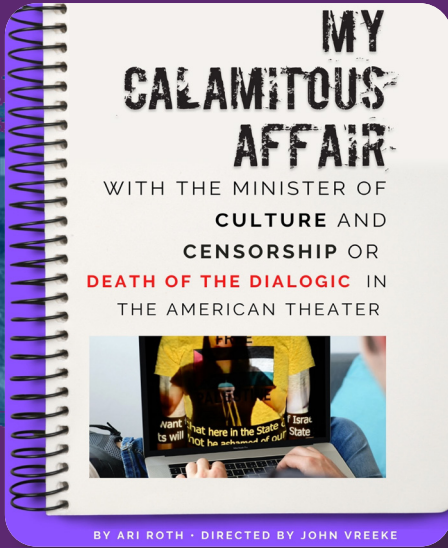


VOICES FROM A CHANGING MIDDLE EAST FESTIVAL

LOSING | FINDING HOME

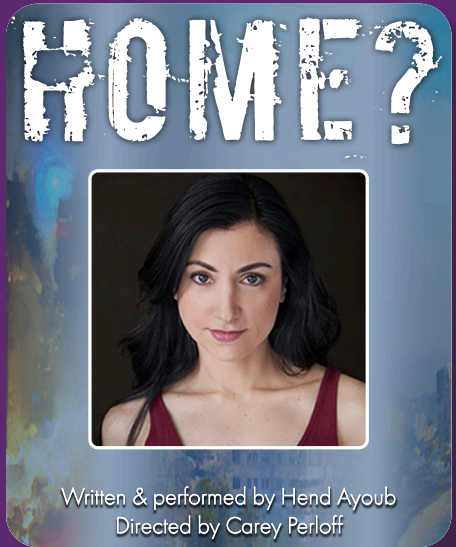


MY CALAMITOUS AFFAIR
WITH THE MINISTER OF CULTURE AND CENSORSHIP OR DEATH OF THE DIALOGIC IN THE AMERICAN THEATER

BY ARI ROTH • DIRECTED BY JOHN VREEKE



I, DAREEN T
American premiere
Created & performed by Einat Weizman
Written by Dareen Tatour & Einat Weizman
Directed by Nitzan Cohen



HOME?
Written & performed by Hend Ayoub
Directed by Carey Perloff

THE CORNER
WHITMAN-WALKER

Sept 29 - Nov 13, 2022



Welcome from A. Lorraine Robinson

Artistic Producing Partner



Dear Wonderful Patrons,
Community Members
and Artist Friends,

It is a true blessing to be able to create art with friends (collaborators both new and old), and I am therefore so happy to welcome all of you into the audience experience of our newly emerging company, Voices Festival Productions. It's been a precipitous journey over a two-year period, from initially connecting and deciding to create a producing partnership, to the excitement of this first year of company development, and ultimately curating and developing these works which we now share with you as our 2022 - Voices From the Middle East Festival.

This time has been especially tenuous for me at home as I have been acting as a caregiver these past two years and am now dealing with the loss of family, my dear sister, Brenda Augrette Robinson to the debilitating disease: ALS-FTD. She was a phenomenal arts lover, producer, patron and arts board member, and has been one of the lifelong champions of all of my creative pursuits. I am so honored that VFP is dedicating our festival opening in her name.

We have put heart into this company and believe you'll find these artistic works affecting and challenging ones which we hope will -- hit home.

We were so pleased with the enthusiastic audience response to our prelude festival offering, *The Gate*, which was produced at Capital Fringe Festival this summer, and we hope you enjoy these fall productions as thoroughly. Thank you for being with us, and if you enjoy, please share the word with your friends. We hope to see them and you in the audience again soon.

A. Lorraine Robinson



Screenshot of May 5, 2022 "Ukrainian Playwrights Under Siege"
virtual play reading, directed by A. Lorraine Robinson

Welcome from Ari Roth

Founding Producing Partner



If we've learned anything over the past two-and-a-half years about how our culture has shifted, and how our theater world is radically different from what it was (transformed and more equitable for the better; riddled with loss and defection, for the worse), consider the "Welcome" note in an actual, printed playbill itself. In many theaters, hardcopy programs have been done away with. I used to labor lovingly over these welcome essays – I wrote 164 of them for productions at Theater J and Mosaic over 25 years in this town, offering a reason for gathering; our *raison d'être* for producing. I knew who I was writing to; a theater audience of subscribers, supporters, a council (and then a board); an ever-more prodigious list of single-ticket buyers, with a warm theatrical community coming to see the next probing, provocative, celebratory thing.

It's different this time. We're different. At Voices Festival Productions, we don't have a board or council (or not yet). There's no list of thousands of single ticket buyers (alas again, not yet). The same could be said for a year-round staff; not yet, but soon, hopefully retaining this wonderful cohort of professionals who've gathered for this short, intensive run of three productions and a two-night reading. We don't quite know what VFP is going to be, though we love this sweet little storefront at Whitman-Walker with its hallowed legacy. We've learned that a certain way of making theater has been broken. We're more mindful than ever of rehearsal room values and protocols that will knit ensembles more closely together. And we know that a program booklet's main function is to name and honor the artists whose work you'll be appreciating in performance.

At VFP we've inculcated safety protocols to ensure protection – from COVID, but just as importantly, from the sting of microaggressions (hence our "Ouch and Oops" system). And we've found these innovations to be working. The six week rehearsal process for *My Calamitous Affair* has been a blessedly supportive one, no doubt because of the extraordinary human beings who've chosen to be part of this production. But also because, perhaps, we got off on the right, respectful footing, following policies that ensure mutual respect. We framed this undertaking well. And, same as it ever was, the focus is on doing the good, hard work of dramatic inquiry.

And so we are grateful and full of gratitude; I know I am. In spite of having lost a great deal of capacity – despite our base assets being much depleted; despite our concept of community now including words like "fractured." I'm grateful, touched even, by how these exact challenges have made this undertaking a more intimate enterprise. Despite masking, we are figuratively closer.

Even post-show discussions, once a staple of programming for our Middle East Festival, haven't had a chance to get fully organized. And yet there's more organic conversation to come out of the issues voiced in these plays than imaginable. We hope to find a way to engage in open talk-backs, even without the expert panelists and the catchy panel titles we've often presented in the past. Let us enjoy these plays of substance and chew on them; talk about them, and marvel at the artistry that's assembled. It's so good you have come to help us build something new once more. We have no choice but to. We are compelled to... gather... and synthesize. From our separate, distinct, and fractured pieces, let us create a cohesive new whole.



Voices from a Changing Middle East History

Past & Present

This summer, at the Capital Fringe Festival in Georgetown, Voices Festival Productions launched its first in-person show; Part I of this year's Voices From a Changing Middle East Festival; "Losing/Finding Home." It's a resonant theme for us, bespeaking the journey our Festival has taken, from its inception in 2000, to where we re-launch today. This July saw us offer a stirring solo piece, Robbie Gringras performing in his multi-character one-act play, *The Gate*, which told the story of a Kibbutz in the northern Galilee region overlooking an Arab village, and the intense debates within the kibbutz whether to keep the security gate open to all, or to keep the gate closed because, "you've either got a security system, or you don't," as one member likes to say.



Response from audience and critics alike stirred the heart. How we claim and preserve a sense of home – how we lose that home in battle and dispossession – and how we reclaim and reintegrate that home into the moral fabric of our history is a key theme of our long-running festival, and it speaks to that core sense of mission – why we've made this a signature calling for so long – and how it informs the direction of our production company going forward.

A little history: Our festival has been bringing the souls and struggles of the people in the Middle East to life for the past 22 years, humanizing headlines and creating intersectional bonds between communities here in the US and in the region.

Created in 2000 at Theater J (the professional resident company of the EDCJCC), the Voices Festival grew to become a hub for civic and cultural drama in DC. Among production highlights: Motti Lerner's West Bank drama, *Pangs of the Messiah* (2007); Hadar Galron's cry for feminism within the religious community, *Mikveh* (2010); the Cameri Theatre production of *Return to Haifa*, performed in Arabic and Hebrew adapted by Boaz Gaon from the landmark Palestinian novella by Ghassan Kanafani (2011); and the acclaimed 2014 workshop production of Motti Lerner's *The Admission*, which soon transferred to Studio Theatre, about an alleged massacre outside Haifa during the war of 1948.

As the critically-hailed Festival grew in popularity and acclaim, it also attracted detractors, including a small outfit called Citizens Opposed To Propaganda Masquerading as Art (COPMA) that agitated against the festival and its founder. The subterfuge ultimately triggered the dramatic inception of Mosaic Theater Company in December, 2014, after the JCC canceled the Festival in response to pressure and ousted Artistic Director Ari Roth for insubordination in voicing resistance to the cancellation.

Many more Middle East productions followed at Mosaic including *Wrestling Jerusalem, I Shall Not Hate, After the War* and *The Return* by Hanna Eady and Edward Mast. Most recently, the 2018 Voices Festival production of Mona Mansour's *The Vagrant Trilogy* moved up to The Public Theater for its NY premiere with much of the core creative team in place (including VFP current Lighting and Projections Designer, Devin Kinch).



The Admission (2014) by Motti Lerner, directed by Sinai Peter with (from l to r) Pomme Koch, Hana Eady, Leila Buck, and Danny Gavigan. Photo credit for Theater J: C. Stanley Photography



The Return (2017) by Hanna Eady & Edward Mast, directed by John Vreeke with (from l to r) Ahmad Kamal and Alyssa Wilmoth Keegan Photo credit for Mosaic Theater Company: Stan Barouh

Now as the festival becomes truly independent to hold fast to its curatorial balance and dialogic principles, we'll continue to look for multi-dimensional portraits to promote intercultural encountering, onstage and off. For more info, go to voicesfestivalproductions.com/middle-east-festival-about.



An Exhilarating Affair

by Adam Ashraf Elsayigh



When I first read *My Calamitous Affair...*, I was enthralled. The way it offered an anatomical interrogation of our cultural moment felt so prescient. How it dramatized our world as simultaneously intimate and epic in scope was refreshingly cosmopolitan for the American theater. But I almost rejected the offer to join the festival's "Dramaturgical Braintrust" anyway. The Braintrust is Ari's term for the ideologically, intergenerationally, and interculturally eclectic dramaturgs supporting the festival. Truthfully, *My Calamitous Affair...* overwhelmed me; it was clear the frameworks and approaches I typically use to synthesize, understand, and support new play development had to go out the window for *My Calamitous Affair...* to truly reach its core ethos.

My first thought was: is it really two plays? One about the strife of a Palestinian artist trying to make theater under Israeli occupation, and another about the seismic cultural and generational shift to the American theater, and an Artistic Director's contending with his practice amidst that shift. Yet, as I re-read and delved deeper into the world of *My Calamitous Affair...*, it started to reveal to me how each of its two arcs not only spoke to the other, but was absolutely fundamental to informing the other. At its heart, *My Calamitous Affair...* is about how five people help and hurt each other as they navigate intergenerational traumas that diaspora and colonialism breed, forcing five well-intentioned but quite fiery individuals to contend with their choices.

I write this note on my way to our first design run, and the plays' dual themes reflect my own experience of the four months since joining the Braintrust. On one hand, our dramaturgical process supporting Ari's craft has brought incredible nuance to these characters; every decision, every act, every hurt feels like it comes from the personal; feels fully realized. It's been an incredibly, intellectually rigorous, labor of love. On the other hand, I still find myself often overwhelmed while dealing with this text, but if the last four months have taught me anything, it's that maybe that's okay. It's an overwhelming play. It treads geographies, diasporas, traumas. It interrogates the seismic cultural shifts in the theater field and the wider zeitgeist. It invites us to reflect on the role of the dialectic in this moment. It asks us to sit with our own culpability in legacies of violence, and how we operate, repair, and restore in light of that culpability.

But what overwhelms me about *My Calamitous Affair...* is what enthralled me in the first draft I read. It navigates its themes with complexity, refusing to give me - us - an answer that "ties things up," or preaches, refusing to give an answer to my brain's desire for ordered unity. *My Calamitous Affair...* overwhelms me in the way that our precarious cultural moment does. May it always overwhelm me.



Voices Festival Productions presents the World Premiere of Part II of its

VOICES FROM A CHANGING MIDDLE EAST FESTIVAL

LOSING|FINDING HOME

MY CALAMITOUS AFFAIR

WITH THE MINISTER OF
CULTURE AND
CENSORSHIP OR
DEATH OF THE DIALOGIC
IN THE AMERICAN THEATER

Written by ARI ROTH
Directed by JOHN VREEKE

CAST

(in order of speaking appearance)

Virginia B. Lawrence AD (Founding Artistic Director Until Recently)	ILASIEA GRAY*
Miri Rekev Eilat Herzog Samad Hussein	KARL KIPPOLA* LISA HODSOLL ANAT COGAN* HASSAN NAZARI-ROBATI*

PRODUCTION

Dramaturg & Cultural Consultant Additional Dramaturgy	ADAM ASHRAF ELSAYIGH GILLIAN DRAKE & DEBBIE MINTER JACKSON
Lighting/Projections Designer Costume Designer Properties Designer Sound Designer Production Stage Manager Festival Production Manager Assistant Stage Manager Master Electrician Understudies	DEVIN KINCH ANNA MARQUARDT ELIZABETH LONG ALISTAIR EDWARDS KATE KILBANE* KETA NEWBORN EMILY BELOATE CASSANDRA SAULSKI NESSA AMHERST, DERYL DAVIS & RACHEL MANTEUFFEL

September 29 - October 23, 2022
Opening Night, October 6, 2022

*Member of Actors' Equity Association

Acknowledgments: The producers wish to thank Bluelight Strategies, M.T. Connolly, Debbie Goldman, The Arts Club of Washington, Reid Rodell LLC, Becca Khalil, Susan Goldschmidt & Miles Taub, Peter Coy, Peter Birkenhead, Howard Shalwitz, Minna Scherlinder-Morse, and so many other generous colleagues and contributors.



MY CALAMITOUS AFFAIR Cast & Creative Bios



ILASIEA GRAY* (Virginia B. Lawrence) (she/her) is a multi-hyphenate social practice artist and True West Award recipient for her impactful work in the arts & arts education. Featured in publications discussing the intersection of art and activism, Ilasiea made history in Colorado playing the title role of *Sleeping Beauty* (Denver Children's Theatre) as a Black actress, tours *Black. With a Capital B.* (Curious Theatre Company) and speaks at conferences nationwide about her internationally published essay on inequities in the arts for young people of color. Credits include: co-creating/performing *CO2020* (BETC - American Theatre Magazine feature); *Acting While Black.* (The Breath Project), *Second City's Twist Your Dickens* (Aurora Fox); world premieres *American Prom* (THEATREWORKS) and *Black Odyssey* (DCPA Theatre Company). BFA Theatre, Film & Television. MFA Social & Environmental Arts Practice. www.ilasiea.com.



KARL KIPPOLA* (AD) (he/him) has performed in well over 100 plays. A proud member of Actors' Equity, favorite DC-area productions include *Opus* and *Art* (Everyman), *Bach at Leipzig* and *Glass Menagerie* (Rep Stage), *Man of No Importance* and *Arms and the Man* (Bay Theatre), *Mary Poppins* and *Anything Goes* (Olney), *Julius Caesar* and *Illyria* (Virginia Shakespeare), and *Jewish*

Queen Lear (Theater J). Kippola holds a BA in Drama (University of Montana), an MFA in Acting (Wayne State University), and a PhD in Theatre (University of Maryland). He is head of the Theatre/Musical Theatre program at American University, where he has been a faculty member for 20 years. He wishes to thank his wife and son for their continued love and support. For more info: www.american.edu/cas/faculty/kippola.cfm.

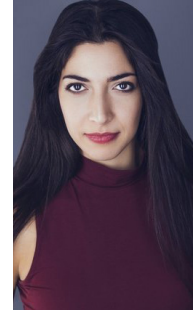


LISA HODSOLL (Miri Rekev) (she/her) was born in Brussels, Belgium and is a graduate of the University of Virginia. Theater credits: *Laura Bush Killed A Guy* (Helen Hayes

Nominated for DC production by The Klunch, and subsequent New York Transfer), *Medea's Got Some Issues* (D.C. and Chicago), *The Wonderful World of Dissocia* (Helen Hayes Nominated), *A Fool's Paradise* (The Edinburgh Fringe) and *The Intelligent Homosexuals Guide To Capitalism and Socialism With a Key to the Scriptures* (Theater J). Writing credits: *Buffurducken* (writer and director, winner of Royal Reel Award), co-writer on *Kosmopolites* (winner of Best International Feature Columbia Gorges International Film Festival) and a play adaptation of *Company K* by William March. Founder of Open Road and member of the Klunch, and Factory 449. For more info: www.lisamhodsoll.com.

ANAT COGAN* (Eilat Herzog) (she/her) is a NYC based, Israeli-Egyptian-American actress and writer. Since finishing her service in the Israeli Defense Force and graduating from Nissan Nativ Acting Studio in Tel Aviv/Israel and the Lee Strasberg Film & Theatre Institute in NY, Anat has been working in the Israeli theater, participating in theater

MY CALAMITOUS AFFAIR Cast & Creative Bios



performances in New York, and shooting films around the US. Select credits include: *Ocean In A Teacup* (Theater Row), *Handle With Care* (Florida Studio Theatre & Shadowland Stages), *David* (St. Marks), *Ajax In Iraq* (Flux), *What's In Alaska?* (MITF), *A Thousand Words* (Manhattan Rep), *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare Co.), *Hamlet* (Shakespeare Co.), *Tartuffe* (TLV), *Mother Courage* (TLV), *Donia Rosita The Spinster* (TLV), *The Sound Of Music* (TLV). TV: "Prisoners of War" and "Wish House." For more info: www.anatcogan.com.



HASSAN NAZARI-ROBATI* (Samad Hussein) (he/him) is a recent transplant to LA, by way of New York, where he performed in shows and readings with The Public, Atlantic Theatre Company, The Flea, and 5th Floor Theatre Company.

Hassan has been featured in the national and international tours of *Beauty and the Beast* (as Lumiere for NETWORKS Presentations). Regional credits include *The Corpse Washer* for Actors Theatre of Louisville (Humana Festival, directed by Mark Brokaw); *Oklahoma!* (Ali Hakim) for Theatre Under the Stars; *Abraham's Land for Theater of Possibility* in Seattle; *Oliver!* (Fagin) at the Palace Theatre, and *Merchant of Venice* (Solanio) for Oklahoma Shakes. Hassan Nazari-Robati is a graduate of Oklahoma City University in Music Theatre.

NESSA AMHERST (Virginia B. Lawrence Understudy) (she/her) Favorite credits: *The Survival* (National Queer Theater & Lincoln

Center), *#ENOUGH: Plays to End Gun Violence* (1st Stage), *As You Like It* (Theatre Lab School of Dramatic Arts), *This Profound Abyss* (Rorschach Theatre), *Julia Caesar* (Barefoot Shakespeare Company), *Runtime Error* (Transformation Theatre), *Henry VIII* (Quarantine Queens Theatre Company), *Lotto & Raffles & Sweepstakes*, *Oh My!* (PlayZoomers), *District Merchants* (Theatre CBT & Globe Openstage), and *These Violent Delights* (Letter of Marque Theater Company). Her original monologue, *Define "Black,"* is featured in the anthology, *08:46: Fresh Perspectives*, published by New World Theatre, and is available to purchase online. Nessa holds a Bachelor of General Studies degree from the University of Missouri-Columbia. www.nessaamherst.com.

DERYL DAVIS (AD Understudy) (he/him) is a Washington-based actor, educator, and documentary film producer. Credits include *Big Daddy in Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Rude Mechanicals), Gerald in *Collect Everything* (Source Theatre Festival), Daddy in *Tame* (DC Fringe Festival) John Buchanan, Jr. in *The Eccentricities of a Nightingale* (Rude Mechanicals), Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* (Silver Spring Stage), Verges/Friar Francis in *Much Ado About Nothing* (Annapolis Shakespeare Company), Adrian in *Private Eyes* (Journeyman Theater Ensemble), and Face in *The Alchemist* (Elden Street Players).

RACHEL MANTEUFFEL (Understudy) (she/her) is happy we're here. She's worked with Nu Sass, 4615 Theatre Company, Bob Bartlett in a laundromat, Pinky Swear, The Washington Rogues, Prometheus Theatre and Doorway Arts Ensemble. In her other life she's a Livingston Award winning writer, mostly for The Washington Post, and a 2022 DCCA Fellow. Thanks to Daphna for her words.

ARI ROTH (Playwright) (he/him) served as Artistic Director of Theater J from 1997 to 2014 and established Mosaic Theater Company of DC in late December, 2014.



MY CALAMITOUS AFFAIR Cast & Creative Bios

To read a full account of his producing dramas and achievements, visit the VFP website. Plays include *Born Guilty* (based on the book by Peter Sichrovsky) commissioned and produced by Arena Stage with more than 50 productions across the country; *Peter and The Wolf* (sequel to *Born Guilty*) produced in DC and Atlanta, with multiple workshops at Epic Theatre in NYC; a family prequel, *Andy and The Shadows* (all part of "The Born Guilty Cycle"). Other produced works: *Oh, The Innocents*; *Goodnight Irene*; *Life In Refusal*, *Love and Yearning in the Not for Profits*; *Still Waiting* (companion to *Waiting For Lefty*) and *The Seagull on 16th Street*. His plays have been nominated for five Helen Hayes Awards, including Best Resident Production and two Charles MacArthur Awards for Outstanding New Play. In 2017, Roth was given the DC Mayor's Arts Award for Visionary Leadership.

JOHN VREEKE (Director) (he/him) is perhaps best known for his directorial and development work on second productions of plays that have gone on to become staples in the regional theater circuit - plays like *Boom* by Peter Nachtrieb, *A Bright New Boise* by Sam Hunter and *Guards at the Taj* by Rajiv Joseph as well as Joseph's epic drama *Describe the Night*. He directed the west coast premiere of the 2018 Pulitzer Prize winner *Cost of Living* by Martyna Majok; the play will be coming to Broadway later this season. He has worked in DC area Theater for the past 22 years. He has six Helen Hayes Award nomination for Outstanding Director. For a full list of his directing credits, please visit: www.johnvreeke.com.

ADAM ASHRAF ELSAYIGH (Dramaturg/Cultural Consultant) (he/him) is an Egyptian writer, theater maker, and dramaturg who writes and develops plays that interrogate

the intersections of queerness, immigration, and colonialism. Adam's plays (including *Drowning in Cairo*, *Revelation*, *Memorial*, and *Jamestown/Williamsburg*) have been developed and seen at New York Theater Workshop, The Lark, The Tisch School of the Arts, The LaGuardia Performing Arts Center, and Golden Thread Productions. Adam holds a BA in Theater with an emphasis in Playwriting and Dramaturgy from NYU Abu Dhabi and is an MFA Candidate in Playwriting at Brooklyn College.

GILLIAN DRAKE (Dramaturg) (she/her) served as Literary Associate at Arena Stage for five years and dramaturg at New York Theatre Workshop for four years. She has been a free-lance director in Washington, DC for the past 30 years. Ms. Drake has served as a Helen Hayes judge for many years. She managed Spooky Action Theater's New Works in Action program until recently and in Fall 2021 directed Will Eno's *The Realistic Joneses*. In 2016, she co-directed *Happy Hour*, a co-production with the Goethe Institut, where she has introduced DC audiences to countless German and European plays in workshop presentations. She is President of On Trial Associates, Inc, a national consulting firm specializing in trial consulting, witness preparation, "Acting for Lawyers" and other applied theater skills.

DEBBIE MINTER JACKSON (Dramaturg) (she/her) is a native Chicagoan having performed in community and cabaret musical theater over thirty years throughout the Midwest and the South. In addition to having scripts commissioned and produced, Debbie's reviews are archived as a founding writer of D.C. Theatre Scene (closed in 2020), is a member of the Black Women Playwrights' Group and on the Board of Footlights, a play reading and discussion group as well as the Lincoln Group of D.C.

Einat Weizman & Dareen Tatour on I, DAREEN T

In November 2018, Palestinian Poet Dareen Tatour interviewed Israeli theatremaker Einat Weizman about their collaboration. Earlier that month, they co-authored an essay responding to some of the sensationalized press coverage of their show, *I, DAREEN T*. These are excerpts from both the essay in Haaretz and the interview, translated in the online journal Mondoweiss.



DAREEN: In a speech that went on for three long hours, the Minister of Culture, Miri Regev, said she will not fund venues that present [certain challenging] works. These works should instead be banned and censored. She also spoke of why there must be a vote on The Loyalty In Culture Bill, drafted by her, and why there should broadly be loyalty in art to the state of Israel... If the bill becomes law¹ it will grant Regev sole discretion to decide what projects should be censored, what projects critical of Israel constitute "incitement."

At the same time the law was discussed in the Knesset, I sat with my friend Einat Weizman talking about our strong friendship that was born between jail and detention, which I have been through for the last three years because of a poem I wrote against the occupation's practices against my Palestinian people.

We are both living examples of the consequences and effects on artistic life in Israel. I, as a Palestinian poet, was detained, jailed and was a victim of racist laws that were imposed against me very strictly, which stole three years of my life that I have spent moving between prison, house arrest and other forms of detention. I still suffer from the racism of these laws and I will keep suffering from them for another three years as Israeli authorities can send me back to jail if I publish a political poem that is directly against the occupation by claiming that I would have broken the law, according to the sentence imposed upon me on July 31, 2018.

Einat Weizman, the leftist actress, director and writer has become increasingly subjected to legal pursuit and interrogation as she opposes the policy of occupation through her artworks that show the reality in which Palestinians in Israel suffer. In order to clarify the situation in which we are living, I had this conversation with her: (Con't on next page)

¹The Loyalty in Culture Bill, after passing through two committees, failed to garner enough votes ahead of vote before the full Knesset and was pulled in late November, 2022. It has not been reintroduced.





DAREEN: Beginning with *Shame* through *I, Dareen T*, what has changed in your art, thoughts, opinions and the type of plays you present?

EINAT: There is a principle and style for my plays as they are always based on facts and real events, they have something close to giving a testimony. I believe that the play with you created something very special, different and unique; something I have not lived in my previous plays. I have been immersed in you emotionally, intellectually and ideologically like never before.

DAREEN: Einat was not the only one to live this state, I was like her; immersed in her and in the plays with all of my feelings, writings and thoughts. I could say I was immersed in how to find a common language between us that would eliminate all the differences between us; especially those between both our Palestinian and Jewish people, through art, humanity and love, as the play is a joint work between two women surrounded by many challenges, cultural, social and national differences. However, art removed all of these differences, gathered the idea and united the heart and mind for us to be in a beautiful relationship characterized by mutual love and respect and finding a mutual life between us as a Palestinian and her as a Jewish Israeli.

EINAT & DAREEN: In our artistic and humanitarian relationship, we have been able to find a mutual life that removes all the obstacles and differences; something that the Israeli authorities do not understand about the importance of art that discusses our issues as Palestinians in Israel, but rather increase the tensions and conflicts.

For similar reasons, the sexual violence Dareen experienced and reveals in the play is easier to denounce and focus on than the violence of the state. It is easier to be shocked by the story of [what happens to] a little girl than by the abuse that takes place without witnesses inside prison facilities; an abuse the Shin Bet denies. In fact, and as was so evident in Dareen's case, the two types of oppression - the oppression of the Palestinians and the oppression of women - are different but also intertwined and mutually reinforcing each other.

For our part, we do not intend to accept evil judgment upon us. If they censor us here we will appear around the world and continue to investigate, expose and fight for what we believe in.

VOICES FROM A CHANGING MIDDLE EAST FESTIVAL

LOSING|FINDING HOME

Voices Festival Productions in partnership with Underwriting Producers, **Bill and Kumi Martin**, present the American premiere of

I, DAREEN T

Created by EINAT WEIZMAN
 Written by EINAT WEIZMAN & DAREEN TATOUR
 Directed by NITZAN COHEN

CAST

Einat & Dareen EINAT WEIZMAN*

ORIGINAL TMUNA THEATRE DESIGN TEAM

Originally produced at the Tmuna Theatre, Tel Aviv, in 2018

Original Video Design NIMROD ZIN
 Original Lighting Design NADAV BARNEA
 Original Music Design TAMER NAFAR & ITAMAR TZIGLER

VFP PRODUCTION

Lighting/Projections Consultant DEVIN KINCH
 Properties Consultant ELIZABETH LONG
 Sound Support ALISTAIR EDWARDS
 Master Electrician CASSANDRA SAULSKI
 Production Stage Manager KATE KILBANE*
 Festival Production Manager KETA NEWBORN
 Assistant Stage Manager EMILY BELOATE

October 20 - October 30, 2022 • Opening Night, October 24, 2022
 The Corner at Whitman-Walker, 1701 14th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

*Member of Actors' Equity Association



I, DAREEN T Cast & Creative Bios



E I N A T WEIZMAN* (Einat/Dareen) (she/her) is an actor, theater director, and a playwright based in Tel Aviv. She is also a Palestinian rights activist. All of her plays,

performances, and events are political documentary theater meant to shed light on the blind spots of Israeli reality. Her theater provides a platform for making diverse voices heard, including those that are outside of the social cultural consensus and challenge conventional thinking. Since 1996 and for many years, Einat Weizman worked primarily as an actor on Israeli television and film productions, and was a popular public persona in Israel. Things changed sharply in 2014 during the Israeli attack on Gaza. For the first time, Weizman was publicly attacked for her political views and she experienced attacks on social media from thousands of people; these attacks spread from the internet to the streets. This was how her first play, *Shame: Talkbacks on Theatre*, came into being (it was subsequently staged at Mosaic Theater Company of DC as *Shame 2.0*). Her second play was *Palestine, Year Zero*, a play about a Palestinian building assessor who estimates the damages to Palestinian homes that were destroyed or damaged. *House 121: A Lesson in Political Construction*, is a short performance she co-created with Azes Alturi about the Bedouin village Al Araqib. Other recent plays include *Prisoners of the Occupation*, which strives to give voice to Palestinian

political prisoners in Israeli jails. The play was banned on political grounds by the Akko (Acre) Festival's steering committee under pressure from the Ministry of Culture and Sport. Immediately thereafter, she staged two theatrical events at the Jaffa Theatre: *Prison Notebooks* and *The State Against the Poet Dareen Tatour* (both in 2017). Each of these events provoked condemnation from Israeli public officials, with the theatre subsequently facing threats of funding cuts. Her most recent play is *How To Make A Revolution*, currently playing at the Jaffa Theatre. For more information, go to www.einatweizman.com.

NITZAN COHEN (Director) (he/him) is a leading director in Israel, a frequent collaborator with Einat Weizman and most recently served as Artistic Director of the Tmuna Theatre in Tel Aviv.



Notes on HOME? from the Director

by Carey Perloff

In early March 2020, on the last day of the run of *A Thousand Splendid Suns* at Arena Stage, HEND Ayoub (one of the stars of *Suns*) shared a work-in-progress she was creating about her remarkable life's journey as a Palestinian Arab actress born and raised in Israel. I had invited my friend Ari Roth to the presentation, knowing he would have an interesting perspective on her story. All of us in the room that day were immediately captivated. A week later, despite Covid forcing us into isolation, I made a commitment to HEND to help develop her piece, first over Zoom, then in person when we could. Over the course of two years, we have dug deeper and deeper into the nuances and surprises of her story, and now it is a fitting and beautiful "homecoming" to bring the first iteration of *HOME?* back to Washington, D.C. and to Ari's Voices Festival.

HOME? asks many questions about identity and belonging, and about what role art can play in creating a sense of "place" that grounds us in spite of exile. Moving fluidly from Arabic to Hebrew to English and back, HEND invites us along a wild ride through endless obstacles and often hilarious misunderstandings, as she wrestles with who is allowed to participate in any given culture and why. Her Palestinian Israeli status naturally makes her liminal to both Israeli and



Arab cultures, but her desire to transform and imagine means that she's constantly trying to find a creative path forward. We recently had the opportunity to workshop the piece in San Francisco courtesy of SF Playhouse, Z Space and Golden Thread Productions, and for that presentation we added the final section on HEND's American experiences which you will hear tonight, and which truly bring this story "home."

Director Carey Perloff, author/performer HEND Ayoub, and Golden Thread Productions AD Sahar Assaf at after a reading at Z Space this summer.

Perhaps the most important words to emerge from that final part of the work were "keep going." It is in that spirit that we offer this piece to you tonight. How do human beings keep going in the face of so many obstacles and disappointments? What helps us to be resilient? Can storytelling help give us some agency over our own lives? These are the questions this unique artist is offering to us in her magical *HOME?* Finally, I want to thank HEND for allowing me to be part of telling this story. As a Jewish-American director and the child of a Viennese refugee, I have learned an enormous amount from her about the situation of Arab artists in Israel and across the Arab world, while at the same time feeling completely welcome to share my own perspectives. Now it's your turn! We are so grateful to you for joining us and know that we will learn a great deal from your response as we continue to shape the play. Welcome!

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LOSING|FINDING HOME

HOME?

a Workshop Production

Written by HEND AYOUB
Directed by CAREY PERLOFF

CAST

HEND AYOUB*

Developed in class with Wynn Handman at the Wynn Handman Studio.
Further Developed with Carey Perloff at San Francisco Playhouse,
(Bill English, Artistic Director/ Susi Damilano, Producing Director)
in association with Z Space and Golden Thread Productions.

PRODUCTION

Dramaturg	SALMA S. ZOHDİ
Lighting/Projections Consultant	DEVIN KINCH
Properties Consultant	ELIZABETH LONG
Sound Designer	ALISTAIR EDWARDS
Master Electrician	CASSANDRA SAULSKI
Production Stage Manager	DAVID ELIAS*
Festival Production Manager	KETA NEWBORN

October 29 – November 14, 2022 • Opening Night, November 5, 2022
The Corner at Whitman-Walker, 1701 14th Street, NW, Washington, D.C.

*Member of Actors' Equity Association

HOME? Cast & Creative Bios



HEND AYOUB* (she/her) is a Palestinian Israeli, New York-based actor and writer, most recently seen in the world premiere production of *First Down* at NYC's 59E59 Theater. Additional theatre credits include Broadway's *Bengal Tiger at the Baghdad Zoo* with Robin Williams, as well as its previous run at Los Angeles's Mark Taper Forum; *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (Arena Stage); *Kiss* (Yale Repertory Theatre) and *Veils* (world premiere, Portland Stage; Barrington Stage). Television credits include *Homeland*, *Orange Is The New Black*, *The Looming Tower*, *Madam Secretary*, *Royal Pains*, *Feed the Beast*, *The Accidental Wolf*, Comedy Central's *The Watch List*, and recurring roles on *Transparent* and *Damages*. In Film, she co-starred in the Emmy Award-winning film *Death of a President* and the multi award-winning film *Private* and has just finished shooting a new film called *If You See Something*. HEND studied acting and scene study with the legendary Wynn Handman at the Wynn Handman Studio where she started developing *Home?*. For more info, go to www.hendayoub.com.

CAREY PERLOFF (Director) (she/her) is a director, playwright, producer, book author and educator who served as Artistic Director of the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco for 25 years (1992 to 2018). In addition to rebuilding the Geary Theater, reanimating ACT's educational programs and creating decades of vigorous, culturally diverse programming that traveled around the country, Perloff oversaw the creation

of ACT's second stage, The Strand, a multi-venue performance space providing a home for new artists, new work and new audiences. Prior to A.C.T., Perloff led the Classic Stage Company in New York, where she won an OBIE for sustained excellence. Her recent directing work includes: *Pale Sister* (Gate Theater, Dublin), *Ghosts* (Seattle Rep and Williamstown), *Queens* (La Jolla Playhouse), *Private Lives* (Stratford Shakespeare Festival), *A Thousand Splendid Suns* (Arena State, Old Globe, Seattle Rep, A.C.T., Theatre Calgary, Arts Club Vancouver), *Merchant of Venice*. Upcoming: *The Oedipus Trilogy* starring John Douglas Thompson at Seattle Rep. As a playwright, Perloff's work includes *Edgardo or White Fire* (WTF commission), *If God Were Blue* (developed by New York Stage and Film 2021, workshopped at the Roundabout 2022), *Kinship* (WTF 2017 and Theatre de Paris), *Higher* (winner, Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation Best Original Script), *Luminescence Dating* (Sloan Foundation commission), *The Fit* (SF Playhouse). Author: *Beautiful Chaos: A Life in the Theater* (City Lights Press, 2016), and *Pinter and Stoppard: A Director's View* (Bloomsbury Methuen 2022). Honorary Doctorate, USF. Honorary MFA, A.C.T. B.A., Classics and Comparative Literature, Phi Beta Kappa, Stanford, Fulbright Fellowship to Oxford University. More info at careyperloff.com.

SALMA S. ZOHDİ (Dramaturg) (she/her) is an Egyptian Dramaturg based in New York City. Salma is the Associate Director of Development & Communications at Noor Theatre Company, an Adjunct Professor at NYU's Department of Dramatic Writing, and was the New Work Specialist at The Public Theater. Salma's theatre credits include *The Mecca Tales*, *The Yacoubian Building*,

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(Bio con't) *Operating Systems, Mix & Match, The Conversationalists, Pilgrims: Musa & Sheri in the New World, Global Forms Theatre Festival* (GFTF), *Google It's Complicated!*, *Siluetta, Once Upon A Time Called Now, Drowning in Cairo*, and *House of Joy*. Salma aspires to create spaces where we can generously and inclusively examine art, culture, community building, and the necessary global and social justice conversations. MA: AUC - English & Comparative Literature. MFA: Columbia University - Theatre (Dramaturgy). Website: zohdiscriptconsultancy.com.

Voices Festival Productions Bios

A. LORRAINE ROBINSON (Artistic Producing Partner & Director - APOLOGIES) (she/her) is an award-winning theatre director & dramaturg. She was Artistic Producing Director of MuseFire Productions, a (501c3) not-for-profit theatre & film company dedicated to multimedia and stylistically challenging work (especially voices of women & individuals of color). Recent Projects: Director - *The Piano Lesson & Raisin in the Sun* (Sitar Arts Center); *Baltimore* [St. Mary's College of MD], *You Were Mine* by Rachel Lynett (Transformation Theatre), *(The) Firepit...play* [by Bob Barlett - site specific production.] Dramaturg - *TopDog/Underdog* [Avant Bard]. She received the Central Ohio Theatre Critics Circle Award: Best Director and Best Production for *The Laramie Project* (Contemporary American Theatre Company in Columbus, Ohio). In 2017, 2018 and 2019 she received Tony Award: Excellence in Theatre Education Honorable Mention Awards. Memberships: BTN & SDC (associate).

KETA NEWBORN (Festival Production Manager & Stage Manager - APOLOGIES) (she/her) is an author and mother. Keta

entered theatre after being a computer engineer and from 2006-2018, focused on becoming a name within the arts industry. Working in the DMV, New York, Boston, and Atlanta, Keta's involvement in theatre saw her hold many titles over a decade. Keta's current title is Production Manager. She is recognized for being detailed-oriented and deeply committed to her work. Highly skilled at working with a diverse group of people to build effective creative solutions, Keta would like to thank her Father above for the opportunity to be used as one of HIS vessels, working to bring HIS work of art into the hearts of many. To learn more about Keta and her work, please visit www.ketanewborn.com.

KATE KILBANE* (Production Stage Manager - CALAMITOUS & DAREEN) (she/her) is a Washington, DC based stage manager and proud member of Actors' Equity Association. She is delighted to return after stage managing the workshop production in September 2021. Kate had the pleasure of being the inaugural Festival Swing Stage Manager at this summer's CATF in Shepherdstown, WV. Previous Stage Manager credits include *Corduroy*, *Zomo the Rabbit: A Hip-Hop Creation Myth*, and *Thumbelina* at Imagination Stage; *Amadeus and 1*, *Henry IV*, at Folger Theatre; and 15 productions at Theater J. Assistant Stage Manager credits include *Sense and Sensibility* at Everyman Theatre, *The Watsons Go to Birmingham-1963*, *First You Dream*, *Follies*, *The Lisbon Traviata*, and *Ragtime* at The Kennedy Center; *The Tempest* Free for All at the Shakespeare Theatre Company; and 13 productions at Ford's Theatre.

DAVID ELIAS* (Production Stage Manager - HOME?) (he/him) has been an actor and stage manager for a multitude of theaters in the Washington area for 30 years. He teaches acting, and voice at the National Conservatory of Dramatic Arts, and has taught stage management at George

(Bio con't) Mason University. David has been able to combine his career and travel bug by stage managing plays in Prague as well as teaching a seminar about building/voicing a character at Universidade de Natal in Brazil.

EMILY BELOATE (Assistant Stage Manager - CALAMITOUS & DAREEN) (she/her) is originally from Seattle, WA and holds her B.A. in Theatre from Whitworth University and M.A. in Contemporary Theatre, Dance, and Dramaturgy from Utrecht University. She has a passion for art that provokes critical thinking, inspires change, and connects people to one another. She has explored work in production, devising, directing, and choreography all over the country: in the Bay Area, working with Epic Immersive to produce immersive dance/theatre performances, and in Memphis, TN, working in Live Entertainment for the Memphis Grizzlies. Emily is new to the DMV area and is so excited for this to be her first DC production.

ANNA MARQUARDT (Costume Designer) (she/her) is a costume designer, songwriter, and performer (sometimes simultaneously). Most recently, she designed costumes for *Newsies* with The Arlington Players. Previously, she designed the costumes for The Arlington Players' production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and designed and constructed five beautifully hideous (or maybe hideously beautiful?) dresses for *Five Women Wearing the Same Dress* with Dominion Stage. Other DC-area costume design credits include *Suddenly Last Summer* (Avant Bard) and *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson* (DS). She recently documented every outfit she wore to her 6 months serving grand jury duty on her Instagram (@ajlobster). annamarquardt.com.

ALISTAIR EDWARDS (Sound Designer) (he/him) is a sound designer, musician, and composer. He recently graduated cum laude from Amherst College, with a Bachelor of Arts in Music and Theater. For his senior project, he wrote, directed, and produced a radio play, called *Boundless*. He has also worked on productions such as *Medea* and *Gossamer*, as well as experimental dance projects such as *Endogenous*. He is very excited to be working with Voices Festival Productions and hopes that you enjoy the show.

DEVIN KINCH (Lighting/Projections Designer) (he/him) currently serves as an Associate Designer for VidCo and is the Projections Coordinator for The Clarice Smith Performing Arts Center. Recent work includes *Machinal* (Media and Media Systems Design), *Sense and Sensibility* (Video Director), *The Lady From the Village of Falling Flowers* (Video Director).

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**APOLOGIES TO
LORRAINE HANSBERRY
(YOU TOO, AUGUST WILSON)
by RACHEL LYNETT
October 10-11, 2022 at 7:30pm**

Written by RACHEL LYNETT
Directed by A. LORRAINE ROBINSON

Apologies to Lorraine Hansberry (You Too August Wilson) received its first professional reading with Mirrorbox Theatre in June 2020.

Apologies to Lorraine Hansberry (You Too August Wilson) received a professional reading as part of PlayFest 2020 at Orlando Shakes Theatre.

Apologies to Lorraine Hansberry (You Too August Wilson) was developed as part of the Martha Heasley Cox Virgin Play Festival at Magic Theatre in San Francisco in January 2021.

Sonia Fernandez, Interim Artistic Director Kevin Nelson, Managing Director
Apologies to Lorraine Hansberry (You Too August Wilson) received its world premiere at Fonseca Theatre in August 2021.

CAST

(in order of speaking appearance)

Alice	ERICA DILWORTH
Jules	NESSA AMHERST
Lorenzo	CHARLES FRANKLIN, IV
Yael	FATIMA QUANDER*
Izaak	THEODORE SAPP*

PRODUCTION

Stage Manager KETA NEWBORN

*Member of Actors' Equity Association

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APOLOGIES to
LORRAINE HANSBERRY
(YOU TOO, AUGUST WILSON)

By RACHEL LYNETT

Staged reading directed by A. LORRAINE ROBINSON



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