

*Knox College Theatre
in collaboration with Silk Road Rising
presents the college world premiere of*

A PLAY BY JAMIL KHOURY MOSQUE ALERT

Directed by Nell Blackadder



Join us in Harbach next term for:

Rapture, Blister, Burn
by GINA GIONFRIDDO
directed by JEFF GRACE

MAY 13TH - 16TH, 2015

WELCOME TO KNOX COLLEGE THEATRE

Welcome to the second mainstage production of Knox Theatre's 2014-15 season. We are excited to present the culmination of our collaboration with Jamil Khoury, Artistic Director of the Chicago company Silk Road Rising.

My work with Jamil goes back to 2012, when I directed *At Night's End*, a new play written by Motti Lerner, that year's Visiting Israeli Scholar and an award-winning playwright and screenwriter. Silk Road Rising has staged several of Motti's plays, and he introduced me to Jamil and his partner Malik, and suggested we develop a play together. We decided to work on a project Jamil had already conceived and explored, a play inspired by the 2010 controversy surrounding the proposed building of a mosque near Ground Zero in New York. As Jamil explains in this playbill, he began with a unique online play development approach, inviting people from all around the world to serve as co-creators of *Mosque Alert*. We then continued that process on campus during the fall and winter terms. Knox appointed Jamil playwright-in-residence, and he visited campus twice in the fall, when we ran workshops in which students read and discussed scenes from the script in progress. We are grateful for the support Jamil's residency has received not only from the campus but also from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

This term, Jamil returned to campus for auditions and first rehearsals, then again several weeks later. During that time, he's been continuing to edit the script, which has been exciting but also challenging for a cast that includes only two students who've previously appeared in a faculty-directed production. Jamil is also in residence this week, and will participate in a discussion after each performance. Civic engagement is central to Silk Road Rising's work, and we hope you will voice and debate your responses to *Mosque Alert*.

— Neil Blackadder, Chair

THEATRE DEPARTMENT FACULTY

Smith V. Brand Distinguished Prof. of Theatre Liz Carlin-Metz
Professor of Theatre..... Neil Blackadder
Associate Professor of Theatre..... Craig Choma
Assistant Professor of Theatre..... Jeff Grace
Lecturer in Costume Design.....Margo Shively
Writer-in-Residence Sherwood Kiraly
Distinguished Professor Emeritus Robert C. Whitlatch
Playwright-in-Residence 2014-2015..... Jamil Khoury

Knox College Theatre
in collaboration with Silk Road Rising
presents

Mosque Alert

BY JAMIL KHOURY

Directed by NEIL BLACKADDER

Scenic Design by CRAIG CHOMA

Costume Design by MARGO SHIVELY &
CHLOE VOLLENWEIDER

Lighting Design by CRAIG CHOMA & ANDREW PURVIS

Sound Design by JOEL SCHLEICHER

HARBACH THEATRE

FORD CENTER FOR THE FINE ARTS

FEBRUARY 25 - 28, 2015

Please join us following the performance for a post-show discussion with the playwright Jamil Khoury.

This program is partially supported by a grant from the



Additional support for Jamil Khoury's residency provided by the Greig Post, Finley, and Knight Funds, the Department of English, and the Dean's Office.

PRODUCTION STAFF

DIRECTOR..... Neil Blackadder
STAGE MANAGER..... Anna Karwowska
ASSISTANT STAGE MANAGERS..... Jamie Gavin, Emma Lipson
TECHNICAL DIRECTOR..... Craig Choma
ASSISTANT TECHNICAL DIRECTOR Jacob Schneider
SCENIC DESIGNER..... Craig Choma
SCENIC ARTIST..... Craig Choma
SCENERY/LIGHTING STAFF..... Nic Chapin, Moriah Chermak,
Sophie Click, Danny Donnelly,
Stephen Ford, Katie Greve, Emily Ioppolo,
Nathan Levine, Emma Lipson, Gregg Miller,
Rhiannon Neuville-Norton, Ian Tully
SCENE SHOP VOLUNTEERS..... Brady Comenduley, Emily Harvey,
Andre Leewright, Joel Schleicher, Eunice Shek,
and the students of Theatre 121: Design
& Technology for Stage & Screen
COSTUME DESIGNERS Margo Shively & Chloe Vollenweider
COSTUME STUDIO ASSISTANTS Miranda Loeber, Andrew Purvis,
Auty Rohweder, Carly Berinstein, Emily Trevor,
Willa Coufal, Jayel Gant, Morgan Jellison
Chloe Vollenweider, Katie Hutton, Kristina Mengis
LIGHTING DESIGNER..... Craig Choma
ASSISTANT LIGHTING DESIGNER Andrew Purvis
MASTER ELECTRICIAN Emily Ioppolo
LIGHTING BOARD OPERATOR..... Anna Karwowska
SOUND DESIGNER..... Joel Schleicher
SOUND BOARD OPERATOR Joel Schleicher
PROPS MASTER..... Hanna Levine
DRAMATURG..... Martha Brown

*Architectural renderings generously provided by
Christopher B. McCoy, AIA, Lexington, KY.*

*Props graciously loaned by Hawthorne Centre Antique Mall, 2188 Veterans Drive,
Galesburg.*

SPECIAL THANKS

Malik Gillani, the staff of Silk Road Rising (Ethan Grant, Corey Pond,
and Maria Wagner), James Thrall, Dean Laura Behling, Anne-Marie
Berk, George and Kathy Knapp

ABOUT SILK ROAD RISING

Silk Road Rising is a Chicago based non-profit theatre and media company that produces stage plays, video plays, and documentary films. By telling stories through primarily Asian American and Middle Eastern American lenses, Silk Road Rising is committed to advancing a polycultural worldview.

Founded in 2002 by life partners Malik Gillani and Jamil Khoury in response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, Silk Road Rising understands the power of representation and the importance of shaping one's own representation. In countering negative and "otherizing" narratives about Asian, Middle Eastern and Muslim peoples with stories that are thoughtful, multi-faceted, and grounded in human experience, Silk Road Rising challenges colonial and Orientalist narratives, orthodoxies of identity politics, and theories purporting a "clash of civilizations." The term "Silk Road" refers to the historic trade routes that originated in China and extended across Central and South Asia, the Middle East, and into Europe, from the 2nd century B.C.E. until about the 16th century A.C.E. By envisioning a world that values art over ideology and inquiry over dogma, and creating space for feminist and queer voices within Silk Road communities, Silk Road Rising strives to advance change through cultural production.

NOTES FROM PLAYWRIGHT JAMIL KHOURY

From lower Manhattan's Cordoba House (aka Park 51 aka "ground zero mosque") to Knox College's student production of "Mosque Alert," I have been on a whirlwind journey of discovering, decoding, and dramatizing resistance to the building of Muslim houses of worship and that pernicious triumvirate of public policy, racism, and zoning permits. But I never would've imagined that against the backdrop of ISIS and Chapel Hill, of Charlie Hebdo and a Texas fireman applauding the burning of a mosque, I'd find myself in Galesburg, Illinois working with a visionary director, Neil Blackadder, and some of the smartest, most thoughtful, honest, and engaged undergrads I've ever encountered.

What started as a series of student workshops, and a somewhat discombobulated "collection" of scenes I'd written, has culminated in the college world premiere of a play originally conceived as an online civic engagement and new play development project—"crowdsourced co-creating" meets the hallowed halls of academia. In other words, after releasing 24 character video blogs, nine virtual "conflict scenes," a digital compilation, 20,000+ online downloads, dozens of public presentations, angry walkouts, gracious applause, and hundreds of comments, posts, questions, shares, and private emails, I arrived at Knox College with characters, plot points, politics, and a story just waiting to congeal. And congeal it has. The play being staged in Harbach Theatre grows out of a uniquely collaborative process that has the culture and history of Knox College written all over it. Students spoke; faculty spoke; I spoke (and spoke and spoke); we listened, we exchanged, argued, debated, discovered, and ultimately, we created. The play may be set in Naperville, Illinois, but its themes of loyalty and betrayal, pluralism and prejudice, civil rights and personal fears, are themes that resonate universally. Today it's mosques that some fear. In yesteryears it was Catholic churches, Jewish synagogues, and Mormon Temples. Thus continues the cycle of expanding and redefining Americanness.

THE CAST

in order of appearance

TED BAKER.....	Trevor Marshall
TAWFIQ HUSSEIN	Zair Zahid
AYESHA KHAN.....	Alexia Vasilopoulos
MUSTAFA KHAN	Caleb Awe
CARL BAKER	Ben Rezko
HADIYA HUSSEIN	Jayel Gant
AMINAH HUSSEIN.....	Ayesha Ismael Fariz
EMILY BAKER.....	Sammie Zimay
JENNIFER BAKER.....	Ngan Le
FARID HUSSEIN.....	Zak Metalsky
DANIEL BAKER.....	John Bird

SETTING

Mosque Alert is set in August, 2014, in Naperville, Illinois.

There will be one 10-minute intermission.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Chairperson	Neil Blackadder
House Manager	Jordan Hurst
Reservations & Tickets.....	Sam Auch
Box Office.....	Sam Auch & Student Volunteers
Poster Design	Craig Choma
Programs	Sam Auch
Publicity	Peter Bailley, Sam Auch, Cast & Crew
Ushers.....	Student Volunteers

WHO'S WHO IN THE CAST

CALEB AWE (Mustafa Khan) is a junior majoring in Theatre and minoring in Creative Writing. He has been involved in theatre at Knox since spring term his freshman year. He was in *McComb 1964* (Sheriff Warren) and it was the first time he had acted on stage. Since then he's been involved in *Next Fall* (Brandon), *Mitch in the Morning*, *The Sandman* (Robert), and other minor acting opportunities his classes have given him chances to participate in. He's happy to be a part of the *Mosque Alert* process since it has given him the opportunity to communicate openly with the playwright about the plot and characters. Caleb is from Oak Park, Illinois.

JOHN BIRD (Daniel Baker) is a senior double-majoring in Theatre and Environmental Studies. Previous Knox credits include *A Funny Walk Home* (Bill), *Playhouse Creatures* (Otway), *Next Fall* (Butch), *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* (Ensemble), *The Green Bird* (Calmon), and *Mary Stuart* (Paulet). John is also a sound designer within the department, having designed for this term's production of *Stop Kiss* as well as several other productions over his time here. He's currently completing his senior research in Environmental Studies on sustainability in modern American music festivals. He'd like to thank his friends, family, and professors for all their support over the years: it means more to him than any paragraph in a program could ever properly express. John is from Frankfort, IL.

JAYEL GANT (Hadiya Hussein) is a first-year and is currently undeclared. Her previous theatre experiences include various small acting parts in

high school productions along with playwriting/directing for fundraising events, and kids retreats. She has been involved in all of the *Mosque Alert* workshops and is delighted to be a part of the show. Jayel has also had a wonderful time working backstage in the costume shop and watching each character's unique sense of style. Jayel is from Kansas City, MO.

AYESHA ISMAEL-FARIZ (Aminah Hussein) is a senior majoring in Economics with a Business and Management minor. She is excited to be a part of her first theatre mainstage production at Knox. She recently spent a semester of her senior year abroad in Amman, Jordan. Ayesha would like to thank her mother for her never ending support and encouragement. Ayesha is from Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

NGAN LE (Jennifer Baker) is a sophomore majoring in Theatre and Biology. She has been involved in theatre since coming to Knox, including *The Devil Is Bored* (Assistant Sound Designer). *Mosque Alert* is her first mainstage production, and she is excited for this great opportunity. Ngan is actively involved with Dance Squad, Track and Field, running the 60m and 200m dash and TRIO. She would like to thank her family and friends, her professors, and coaches for their great support. Ngan is from Chicago, Illinois.

TREVOR MARSHALL (Ted Baker) is an undeclared sophomore. His previous theatre experience includes directing *Picasso at the Lapin Agile* and performing with the Knox Improv Club in *Not a Tourist Trap*, *What a Strange Apocalypse I've Found Myself In*, *24 Hour Improv*, and more.

WHO'S WHO IN THE CREATIVE TEAM

He's happy to be working with so many great people on *Mosque Alert*, and is very excited about the show. Trevor is from St. Louis, Missouri.

ZAK METALSKY (Farid Hussein) is a first-year planning to major in Theatre. This is his first mainstage production at Knox, though previous theatre experiences include staged readings with the Prairie Players Theatre and acting/writing for Playground. He has thoroughly enjoyed being involved with *Mosque Alert* and he is honored to have this be his first major show. He would like to thank director Neil Blackadder, writer Jamil Khoury, and companion Lil' Mordecai. Zak is from Appleton, WI.

BENJAMIN REZKO (Carl Baker) is a freshman planning to major in Theatre and Psychology. This will be Ben's first show at Knox, but his previous theater experiences include *Grease* (Kenickie) and a summer Second City! training camp show. Ben has been involved with *Mosque Alert* since its early beginnings. Silk Road Rising came to his high school and they did script readings in Drama Class. Ben also attended the workshops Jamil had during the Fall Term, and he is very honored and excited to be a part of the first performance of this play. Ben is from Chicago, Illinois.

ALEXIA VASILOPOULOS (Ayesha Khan) is a senior double-majoring in Political Science and French. Her previous theater experiences include *The Vagina Monologues* (Ensemble), *Scared Money* (Vee), *Check, Please* (Girl), and *Crumble, Lay Me Down Justin Timberlake* (Aunt Barbara). She would like to thank her mother, sister, and best friends, for being her number one fans in everything she is passionate

about. OPA! Alexia is originally from Greece, but has spent most of her life growing up in the south suburbs of Chicago, in Oak Forest, IL.

ZAIR ZAHID (Tawfiq Hussein) is a sophomore majoring in Financial Mathematics with a double minor in Economics and Business. This will be his first theatre production at Knox but has been part of the theatre world since before he could walk! Zair is also a tennis player and missing his match for this play. But he is very excited to be part of this production! Zair is from Lahore, Pakistan.

SAMMIE ZIMAY (Emily Baker) is a junior majoring in Theatre. She's been involved in theatre since coming to Knox, including the productions *Henry Moore is Melting* (Carrie Deacon), *Railing It Uptown* (Woman in Black), *Are You Ready?* (Woman), and *Iphigenia 2.0* (Soldier). She's very excited to be a part of *Mosque Alert*. She has just returned from a study abroad term in Ireland and is happy to be back at Knox. Sammie is also actively involved in Terpsichore. Sammie is from Northbrook, Illinois.

JAMIL KHOURY (Playwright) is Founding Artistic Director of Chicago's Silk Road Rising and the 2014 -15 Playwright-in-Residence at Knox College. A theatre producer, essayist, playwright, and film maker, Khoury's work focuses on Middle Eastern themes and questions of Diaspora. He is particularly interested in the intersections of culture, national identity, citizenship, and class. Khoury holds a M.A. degree in Religious Studies from The University of Chicago Divinity School and a B.S. 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. Khoury is the 2013 recipient of the Actor's Equity Association's Kathryn V. Lamkey Award for promoting diversity and inclusion in theatre, the 2013 recipient of the Change Maker Award from South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT) for advancing anti-racist civic engagement, and the 2010 recipient of the 3Arts Artist Award for Playwriting. Khoury thanks Knox College, Neil Blackadder, and the entire cast and production team of *Mosque Alert* for a truly extraordinary experience.

NEIL BLACKADDER (Director) has taught at Knox since 1998, in the areas of dramatic literature and theatre history, dramaturgy, and playwrighting. *Mosque Alert* is the

twelfth show he has directed or co-directed in Harbach, ranging from Molière, Schiller, and Chekhov to the world premiere of Motti Lerner's *At Night's End*. In 2008, he directed the English-language world premiere of his own translation from German of Rebekka Kricheldorf's *Rosa and Blanca*. Neil's translations have also been produced professionally in the UK and US and recognized with many grants and residencies including from PEN, the Howard Foundation, and the Banff Centre. Neil grew up and went to university in England, and first came to the US for graduate study in Comparative Literature. He is the author of *Performing Opposition: Modern Theater and the Scandalized Audience*, and of the short play "Dad's Guns," published in the collection *24 Gun Control Plays*.

CRAIG CHOMA (Scenic & Lighting Designer/ Technical Director/Videographer) is an Associate Professor of Theatre at Knox College (resident designer and technical director). Favorite Knox designs include *The Caffè Cino Project*, *In The Next Room (or the vibrator play)*, *Next Fall*, *The Green Bird*, *Caucasian Chalk Circle*, *Under Construction*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Lie of The Mind*, *Medea*, *Angels in America*, *Intimate Apparel*, *Rosa & Blanca*, *The Skriker*, *Noises Off*, *A Moon for the Misbegotten*, *As You Like It*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *War and Peace*, *Arcadia*, and *Macbeth*. Craig is also an inaugural member of Vitalist Theatre in Chicago, whose designs include the award winning productions of *A*

Passage to India (sets) and *Mother Courage and Her Children* (sets), *Anna Karenina* (sets), *Floating Rhoda and the Glue Man* (sets), *King Lear* (lighting), *The Mill On The Floss* (set and lighting), and the world premiere of *Anung's First American Christmas* (set). Other Chicago designs include the sets for *Death and the Maiden* (Timeline), *Pippin*, *Night Sky*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Museum*. Craig holds a BA in Theatre and Philosophy (Knox College) and MFA's in both scenic and lighting design (Carnegie Mellon University). Craig thanks his lovely wife and two beautiful daughters for their boundless creativity and unconditional love.

MARGO SHIVELY (Costume Designer) began her career in the fashion industry after graduating from the the Art Institute of Chicago. She interned with Oleg Cassini and designed and freelanced for several years before coming to Knox to teach costume design. In her thirty years at Knox, Margo has designed—more frequently co-designed with students—a number of plays. She has also designed for the Black Hills Playhouse in Custer, South Dakota and is a regular designer and consultant for Vitalist Theatre Company in Chicago, where she has been actively involved since its first production of *The Mill On The Floss* in 1997. She is an active member of the U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology, participating in symposiums on design and curriculum across the country. Her students have gone on to pursue Master's degrees at Yale, Carnegie Mellon, University of Connecticut at

Storrs, and the University of Texas at Austin. Of her many experiences, she is most grateful for, and proud of, the opportunity to work with students who share her passion for design. Margo is from Galesburg, IL.

CHLOE VOLLENWEIDER (Costume Designer) is a sophomore majoring in Theatre and minoring in Religious Studies. Recently she has been involved in *Crumble*, *Lay Me Down*, *Justin Timberlake* (Costume Designer), *The Caffè Cino Project* (Hair and Makeup Designer), and *Maple and Vine* (Co-Dramaturg). Chloe is also a teaching assistant in the costume shop. She has been delighted to be a part of *Mosque Alert*. Chloe is from Kansas City.

ANDREW PURVIS (Assistant Lighting Designer) is a senior majoring in Theatre with a minor in Creative Writing. He has been involved in many capacities with Knox Theatre over the past years, acting in past productions: *The Caffè Cino Project* (Jack/George Birimisa), *Playhouse Creatures* (Earl of Rochester), *Hot 'n' Throbbing* (Clyde). This is his second Lighting Design credit following his work last term on *Crumble* (*Lay Me Down Justin Timberlake*). Andrew is from Colorado Springs, Colorado.

ANNA KARWOWSKA (Stage Manager) is a Post-Bac ('14) with a degree in English Literature. Her previous theater experiences include *The Caffè Cino Project* (Associate Stage Manager), *Maple and Vine* (Assistant Stage Manager), *Crash by Sunny Bow Mar Lake* (Stage Manager), and *Death Comes to Us*

All, Mary Agnes (Stage Manager). She has been working on *Mosque Alert* for two terms now, and is ecstatic to see the play come to life! As a Post-Bac, she is doing a research project with the English Department where she is developing an approach for how research can be better implemented in English Literature and Creative Writing classrooms. Anna is from Arlington Heights, IL.

JAMIE GAVIN (Assistant Stage Manager) is a freshman. She was involved with theatre in high school and was an ASM for *Crumble* last term. This is Jamie's first mainstage show and she is very glad to have this experience. Jamie is from Wausau, WI.

EMMA LIPSON (Assistant Stage Manager) is a first year with plans to major in theatre. Her previous theatre experiences include *The Caffè Cino Project* (ASM) as well as working in the scene shop. Emma is excited to be assistant stage managing her second show at Knox and can't wait to see everything come together. Emma is from Norwalk, Ct.

MARTHA BROWN (Dramaturg) is a sophomore majoring in Creative Writing and minoring in Theater. She has nursed a healthy relationship with Knox's Studio Theatre in a wide range of duties, but this is her first time Drama-Turkey-ing a show. She is very excited to be involved in such a meaningful production with such an important message and hopes everyone will walk away having learned something. Martha is from Portland, OR.

JOEL SCHLEICHER (Sound Designer/Board Op) is in his first year at Knox and is currently majoring in Theatre Design and Technology. He has been working in audio design and system management for theatre and musical productions for the past ten years, and has served as audio tech for *Phantom of the Opera*, *Les Misérables*, *Into the Woods*, *Comedy Sports*, and *RENT*. He has also worked as sound designer for *The Caffè Cino Project*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Little Mermaid*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. Joel is from Northbrook, Illinois.

HANNA LEVINE (Props Master) is a first-year and plans major in Theatre. At Knox, she has performed in *Last Kiss* and *The Legend of Zelda: Majora's Mask*, both of which were one act readings. She has enjoyed working on *Mosque Alert* as Props Manager this term. Hanna is from Irvine, California.