Sessions, the Boston Palestine Film Festival, the Arab American National Museum in Dearborn, and the Palestinians Podcast. She is pleased to have been part of the film Obstacle Course and the holiday show Christmas Mubarak with Silk Road Rising, and also recently played Amal Kafiz in the independent film Green Summer. She is a writer and an improviser, and used these skills to help create the show Sisters Rising with a group of formerly incarcerated women. Annalise also sings professionally in a variety of venues. Her solo show I Know A Place, a memory play with a live band onstage, was part of the Fillet of Solo Festival. But by far, her most creative act has been raising her amazing daughter Kalila Holt.



Tina El Gamal

(Understudy for Amira) is a Chicago based actor and theatre artist. She is delighted to be back at Silk Road Rising for the world premiere of Fouad Teymour's *Twice*,

Thrice, Frice... Tina is a graduate of University of Illinois at Chicago where she received her BFA degree in acting. Her recent credits include *Much Ado About Nothing* (Oak Park Festival Theatre), the Chicago premiere of *I Call My Brothers* (Interrobang Theatre Project), the world premiere of *Through the Elevated Line* (Silk Road Rising), and *florissant & canfield* (UIC Theatre). Tina is represented by NV Talent.



Alyssa Fantel (Understudy for Samara) is beyond excited to join Silk Road Rising for her Chicago debut. Alyssa has a BFA from the University of Oklahoma. Previous credits include *Actually*, *Twelfth*

Night, A Christmas Carol, Shakespeare's Other Women, Sylvia, Vinegar Tom, Stepping Out, The Trojan Women, and Everyman (University of Oklahoma); and Richard III (Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park), as well as various workshops and readings (Williamstown Theatre Festival). She is certified in unarmed stage combat with the Society of American Fight Directors. She is also an Equity Membership Candidate. Alyssa would like to thank the entire company and creative team for their warm welcome into the Chicago community, and her family and friends for their constant support. For more, visit AlyssaFantel.com.



Talia Langman (Understudy for Khadija) is thrilled to be working with Silk Road Rising. In Chicago, she has had the opportunity to perform with Organic Theater

Company, Strawdog Theatre

Company, City Lit Theater Company, Theatre-Hikes, and The Agency Theater. She has trained at Vagabond School of the Arts, The Green Room, and Black Box Studio. She has also trained at T. Schreiber Studio & Theatre in New York City. Originally from Seattle, Talia received a BA in biology from Brandeis University and an MFA in theatre from Sarah Lawrence College. Talia also spent two years in Nicaragua with the Peace Corps working as a health educator. When not on stage Talia works as a media and communications specialist for a Holocaust education program. Talia would like to thank her family, friends, amazing coworkers, and Ira Letchinger for their continued encouragement 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. Malik is a

recognized leader in the creation of innovative arts programming that expands artistic access. In the digital arena, he conceived of and developed Silk Road Rising's model for creating online video plays which are now being viewed across the globe. In the arts learning field, he established SRR's arts education program, Myths to Drama, which was heralded as one of the finest elementary school arts education programs in the Chicago Public Schools system. He also developed and piloted a new arts learning program for high school and middle school students in partnership with San Diego's Playwrights Project, called Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course (EPIC). In the field of creative placemaking, Malik has developed several multi-year community centered partnerships, most notably with Naperville, IL, working to be more welcoming and inclusive; and currently with the diverse community of West Ridge on Chicago's far northside, to infuse creative opportunities into a neighborhood long regarded as an "arts desert." Malik earned a BA degree in liberal arts from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, with an emphasis on the great books. He is a Kellogg Executive Scholar (Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University.) Malik also earned an MA degree in nonprofit administration from North Park University. Malik has been a grant panelist for CityArts, Illinois Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, Shakespeare in American Communities, and the Chicago Community Trust's Fellowship Program. He is the recipient of the IBM Business and Technology Leadership Award, the Changing Worlds Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts, and the Chicago Community Trust Fellowship Award. Malik is also recognized by Crain's Business Chicago as a "Notable LGBTQ Excutive" and by Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management with their "Excellent Executive Director" award.



Jamil Khoury (Producer) is Founding Artistic Director of Silk Road Rising. As a theatre producer, playwright, essayist, and filmmaker, Jamil's work focuses on Middle Eastern themes and questions

of diaspora. He is particularly interested in the intersections of culture, national identity, and citizenship, and has emerged as a national leader in the Middle Eastern American theatre movement. Jamil has been Playwright-in-Residence at the Joan Mitchell Center (New Orleans, LA), Tufts University (Boston, MA), Benedictine University (Lisle, IL), North Central College (Naperville, IL), Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, IN), and Knox College (Galesburg, IL.) His most recent play, Mosque Alert, received its world premiere at Silk Road Rising in the spring of 2016. It has since been translated into German, Russian, and Arabic. The German translation was performed in Hamburg, Germany, and the Russian translation was performed in Moscow and St. Petersburg, Russia. Jamil holds an 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 is a Kellogg Executive Scholar (Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University) and has been awarded a Certificate of Professional Achievement in Nonprofit Management. Jamil is the 2017 recipient of The University of Chicago Diversity Leadership Alumni Award, the 2015 recipient of the Community Leader Award from the Association for Asian American Studies, the 2013 recipient of the Kathryn V. Lamkey Award from Actor's Equity Association for promoting diversity and inclusion in theatre, the 2013 recipient of the ChangeMaker Award from South Asian Americans Leading Together, the 2010 recipient of the 3Arts Artist Award for Playwriting, and the 2003 recipient of the After Dark Award for Outstanding New Work (Precious Stones.)



Corey Pond (Associate Producer) has been with Silk Road Rising since *Yellow Face* in 2011, where he began as a house manager. Corey is a director, dramaturg, and avid baker. He holds a BA in theatre

from Illinois State University where his studies concentrated on directing but also explored theater management and dramaturgy. Recent work with Silk Road Rising includes directing and adapting *Christmas Mubarak*, co-curating *Staging the Stans*, *New China Festival*, and *Semitic Commonwealth*, and script dramaturgy for *Obstacle Course*.



Fouad Teymour

(Playwright) is a Chicagobased Egyptian American playwright. As an associate artist of Silk Road Rising and a board member for International Voices Project

(IVP), he is thrilled to be working with both organizations on this co-production of his play Twice, Thrice, Frice... The world premiere of his play Blue Fish in a Tall Clear Vase was produced in 2017 at Three Cat Productions, where he had previously collaborated on The Other Side of Christmas (2016), and Holiday Stories (2015), and where his play An Afternoon with My Mother (2015) was featured in the Chicago New Work Festival. Two of his plays, Twice, Thrice, Frice ... and The Night Jesus Joined the Revolution, have received staged readings at Silk Road Rising, where he also collaborated on several projects including Mosque Alert, The Four Hijabs, Christmas Mubarak, and Obstacle Course. His translation of Ahmed Serag's The Castle and the Sparrow (Arabic) was performed at International Voices Project in 2014 and published in June 2015 by Dar Ibda'a (Egypt.) He has directed staged readings of two plays by Syrian playwright Mohamed Al-Attar. Twice, Thrice, Frice ... was part of the Crescent and Star Staged Reading Series at Silk Road Rising (August 2017), the New American Voices Series at Queens Theater, New York (October 2018), and a semifinalist for the Bay Area Playwrights Festival (2018.) Fouad is grateful for all sources of input during the development process, especially from director Kareem Fahmy, playwright Dana Lynn Formby, director Tracy Cameron Francis, and all the actors who participated in readings. Lately, Fouad has been passionately focused on the culturally accurate portrayal of Muslim and Arab characters in Chicago productions. In that vein he has collaborated with several Chicago theaters, as cultural consultant, panelist, or workshop guest. Fouad Teymour is a professor of engineering at Illinois Institute of Technology.



Patrizia Acerra (Director) is a stage director and producer with three decades of playmaking in the USA, Italy, and beyond. As founder and executive director of the International Voices

Project (IVP), she produces and directs a festival of new plays from around the globe read and performed in translation. Patrizia holds an MA in communications, an MA in pastoral studies and is currently writing her PhD dissertation focusing on the important history of AIDS drama in Chicago 1980-1996. In addition, Patrizia works as an educator, teaching courses in creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship at DePaul University. Favorite theatre projects include The Sultan's Dilemma (Egypt), Oceano Mare/Ocean Sea (Italy), Cosi e? Se vi pare! (Italy), Einstein's Dreams (USA), Our Enemies (Silk Road Rising), and The Quiltmaker's Gift (IVP). Special thanks to Jamil, Malik, Corey, Andy, Fouad, and the wonderful artists here at Silk Road Rising. For more, visit www.ivpchicago.org.

S.G. Heller (Stage Manager) is happy to be back at Silk Road Rising after *Detour Guide* last season. Stephanie has lived in Chicago for more years that she'd like to admit. She is a resident stage manager at A Red Orchid Theatre, and has worked with (among others) Steppenwolf, Strawdog, Rte. 66, City Lit, Theater Wit, ShawChicago, Seanachai, Piven, Rivendell, European Repertory, Irish Repertory, A Crew of Patches, Shakespeare's Motley Crew, Bailiwick, About Face, and The Den.

José Manuel Díaz-Soto (Scenic Designer) is a native of Bayamón, Puerto Rico. José holds an MFA in scenic design from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, a BA in fine arts from the University of The Sacred Heart, and has credits towards another degree in drama from the University of Puerto Rico. José has been designing for drama, musical theater, and television for fifteen years. Recently completed projects include *Time Is on Our Side*, *The Explorer's Club* (Jeff Award Nominee), *The Madres, American Jornalero, Polaroid Stories, Between You, Me, and the Lampshade, RED*, and *Too Heavy for Your Pocket*. Musical Theater and Opera credits include *Burnham's Dream, Don Giovanni, Evita, Godspell, The Sound of Music, Les Misérables, Mary Poppins, Man of La Mancha, Don Pasquale, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Kiss Me Kate, Sister Act,* and *Legally Blonde.* In the fall of 2018 José became part of the faculty at UIUC as a scenic design professor. For more, visit www.josemanueldiaz.carbonmade.com.

Noël Huntzinger (Costume Designer) is a Chicago based freelance designer. She is a Sideshow artistic associate and a resident artist at Filament Theatre. Favorite theatre design projects include The Goodman Theatre, Chicago Lyric Opera Unlimited, Boise Contemporary Theatre, Filament Theatre, About Face Theatre, Pride Arts Theatre, Interrobang Theatre Ensemble, A-Squared, Muse of Fire, Shattered Globe Theatre, and Collective Theatre Ensemble. Noël is a design advisor at The DePaul Theatre School. In addition to theatre, she has designed pieces for choreographers such as Ginny Sykes, Wendy Clinard, the George Balanchine Trust, and the Antony Tudor Trust. Film design credits include Olympia and Cliff. Noël is a graduate of Oklahoma University. For more, visit www.noelhuntzinger.com.

Lindsey Lyddan (Lighting Designer) is excited to be back at Silk Road Rising! She has worked with theatres all over the city, including Haymarket Opera Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Steppenwolf Theatre, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Roosevelt University's Opera Program, Wheaton College Opera Program, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago Dramatists, and the Phoenix Theatre in Indianapolis. She received her MFA in lighting and scenic design from Northwestern University. She would love to thank her husband, Bill, for his support in all her endeavors. For more, visit lindseylyddandesign.com. Andrew Hopson (Sound Designer) is an associate professor of sound design in the department of theatre, drama, and contemporary dance at Indiana University. He has designed or written the scores for shows at such theatres as the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Utah Shakespearean Festival, Actors Theatre of Louisville, American Repertory Theatre, American Players Theatre, Cincinnati Playhouse, Pioneer Playhouse, Cleveland Play House, Victory Gardens, Harvard University, and the Indiana Repertory Theatre, where he was resident sound designer for five years. In 2004 his New York City debut, Trying, was rated one of the best off-Broadway shows of the year. In film, he has scored the documentaries Birth of Legends, The Battle of Comm Avenue, Hockey's Greatest Era 1942-1967, The Frozen Four, and Utah's Olympic Legacy. He has produced, engineered, or performed on more than 40 CDs, ranging from stories for children to collections of modern American piano works. He is a member of United Scenic Artists, local 829, and the United States Institute of Theatre Technology.

Jonathan Berg-Einhorn (Properties Designer) is a Chicago based designer and artisan. Jonathan has previously worked with companies such as Goodman Theatre, Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Paramount Theater, and Lookingglass Theatre. Scenic design projects include Alice in Wonderland, The ARC Trials (Mudlark Theatre); Curious George: The Golden Meatball (Hope Summer Repertory Theater); Brooke Astor's Last Affair (Chicago Musical Theatre Festival); The Seven Deadly Sins, Endgame (Boston University). Prop design projects include Haymarket (Underscore Theatre); Something Clean, Scientific Method, I Wanna Fucking Tear You Apart (Rivendell Theatre Ensemble); HeLa, The Ridiculous Darkness (Sideshow Theatre); Hannah and Martin (Shattered Globe Theatre); Johnny 10 Beers' Daughter (Something Marvelous); Elephant Man, Bomber's Moon (William Street Rep); I Know My Own Heart (Pride Films and Plays). Jonathan holds a BFA in scenic and costume design from Boston University. For more, visit Jonathanbergeinhorn.com.

Marina J. Bergenstock (Assistant Director and Dramaturg) is thrilled to work on a production that combines her love for new plays, strong women, and Middle Eastern voices! She is grateful for the opportunity. Marina is a director, dramaturg, and educator currently teaching at Beloit College in Wisconsin. Her favorite class to teach is Arab Theatre, a course she designed. She received her MFA in directing at the University of Iowa. She has trained with Anne Bogart and the SITI Company in New York City, the Kennedy Center Directing Lab, and the Chicago Director's Lab. You can see her directing work on stage at Beloit College this November. Favorite credits include Food and Fadwa, Men on Boats, and Below the Pacific. For more, visit www.MarinaBergenstock.com.

Andy Lynn (Production Manager) is a multidisciplinary artist and arts manager. His work centers on the pursuit of catalytic experiences that educate, empower, and connect societies for momentous personal and public growth. He is the production manager for both Silk Road Rising and Onye Ozuzu's *Project Tool.*

Jordan Affeldt (Assistant Stage Manager) is a stage manager and musician based in Chicago. She is thrilled to be doing her first show at Silk Road Rising. Favorite Chicago credits include *Pinocchio* and *Borealis* at The House Theatre of Chicago, and *Fuente Ovejuna* at City Lit Theatre Co. Before Chicago, she completed apprenticeships at regional theatres such Portland Center Stage at the Armory, Pacific Conservatory Theatre, and Shakespeare Theatre of New Jersey.

AGENCY, DIGNITY, AND INTEGRITY IN TWICE, THRICE, FRICE... By Jamil Khoury, Founding Artistic Director

Found Teymour has been attending plays at Silk Road Rising since 2007. I first got to know Fouad as part of an active group of theatre-goers affectionately referred to as "the Egyptians" (a group that includes at least one Armenian!) Along with his dear friends, and our cherished patrons, Omar Kahlil, Muhammad Eissa, and Effat Moussa, Fouad is a fixture in the Silk Road Rising community. His participation reveals a true renaissance man: an engaged audience member, an active company member (as an artistic associate), a cultural consultant, an advisor on Islamic practice and belief, an actor, and of course, a playwright. On top of that, Fouad has a day job. He's a professor of chemical engineering at the Illinois Institute of Technology!

It is on Fouad the playwright that I will focus, particularly in light of what he's created with this play. I should probably begin with a full disclosure. Starting with the TV show *Big Love* and continuing with *Three Wives, One Husband*, my husband Malik and I have become a bit obsessed with polygamous Mormons—I know, I know, the mainstream Mormon church disavows them. But they sure make for great storytelling! I think part of our appreciation for TV's "fundamentalist Mormons" is bound up in the fact that polygamous marriages, not unlike same-sex marriages (until recently, sort of) exist outside social sanction and the law, and are subject to negative scrutiny and prosecution. We can relate.

As another aside, I don't oppose *polyamory*. Who am I to tell people how to structure their relationships? I oppose *patriarchal polygamy*, with all its sexist and heterosexist dictates and tropes. As for those who do practice polygamy, perhaps we should be asking this: does the constitutional guarantee of freedom of religion extend to *their* religious conscience? Where does religious liberty begin and end? What are the implications of polygamy for women's friendships? Can gender justice and polygamy co-exist equitably? Are religious conservatism and feminism mutually exclusive? A lot to ponder, but important questions nonetheless.

Fouad asks us to open our minds and consider polygamy in his own faith tradition, Islam, a practice notably legal in most Muslim-majority countries, and regarded by many, though not all, Muslims to be a religious right. As for the Muslim American community, only a tiny number practice polygamy, albeit, with great discretion and secrecy and avoidance of the state. Numbers notwithstanding, it's the utility and the ethics of polygamy, in an American context, that *Twice, Thrice, Frice...* grapples with so intelligently.

I do think it's important to note that Fouad is a man who has written a play about women with agency, women with integrity. The three Arab Muslim women who comprise the world of his play are smart, funny, courageous, daring, and complicated. If society directs women to focus on the men in their lives, then these three women do so with an extraordinary sense of self, mindful of their needs, rights, and desires as women, and determined to uphold their dignity. Women who possess the power to navigate American culture, Arab culture, religion, family, and friendship are women who defy stereotypes and male caricatures. As someone who has been blessed to know "versions" of these women, they sure do ring authentic and true.

I hope you'll find *Twice, Thrice, Frice...* to be as moving, challenging, insightful, and humorous as I do. Three cheers for Fouad Teymour!

A HOT-BLOODED PLAY IN A HUMOROUS PACKAGE By Fouad Teymour, Playwright

Twice, Thrice, Frice... is dear to me because it is a play where I attempt to tackle big questions, sensitive contemporary critical issues, and old attitudes that we keep carrying without knowing why. Over the years, I have come to develop a passion for finding answers to challenging questions that emerge from community debates, especially those related to America's Muslim community's efforts to interpret and practice Islam within a modern American context. I have also grown tired of countless unrealistic portrayals of Arabs and Muslims on stage. This play is my humble attempt to introduce to you three Muslim women you could recognize as humans, complete with their flaws, sentiments, needs, and desires.

Conventional wisdom suggests that, when at a dinner party, one avoids discussing sex, religion, and politics. Not at an Arab dinner party! When we get together (as I am sure is also the case with many other cultures) we eat great food, we tell funny jokes, and we engage in endless heated debates about religion and politics—what I call a fun evening! It is through countless such debates that I first encountered the questions that inspired the play: Does a Muslim woman need to agree to her husband's right to polygamy in order for her to be considered pious? Does a Muslim man who marries two or more women do so with a peaceful mind? Or does he experience torment over the hurt he causes his first wife?

These ideas eventually crystallized into the first draft of *Twice, Thrice, Frice...*, then a long journey of development ensued. My first reader was Dr. Manal Hamzeh, an academic, author, and activist who has dedicated her career to researching the doctrinal limitations imposed by religions on their followers, especially women. I was very pleased when I received a reply that not only eased my fears about the journey on which I was embarking, but also taught me a lot about the fundamental essence of the message I was attempting to convey. Dr. Hamzeh's response was this: "*The women [in this play] are constantly negotiating the limitations of the normative interpretations of these hijabs. That is, they are crossing or trying to cross the spiritual hijab in search of gender justice. They are all actively practicing their agency and making sense of their fluid Muslim-ness. It's a sophisticated representation of some Muslim women's lives."*

With that encouragement I continued to develop the script. It was read as part of the First Draft series at Chicago Dramatists, and was critiqued in their Script Lab by the wonderful Dana Lynn Formby who offered me even more insight into the character's inter-relationships. Eventually, after several revisions, it caught Jamil Khoury's eye; and as a result is now being staged in front of wonderful audiences like you.

The development process at Silk Road Rising is involved, caring, and nurturing: in short, a playwright's dream. No effort is spared in helping the playwright explore all issues and possibilities. Further enhancement of the script was achieved through personal meetings with Jamil, and several table reads. In August 2017, the play was featured in the Crescent and Star staged readings series, directed by Kareem Fahmy. I owe a lot to Kareem for helping accelerate the pace of the play, streamlining its flow, and protecting me from my fascination with technical details—after all I am an engineer! The play is where it is because of Kareem's masterful touches. The staged readings he directed made it clear to all, especially Silk Road Rising, how audiences had embraced this play.

In October 2018, the play went on to another reading as part of the New American Voices Series of Queens Theater in New York, directed by Tracy Cameron Francis. Once again audience engagement and enthusiasm were evident in the talkback.

I am so grateful to Silk Road Rising and their co-production partner, International Voices Projects, for the opportunity to share this play with you. I am thrilled to be working with Director Patrizia Acerra, our talented cast, and a world-class team of designers, managers, and producers.

(continued on next page)

ON FIDELITY AND REDEMPTION: DIRECTOR'S NOTES

By Patrizia Acerra, Director

Next to love, fidelity is perhaps the most sought after quality in a relationship: in our spouses, in our family, and in our friends. We seek fidelity from our work place and our place of worship. We marvel at its endurance and its elasticity. But little prepares us for the tests of fidelity in matters of the heart.

Culturally, I think we are in a seismic shift of sensibilities about what it is to live together in the modern world. Identity politics have us asking who we are and what defines us. But our answers can be superficial. So much informs identity: our ethnicity, our religion, our relationships and our personal ideas about what is to be good and faithful. Can we be faithful to the many different parts of our lives–our religious practices, our human desires, our communal and familial selves–and still retain a sense of personal identity?

Our playwright puts us in the eye of this existential storm with warmth, intensity, and sometimes with brutal honesty. In sharing the journey of Amira, Khadija, and Samara, *Twice, Thrice, Frice...* invites us to look at the abundant, conflicting desires of modern life and examine our own dreams and truths in light of those things to which we give our hearts and our precious time.

And what of infidelity? If we can't be faithful, what replaces our lost selves? As in most paradoxes, the way out is the way in. What will we gain when we learn that we must first be faithful—unsparingly—to ourselves? At its core, this play celebrates the transcendent power of forgiveness and redemption and the healing role of culture and community.

Finally, this play is an excellent example of the best kind of work we've done at International Voices Project. It brings diverse worlds, diverse conversations, into dialogue (and conflict!) on stage for Chicago audiences. And of course, I am always in awe of the company that Jamil and Malik have created. Like IVP, Silk Road Rising produces work that embraces global cultures and produces work that is singular, unique and powerful. Kudos to Silk Road Rising and International Voices Project for bringing such powerful voices to life.

A HOT-BLOODED PLAY IN A HUMOROUS PACKAGE (continued from previous page)

Having said all that, I do not want to leave you with the impression that this play is specifically about one religion and one issue. I hope that you will recognize, in the actions and reactions of our characters, familiar scenes from daily life that keep reminding us about the relativity of ethics, morals, norms, principles, and beliefs when practiced by the individual across all religious traditions, and/or ideological social constructs, especially those with influential authority.

Finally, *Twice*, *Thrice*, *Frice*... is delivered to you in a humorous package because that's what we do when we get together: we tell jokes!

POLYGAMY, HOSPITALITY, POETRY, AND PRONUNCIATION: ABOUT THE WORLD OF *TWICE, THRICE, FRICE...*

By Marina J. Bergenstock, Dramaturg and Assistant Director

What I love about Fouad Teymour's *Twice, Thrice, Frice...* is that, while it certainly revolves around polygamy, it is about so much more than that. This play puts three strong, intelligent, "hot-blooded" Arab women onstage and invites us into the private spaces where they eat and dress, think and hope. We get a peek into friendships where tempers are allowed to flare, but where bonds are strong enough to survive any fight. These Muslim women are complicated, which in turn permits the audience to see them dealing with life, love, loneliness, and their evolving worldviews. When faced with a crisis, each draws upon something that nourishes her—Islam, Arab culture, philosophy, or poetry. As Kahlil Gibran wrote, "out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls."

ABOUT VOCABULARY

Here are some Arabic words used multiple times in Twice, Thrice, Frice...

Alhamdullellah	Thank God
Argeeleh	A waterpipe used communally for smoking or vaping, also called "hookah." In America, a hookah bar's main attraction is the act of smoking. However, in most places in the Middle East, one smokes while eating a meal, playing games, drinking tea, etc.; but smoking isn't the main attraction, socializing is.
Asta-ghfir Ullah	I ask forgiveness of Allah
Dorrah	Additional wife; in polygynous relationships, all the wives would call each other this. The root word is "dararr," which means "harm."
Habibi/Habibti	My beloved (masculine/feminine)
Haram/Halal	Forbidden/permitted by religious law
Hijab	To cover or protect; also boundary or barrier
In sha'Allah	God willing
Kafir/Kuffar	Nonbeliever (singular/plural)
Khalto	Aunt; mother's sister
Masjid	Mosque
Salam	A general greeting, meaning "peace"
Wallahee	I swear to God
Ya Allah	My God, or Oh God

PRONUNCIATION

Samara calls Khadija "Khadeega" throughout the play. That is because she is repeating what she heard her mother say in Egyptian Arabic. Egyptian Arabic tends to pronounce the "z" with a "guh" sound instead of a "juh" sound, as would be the case in Levantine Arabic.

ABOUT FOOD

Arabs are known for their hospitality; food plays a big part of that hospitality! Here are some of the foods eaten in *Twice, Thrice, Frice...*

Baklava A famous dessert that has layers of crispy golden brown phyllo dough, filled with chopped nuts and garnished with a honey syrup. Many groups claim baklava as their own, including Turks, Arabs, Jews, Greeks, Armenians, and Bulgarians.

Bamia	A stew made with lamb, okra, and tomatoes.
Fatayer	A small pie that can be stuffed with meat (lahme) or spinach (sabenekh) and cheese.
Kunafa	A traditional dessert made with thin pastry soaked in a sweet, sugar-based syrup, and typically layered with cheese.
Maklouba	A dish featuring roasted vegetables, spiced rice, and meat. Once cooked, it is flipped over and served inverted. The name literally means "upside down."
Marameya	Sage, often added to tea by Palestinian Arabs.

ABOUT HIJAB

Wearing (or not wearing) the hijab is not only a private choice but also a hot button political issue. However, most people don't know that the hijab can manifest itself in more ways than just a headcovering. Dr. Manal Hamzeh, professor of interdisciplinary studies at New Mexico State University, discusses the many meanings of the hijab in her book *Pedagogies of DeVeiling: Muslim Girls and the Hijab Discourse*. She describes other manifestations of the hijab, including: the modest dress prescribed for Muslim women and men, the division between private and public spaces, pious and modest behavior, and a barricade to spiritual and intellectual advancement that must be overcome. To learn more, watch the animated short inspired by Dr. Hamzeh and adapted by Silk Road Rising's Jamil Khoury at www.fourhijabs.org.

ABOUT KAHLIL GIBRAN

Kahlil Gibran was born in 1883 in what is now northern Lebanon, though at the time it was Ottoman Syria. He was a Maronite Catholic (an ancient Eastern Christian community); his grandfather was a Maronite priest. He had a turbulent childhood. His father was a tax collector (he was also a drinker and a gambler, sometimes violent) who was eventually jailed for unscrupulous behavior. The family's property was confiscated. Gibran's mother, Kamila, left her husband in 1895, taking the children to Boston.

While he is best known for his writing, for a major part of his life Gibran considered himself a painter. Gibran's written work often centered around a single vivid image, which people claim is his painterly influence. Some of Gibran's first work as a writer was a weekly column for the New York City Arabic-language newspaper *al-Mohajer* (*the Immigrant.*) Gibran's columns, entitled "Dam'a wa'btisama" ("Tears and Laughter") were popular because they differed from conventional Arabic literature. Unconventionally educated in English and Arabic, Gibran was most influenced by the Romantic European writers of the late 19th century. His themes of exile, oppression, and loneliness spoke to the experiences of Middle Eastern immigrants.

Gibran's most famous work, a book of poems called *The Prophet*, powerfully illustrated with his own drawings, was published in 1923. It is considered Gibran's masterpiece. *The Prophet* was well received in the Arab world. Most Arabs were accustomed to the rigid tradition of Arabic poetry and literary prose. By contrast, Gibran's simple and direct style was a revelation and an inspiration. His reception in the West was slightly different. Critics gave him mixed reviews, though the popular response was stunning. The first edition sold out in two months. 13,000 copies were sold each year during the Great Depression. 60,000 copies sold in 1944. Total sales reached one million by 1957. Many millions more were sold in the following decades, making Gibran the best-selling American poet of the twentieth century. His work remains hugely popular, though critics remain ambiguous.

Excerpt from the poem "On Marriage" from *The Prophet* by Kahlil Gibran Bolded lines are used in *Twice, Thrice, Frice...*

Then Almitra spoke again and said, And what of marriage, Master? And he answered saying: You were born together, and together you shall be forevermore. You shall be together when the white wings of death scatter your days.

(continued on next page)

Ay, you shall be together even in the silent memory of God. But let there be spaces in your togetherness, And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.

Love one another, but make not a bond of love: Let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls. Fill each other's cup but drink not from one cup. Give one another of your bread but eat not from the same loaf. Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each one of you be alone, Even as the strings of the lute are alone though they quiver with the same music.

Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping. For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts. And stand together yet not too near together: For the pillars of the temple stand apart, And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.

ABOUT POLYGAMY

Polygamy, or plural marriage, is an umbrella term that includes:

Polygyny	The marriage of one man to multiple wives
Polyandry	The marriage of one woman to multiple husbands
Bigamy	Entering into a marriage with one person while still legally married to another
Group marriages	Marriages of multiple husbands and wives

The section from the Quran regarding polygamy that is quoted most frequently is, "...then marry the women you like—two, or three, or four. But if you fear you will not be fair, then one, or what you already have. That makes it more likely that you avoid bias." [Quran 4:3, translated by Talal Itani]

Polygamy is legal in 58 countries, most of them Muslim-majority. In fact, other than Turkey and Tunisia, all Muslim countries permit polygamy. Some countries allow women to add a clause to their marriage contract that forbids the husband from taking additional wives, though this is not available or encouraged everywhere. While there are estimates of anywhere from 50,000-100,000 Muslims in the United States engaging in polygamous relationships, it's hard to know for sure. One of the largest known polygamous Muslim communities in the USA is in the Orthodox Black Muslim community in Philadelphia.

But it is important to note that polygamy is practiced not only by Muslims, but also by Neopagan groups, Evangelical Christians, Jews, Indigenous American tribes (most noteably the Plains Indians and Cheyenne), and, famously, Mormons. While the Mormon church doesn't condone the practice any longer, there are still some fundamentalist break-off sects that do. Estimates are that there are 30,000-50,000 polygamous Mormons in North America.

The United Nations Human Rights Committee recommended in 2000 that polygamy be outlawed because of a lack of agency often afforded to women in these situations. Polygamy and anything that falls under this larger category is not legal anywhere in North America. However, the view around polygamy in America is changing. In 2001, only seven percent of Americans reported the view that polygamy was "morally acceptable," but in 2016, 16 percent said they did not object to polygamy. Brad Wilcox of the National Marriage Project claims that "an increasingly libertarian or laissez-faire view that many younger Americans take toward sex, marriage, and family life" has led to this newfound attitude. Our play is fictional, but the feelings of shock, upheaval, and betrayal, as well as the struggles to make polygamous situations beneficial for the whole family, are real. Also real are the following 21st century examples, taken from contemporary sources.

FROM CANADA:

After 26 years of marriage, Zaib received a call from her husband telling her that he had married a second wife. Zaib recalls, "I went into shock mode. I was in a state of denial, saying no, no, this can't be happening. I started getting the symptoms of anxiety, depression and crying spells." Her husband said that he will still provide for her and their three adult children, believing they can live as one extended family.

Alima asked for a divorce when she found out that her husband of 18 years had a second wife, who was pregnant. She says, "when we were married, my husband told me his religious teacher said it was permissible for a man to lie to his wife about taking a second wife if the intention is to keep her happy and to keep the peace."

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After 16 years of marriage, Kareema's husband began to have an affair. "A prominent imam in Toronto advised him to marry (nikah) the woman to avoid committing the sin of adultery," said Kareema. "Instead of correcting the wrong that my husband was doing, the imam compounded it with another wrong."

FROM PHILADELPHIA:

Mecca was married and had one child when she decided to study Arabic abroad. She told her husband, "I'm going to have to find you another wife!" Mecca interviewed a dozen women, wanting to find a good fit for the whole family. Now Mecca's husband sleeps at his second wife's home several times a week. On Fridays, they all get together as a family.

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After his best friend died, Shaheed asked his widow, a 30 year old pregnant woman with two children, to be his second wife. His first wife, Alieah, said that for the first two years of the marriage, she considered divorce daily. After all, "the second wife is receiving something, where a first wife will feel that something is being taken away from her." She prayed for guidance and worked hard to overcome jealousy. As a result, the family has thrived. They are seen as pillars in their community, a model for how polygamy "should be" in Philadelphia.

FROM NEW YORK CITY:

Kante, who was wed via telephone to a New York City taxi driver when she was a 15 year old living in the Ivory Coast, was delivered to her groom on a false passport. She said she endured years of abuse, relinquished her paycheck, and tried hard to accept it when he sent two of their children to Africa. She left him when he announced that he had taken a second wife, also a teenager, also married over the telephone, also from the Ivory Coast. Without papers, vulnerable to deportation, Kante lived for a time in a homeless shelter. Her husband and his second wife have three children now. Recently, Kante said, he married a third wife.

Aisha, an African immigrant, was abused by her husband for not giving him a male child. Whenever he was upset with her, he would threaten to marry a second wife. Finally, she left, first to a homeless shelter, and eventually to a one-bedroom apartment with her daughters.

A Palestinian woman with six children from her first marriage, Mona is happy to be a second wife. After her divorce, Mona felt like a social pariah. Remarrying made her problems "evaporate…when I married the second husband, everybody's OK…nobody talks." Her husband provides for both of his families, dividing time between the two homes. Mona says the first wife was initially angry, but she got used to it. "You know, my religion is good because it gives man and woman another chance to be happy."

ABOUT SILK ROAD RISING

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Silk Road Rising is a community-centered art-making and arts service organization rooted in Asian, Middle Eastern, and Muslim experiences. Through digital media, arts education, and live performance we challenge disinformation, cultivate community voices, and create new narratives.

At Silk Road Rising we understand that representation matters; it molds perceptions, informs conversations, and influences policies. We view our work as an intentional strategy to shift and expand our communities' narratives, and to assist other organizations in their efforts to include Asian, Middle Eastern, and Muslim stories.

CONTACT SILK ROAD RISING

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ABOUT INTERNATIONAL VOICES PROJECT

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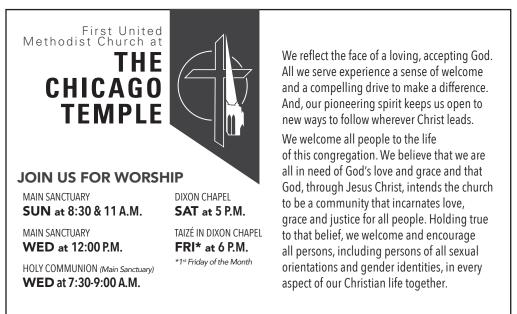
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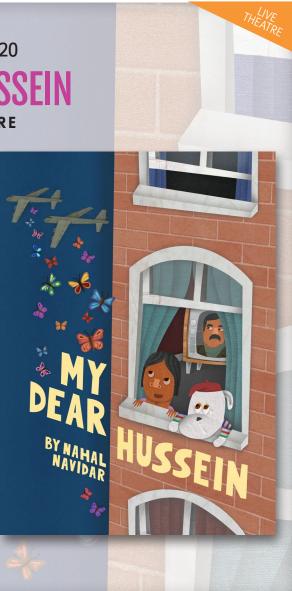
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