

NOVID  
PARSI'S  
THROUGH  
THE  
ELEVATED  
LINE

THE WORLD PREMIERE  
**MARCH 7 - APRIL 15, 2018**

Written by **NOVID PARSI** | Directed by **CARIN SILKAITIS**



**SILK ROAD RISING**  
UNLEASH CURIOSITY

# NOVID PARSİ'S THROUGH THE ELEVATED LINE

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 3 **Cast List**  
**Production Team**
- 4 **Cast Bios**
- 6 **Production Team Bios**
- 10 **Among Our Own**  
by Novid Parsi
- 11 **A Star is Rising**  
by Jamil Khoury
- 12 **The Many Questions of**  
*Through the Elevated Line*  
by Carin Silkaitis
- 13 **How's the Water?**  
by Kate Cuellar
- 14 **Timeline of U.S.-Iranian Relations**  
by Kate Cuellar
- 16 **On the Poet Hafez**  
by Kate Cuellar
- 17 **About Silk Road Rising**
- 18 **Supporting Donations**
- 20 **Company List**  
**Board of Directors**
- 21 **Sponsor Acknowledgments**  
**Special Thanks**

## THE WORLD PREMIERE

Written by Novid Parsi  
Directed by Carin Silkaitis

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 LIST

**Philip Winston\*** | Sean  
**Salar Ardebili** | Razi  
**Christian Castro** | Cesar and others  
**Catherine Dildilian** | Soraya  
**Alison Plott** | Beth  
**Scott Shimizu** | Ben  
**Joshua J. Volkens** | Chuck  
**Ninos Baba** | Understudy for Razi  
**Bobby Bowman** | Understudy for Chuck  
**Tina El Gamal** | Understudy for Soraya  
**Amy Gray** | Understudy for Beth  
**Armando Reyes** | Understudy for Cesar  
and others  
**Reed Willard** | Understudy for Sean  
**Tim Yong** | Understudy for Ben

## PRODUCTION TEAM

**Malik Gillani** | Producer  
**Jamil Khoury** | Producer  
**Corey Pond** | Associate Producer  
**Novid Parsi** | Playwright  
**Carin Silkaitis** | Director  
**Joshua Baggett\*** | Stage Manager  
**Joe Schermoly\*\*** | Set Designer  
**Elsa Hiltner** | Costume Designer  
**Lindsey Lyddan** | Lighting Designer  
**Jeffrey Levin** | Sound Designer and  
Original Music  
**Abigail Cain** | Props Designer  
**Gaby Labotka** | Fight and Intimacy  
Choreographer  
**Kate Cuellar** | Dramaturg  
**Kelly Butler** | Production Manager  
**Kathryn McNall** | Production Manager  
**Harrison Ornelas** | Technical Director  
**Kristin Osborn** | Assistant Director  
**Stephen Kossack** | Assistant Stage Manager  
**Salar Ardebili** | Farsi Coach  
**David Trudeau** | Master Electrician  
**Colin Smith** | Marketing Coordinator  
**Al Gillani** | Box Office Manager  
**Nick Johnson** | House Manager  
**Sarah Ibis** | Program Editor  
**Deann Baker** | Video Coordinator and Editor

\* Member of Actors' Equity Association,  
the union of professional actors and stage  
managers in the United States.

\*\* Denotes member of United Scenic Artists, the  
union of professional designers, artists, and  
craftspeople.

## CAST BIOS



**Philip Winston** (Sean) is thrilled to be working with Silk Road Rising on this beautiful play. He was an ensemble member of the now disbanded Signal Ensemble Theatre where his credits included *The Ballad of the Sad Café*, *The Birthday Party*, and *1776* (which earned him a Joseph Jefferson Award nomination.) Most recently, he was seen in Steppenwolf Theatre's production of *The Crucible* as Putnam and Willard. Other Chicago credits include *As You Like It* (First Folio Theatre), *You Can't Take it With You* (Northlight Theatre), *Romeo and Juliet* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre Short Shakespeare!), *Romeo and Juliet* (Teatro Vista), *The Realm* (The Other Theatre Company), and *Dancing at Lughnasa* (Irish Theatre of Chicago). Philip holds an MFA in acting from The Shakespeare Theatre's Academy for Classical Acting at George Washington University and is a graduate of the School at Steppenwolf.



**Salar Ardebili** (Razi) is a Chicago based actor. His most notable Chicago credits include *Yasmina's Necklace* at the Goodman Theatre and *The North Pool* at Interrobang Theatre Project, for which he received a Jeff Award nomination for Best Actor in a Principal Role. Recent regional theatre credits include *Disgraced* (Portland Stage Company and Hangar Theatre) and *I Call My Brothers* (Cleveland Public Theatre). Television credits include NBC's *Chicago PD* and Amazon's *Patriot*. Salar is an ensemble member with Interrobang Theatre Project. He is represented by Shirley Hamilton Inc. For more, visit [www.salarardebili.com](http://www.salarardebili.com).



**Christian Castro** (Cesar and others) is very excited to be making his Silk Road Rising debut for this world premiere production of *Through The Elevated Line*. He was last seen on stage in the Eclipse Theatre world premiere of *Megastasis*. He began his professional career

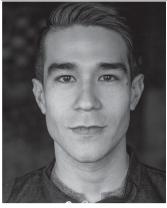
as an ensemble member for Chicago Dance Crash in 2002, and has worked at Steppenwolf, Chicago Shakespeare, Goodman Theatre, Victory Gardens, Lifeline Theatre, About Face Theatre, Eclipse Theatre, The Den, TimeLine, Artistic Home, Teatro Vista, Urban Theatre Company, THEMASSIVE, Tympanic Theatre Company, and Illinois Theatre Center (with the late Etel Billig). His SAG/AFTRA television credits include *Chicago Code*, *Mob Doctor*, *Chicago Fire*, *Crisis*, *Chicago PD*, and *Empire*.



**Catherine Dildilian** (Soraya) is pleased to return to Silk Road Rising after performing in several of their staged readings, and as an understudy in *Mosque Alert* and *Night Over Erzinga*. Recently, she performed in the solo piece *Avenge Our Blood*, originating the roles of a young woman and her family members 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 with 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.



**Alison Plott** (Beth) is elated to be working with Silk Road Rising for the first time. Chicago credits include *Home* (Piven Theatre Lab Series), *In the Wake* (The Comrades), *Wit* (Aston Rep), *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Mortal Audit* (The Arc), *Le Switch* (About Face), *The Vandal* (Steep), *The Hamlet Project* (Los Angeles and Chicago companies), *Unbearable Lightness of Being* and *The Odyssey* (Creative Wellness). Regional credits include *Or What You Will* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Comedy of Errors* (New Swan Shakespeare Festival), *The Learned Ladies* and *As You Like It* (Texas Shakespeare Festival), *Little Dog Laughed* (Theatre Out), *The Wedding Singer* and *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (Santa Rosa Rep). Alison has an MFA in acting from the University of California, Irvine.



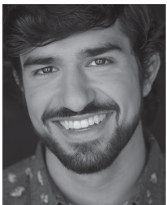
**Scott Shimizu** (Ben) is excited to perform again with Silk Road Rising after previously appearing in *Wild Boar* and *Paulus*. After graduating from Northwestern University with a

BA degree in theatre and musical theatre, Scott has been fortunate enough to work with a myriad of companies around the city, including The Marriott Theatre in Lincolnshire, The Lyric Opera of Chicago, Greenhouse Theatre Center, and Griffin Theatre, among others. Scott would like to thank his family, especially Chad, for their love and support. Scott is proud to be represented by Paonessa Talent Agency.



**Joshua J. Volkers** (Chuck) is making his Silk Road Rising debut. Other acting credits include *Not About Nightingales* at Raven Theatre, *Watch on the Rhine* at The Artistic Home, *Chapter Two* at Windy City Playhouse, *Rolling*

at Jackalope Theatre, *Rites and Sacrifices* at Idle Muse Theatre, *Changes of Heart* at Remy Bumpo Theatre, *Black Diamond* at Lookingglass Theatre, *As Told by The Vivian Girls* at Dog and Pony Theatre, and *Julius Caesar* at Muse of Fire.



**Ninos Baba** (Understudy for Razi) is so excited to be joining Silk Road Rising for the first time! Previous credits include *Miranda* (Indiana Repertory Theatre); *Significant Other* and *I Am My Own Wife* (About

Face Theatre); *King Lear*, *Death of a Salesman*, and *The Comedy of Errors* (American Players Theatre). He holds a BFA from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. While at school he performed in *The Grapes of Wrath*, *1984*, *Oh! What a Lovely War*, *Not About Nightingales*, and *Much Ado About Nothing*. He'd like to thank the family and friends that have supported his journey so far.



**Bobby Bowman** (Understudy for Chuck) is making his Silk Road Rising debut. Chicago credits include *Shakespeare in Love* (Chicago Shakespeare Theatre), *Fair Maid of the West* (Oak Park Festival Theatre),

*Hand to God* (Victory Gardens Theatre), *Richard III* (The Gift Theatre), and *A Loss of Roses* (Raven Theatre). Regional credits include *Death of a Salesman* and *King Lear* (American Players Theatre); *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *As You Like It*, and *Two Gentlemen of Verona* (Montana Shakespeare in the Parks); and two seasons with Notre Dame Shakespeare Festival. Bobby received a BFA in acting from Oklahoma City University. He would like to thank his mom and Ninos.



**Tina El Gamal** (Understudy for Soraya) is a Chicago based actress and theatre artist. She is thrilled and honored to be making her professional debut at Silk Road Rising in the world premiere of *Through the Elevated*

*Line*. Tina is currently completing her BA in acting at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her recent credits include roles in an all-female rendition of *Glengarry Glen Ross*, *Passing Strange*, and *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot* at UIC Theatre. With her graduation just around the corner, expect to see her out and about in the Chicago theatre scene!



**Amy Gray** (Understudy for Beth) is grateful to be making her Silk Road Rising debut. She recently understudied *Pillars of the Community* for Strawdog Theatre Company. She trained at The School at Steppenwolf

(Chicago), Oxford University (England), Accademia dell'Arte (Italy), and Rhodes College (Memphis). As a teenager, she toured throughout the country as the lead role in *I Never Saw Another Butterfly*. Amy was honored by the Memphis Arts Council with two Ostrander Awards and five nominations for excellence in acting, and has recorded vocals on four original cast albums. In Chicago, she directed *Twelfth Night* and performed in *Fame*, *Barefoot in the Park*, *Chapter Two*, *The Last Cyclist*, *Jim & Dave's Blood Meets Jupiter*, *Zelda at the Oasis*, *Holiday*, *The Seagull*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *The Secret Garden*. This is always for my Dad.



**Armando Reyes** (Understudy for Cesar and others) is excited to make his Silk Road Rising debut. Chicago credits include *Perfect Arrangement* at Pride Film and Plays, *Nautilina* and *At The Center* for the Agency Theater Collective, *Adoration of the Old Woman* at Urban Theatre Company, *Romeo and Juliet* with Teatro Vista, and *Yellow Eyes* at Vision Latino. Film and television credits include *Chicago Med*, *Nowhere Mind*, *The Origins of Wit and Humor*, and *Icarus*.



**Reed Willard** (Understudy for Sean) is still somewhat new to town. He recently made his Chicago theatre debut playing the lead role in Oil Lamp Theatre's *A Love Affair*, followed by *The Making of a Modern*

*Folk Hero* with Other Theatre, and *Puff: Believe It or Not* with Remy Bumppo Theatre. His southern California credits include *The Car Plays* (La Jolla Playhouse); *The Aliens*, *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Ion Theatre); *Edward II* and *Dooley* (Diversionary Theatre); *Romeo and Juliet* (Intrepid Shakespeare Co.); *The Rocky Horror Show* (OnStage Playhouse); and *I'm Not Rappaport* (Scripps Ranch Theatre). His TV credits include *The Fugitive Chronicles* (A&E), *Monk* (USA), *Deadly Obsession* (Discovery), and *American Horror Story* (FX). Reed would like to extend his thanks and appreciation to the talented cast and crew of this wonderful production. Reed is represented by Grossman & Jack Talent.



**Tim Yong** (Understudy for Benjamin) is excited to be working with all of these talented people! He recently graduated from Loyola University Chicago where he was the Strongman in *Elephant's Graveyard* and Lord

Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*. This past summer, he was Kerchak in *Tarzan* at Spotlight Studio in Monroe, Michigan. Recently, he was Bishop Baldwin and Servant in *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* at The Raven Theatre. He would like to thank his friends and family for their continued 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. Most notably, he conceived of and developed SRR's model for creating online video plays which are now being accessed across the globe. He established SRR's arts integrated 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 education program for high school and middle school students in partnership with San Diego's Playwrights Project, called Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course (EPIC). 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 received 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 Chicago Community Trust's Fellowship Program. Malik is the recipient of the IBM Business and Technology Leadership Award, Changing Worlds Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Arts, and the Chicago Community Trust Fellowship Award.



**Jamil Khoury** (Producer) is Chief Programming Officer & Mission Trustee at 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 Tufts University (Boston, Massachusetts), Benedictine University (Lisle, Illinois), North Central College (Naperville, Illinois), Valparaiso University (Valparaiso, Indiana), and Knox College (Galesburg, Illinois). 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 and performed in Hamburg, Germany. 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 and is thrilled to take on the role of associate producer for SRR's 15th Anniversary Season and beyond. Previous work at

SRR includes co-curator of *Semitic Commonwealth*, production manager for everything since *Night Over Erzinga*, director for *Yasmina's Necklace*, and assistant director for *Re-Spiced* and *The Lake Effect*. He holds a BA in theatre from Illinois State University where his studies concentrated on directing but also explored theater management and dramaturgy.



**Novid Parsi** (Playwright) has authored plays that have been produced or developed by Golden Thread Productions, The New Group, Paines Plough, Playwrights Foundation, Silk Road Rising, Stephen

Joseph Theatre, West Yorkshire Playhouse, and The Young Vic, among others. His plays have been recognized by the Playwrights Foundation's Bay Area Playwrights Festival (finalist and semifinalist) and the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference (semifinalist). A son of Iranian immigrants, he was born in New York, grew up in Texas, and earned degrees in literature from Swarthmore College and Duke University. Also a freelance writer, Novid regularly covers the arts in Chicago. Novid lives in Chicago with his husband.



**Carin Silkaitis** (Director) is thrilled to be working with Novid Parsi and Silk Road Rising on this gorgeous play. Carin previously directed two readings of *Mosque Alert* for SRR, as well as a full production of the play

at North Central College. Carin is the Founding Artistic Director of Other Theatre where her acting credits include *I Do Today*, *The Realm*, and *Other Letters*; and her directing credits include *OTHERS: A 24 Hour Play Festival*, *Daughters of Ire*, and *Barney the Elf*. Other notable directing credits include *La Boheme*, *La Traviata*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Madama Butterfly*, *Così Fan Tutte*, *The Student Prince*, *Pirates of Penzance*, *The Merry Widow*, *The New Moon*, and *Music in the Air* (Music By The Lake); *In Her Footsteps* (Greenhouse Theater Center – Trellis Project); *Envoy*, *Stop...Look...Listen* (Roosevelt University); *The Laramie Project*, *Distracted*, *Romeo & Juliet*, *Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Twelfth Night*, and *Women and Wallace* (North Central College). Notable acting credits include *Chicago Fire* (NBC), *Unexpected* (SAG feature film), *Machinal* (Greenhouse Theater Center), *Visiting* (Artemisia Theatre), *Lips Together*, *Teeth Apart* (Eclipse Theatre), *Sons of the Prophet* (American Theatre Company), *Richard III* (Oak Park Festival Theatre), *Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England* (Theater Wit), and *Rabbit Hole* (Goodman Theatre). Carin is a graduate of the School at Steppenwolf. She received her MFA in acting from the Theatre Conservatory at Roosevelt University. Carin is proud to be represented by Gray Talent Group, and equally proud to be a member of Actors Equity Association.

**Joshua Baggett** (Stage Manager) is thrilled to return to Silk Road Rising after serving as the stage manager for *Wild Boar*. As a Chicago based director

and stage manager, local credits include productions with Definition Theatre Company, Chicago Shakespeare Theater, Porchlight Music Theatre, and Williams Street Repertory. Regionally, Josh has worked with Little Theatre on the Square, Apple and Oranges Arts, Tennessee Shakespeare Company, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, The Shakespeare Theatre Company, and Orlando Shakespeare Theatre. Selected event credits include *Invictus Games*, *Pop Warner Cheerleading Competitions*, and numerous projects with Disney Parks Live Entertainment. He also served as a regional casting assistant with Disney Theatrical Group, coordinating annual auditions for Disney's *The Lion King* and *Mary Poppins*. For more, visit [www.jbbcreative.com](http://www.jbbcreative.com).

**Joe Schermoly** (Set Designer) is happy to be designing his first show for Silk Road Rising, working on this world premiere play. Previous credits include *Yasmina's Necklace* (Goodman Theatre); *Constellations* (Steppenwolf Theatre); *Hand to God* and *Samsara* (Victory Gardens); *Naperville*, *The Watson Intelligence*, *Mr Burns*, *Seven Homeless Mammoths Wander New England*, *Completeness* (Theatre Wit); *Puff: Believe it or Not*, *Pirandello's Henry IV*, *Travesties* (Remy Bumppo); *American Idiot* (The Hypocrites); *Pocahontas*, *Titanic*, *Spelling Bee*, *Flare Path*, *Punk Rock*, *Port*, *Constant Wife* (Griffin); *Lela & Co*, *Wastewater* (Steep); *Stupid Fucking Bird*, *Idomeneus*, *The Ugly One* (Sideshow); *The Seafarer*, *Lay Me Down Softly* (Irish Theatre of Chicago). Joe studied scenic design at Northwestern University. He has received one Equity Jeff Award, two After Dark Awards and five Jeff Nominations. For more, visit [www.joeschermoly.com](http://www.joeschermoly.com).

**Elsa Hiltner** (Costume Designer) is honored to return to Silk Road Rising after designing for *Great Expectations*, *Mosque Alert*, *Paulus*, and *Night Over Erzinga*. Elsa is based in Chicago; her work includes designs for Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Signal Ensemble, Collaboraction, Remy Bumppo Theatre, Eclipse Theater, LifeLine Theatre, American Blues Theater, Walkabout Theatre, The Right Brain Project, Teatro Vista, and First Folio Theatre, among others. Notable regional credits include Next Act Theatre, SecondStory Repertory, Balagan Theatre, and Book-It Repertory Theatre. Elsa is a company member of Collaboraction and an artistic associ-

ate of First Folio Theatre. For more, visit [www.elsahiltner.com](http://www.elsahiltner.com).

**Lindsey Lyddan** (Lighting Designer) is excited to be back with Silk Road Rising. She has worked with theatres all over the city including Haymarket Opera Company, Steppenwolf, Lookingglass Theatre, Drury Lane Oakbrook, Roosevelt University's Opera Program, University of Illinois at Chicago, Chicago Dramatists, Adventure Stage Chicago, and the Cherub program at Northwestern University. This fall she was privileged to travel to Charleville, France for the World Puppet Theatre Festival, where she was the associate lighting designer for *Moby Dick*. 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 [www.Lindseylyddandesign.com](http://www.Lindseylyddandesign.com)

**Jeffrey Levin** (Sound Designer and Original Music) is a composer, sound designer, and musician based in Chicago. He is thrilled to be collaborating for the first time with Silk Road Rising. Jeffrey has contributed original music and sound designs for nearly 100 productions at dozens of theatre companies in Chicago and elsewhere. Awards and recognitions include five Joseph Jefferson Award Nominations for Sound Design and Original Music (with one win, for *The Hairy Ape*, Oracle Productions), the Edes Award for Emerging Artists, the Michael Philippi prize (2016), two Broadway World nominations, and a Wilde Award Nomination. Jeffrey holds an MA in music from DePaul University and a BA in music from Columbia College, Chicago. For more, visit [www.jeffreylevinmusic.com](http://www.jeffreylevinmusic.com).

**Abigail Cain** (Props Designer) is very excited to be working with Silk Road Rising again. She previously worked on their co-production with Remy Bumppo, *Great Expectations*. Abigail is a freelance prop master/designer and prop artisan. Her Chicago credits include *A Hedda Gabbler* (Red Tape Theatre), *American Hwangap* (A-Squared/Halcyon), *The Nether* (A Red Orchid Theatre), *Picnic* (American Theatre Company), and *Anna Karenina* (Lifeline Theatre), among others. This past summer, she was the prop master at the Cape Playhouse for their 2017 season. Abigail is a graduate of Viterbo University where she earned a BFA in theatre. For more, visit [www.abbiecain.wixsite.com/props](http://www.abbiecain.wixsite.com/props).

**Gaby Labotka** (Fight and Intimacy Choreographer) is an actor, director, storyteller, and choreographer living and working in Chicago. Recent choreography credits include *A Story Told in Seven Fights* (The Neo-Futurists), *The Good Fight* (Babes with Blades), *A Swell in the Ground* (The Gift), *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* (Emerald City Theatre), *Hamlet* (Repertory Theatre of St. Louis), *Night in Alachua County* (WildClaw Theatre), *Romeo and Juliet* (Teatro Vista), and *Battleaxe Betty* (ATC CORE Series). Next up, she will be the fight choreographer for *Hamlet* at The Gift. Gaby is an advanced actor combatant with the Society of American Fight Directors and is proud to have trained with Intimacy Directors International. For more, visit [www.facebook.com/GabyLabotka.Theatre/](http://www.facebook.com/GabyLabotka.Theatre/)

**Kate Cuellar** (Dramaturg) is thrilled to be embarking on her first collaboration with Silk Road Rising. A San Antonio native, Kate has a BA in theatre from Trinity University. She was also a member of the 2015/2016 professional training company at Actors Theatre of Louisville, where she provided dramaturgical support to over a dozen new works, including three world premieres in the Humana Festival of New American Plays. Since moving to Chicago, she can be found at Greenhouse Theater Center where she currently serves as dramaturg on the Trellis Residency Initiative for playwrights and, recently, the winter Solo Performance Lab for new plays.

**Kelly Butler** (Production Manager) is excited to continue her work with Silk Road Rising after joining the organization for *Wild Boar*. Previous production management credits include the 65th Season of Theater on the Lake (Chicago Park District); *Shakin the Mess Outta Misery* and the 30th and 31st Young Playwright's Festivals (Pegasus Theatre Chicago); 2017 Peacebook Festival, *Gender Breakdown*, *The Mars Assignment* (Collaboraction); and *Cat in Heat* (Nothing Special Productions). Kelly has also worked in various capacities with New Moon Chicago, the Chicago Humanities Festival, Redmoon, Step Up Productions, American Theater Company, and more.

**Kathryn McNall** (Production Manager) is thrilled to be rejoining the Silk Road Rising team. Since moving to Chicago, Kathryn has had the

pleasure of working on a variety of festivals and full productions with the Agency Theater Collective and the Raven Theatre, including the Raven's Jeff-Nominated production of *Choir Boy*. Special thanks to Corey Pond for the opportunity to work with this fabulous company, and to Jake Engram for his tireless love and support.

**Harrison Ornelas** (Technical Director) was born and raised in Chicago. He graduated from Columbia College Chicago where he focused on production design and set construction. Harrison has worked as technical director for theaters all over the city including Theater on the Lake, Strawdog Theater Co., and A Red Orchid Theatre. He is very excited and grateful to be working with Silk Road Rising on this production. Harrison would like to thank Manny Ortiz and Linda Wyatt.

**Kristen Osborn** (Assistant Director) is a Chicago based director who is passionate about sparking compassion through storytelling. Directing credits include Eugene O'Neill's *Fog*, JoyistLA's *First Embrace*, and an original adaptation of the Orpheus and Eurydice myth, *Lift*. Assistant director credits include *The Scene* (Writers Theatre), *Sex With Strangers* (Geffen Playhouse), *Relativity* (Northlight Theatre), *Threesome* (Other Theatre Company), *Choir Boy* (Geffen Playhouse), and *Fighting Shadows* (Inner-City Arts). Kristen was the associate director of *Intersection: Across the Divide* at the 2016 Ojai Playwrights Conference, and artistic associate at the 2017 Ojai Playwrights Conference where she co-directed *Intersection: Truth Will Out*. Kristen is the artistic assistant at Northlight Theatre. She is a graduate of UCLA's School of Theater, Film and Television.

**Stephen Kossak** (Assistant Stage Manager) is a Chicago-based stage manager and casting director. Stage management credits include *In Her Footsteps* (Greenhouse Theater Center), *Machinal* (Greenhouse Theater Center), *Gefilte Fish Chronicles* (Chicago Musical Theatre Festival), *Sweet Charity* (North Central College), and *9 to 5: The Musical* (North Central College). Casting credits include work with Other Theatre, Haven Theatre, Pursuit Productions, ATHE, and Chicago Musical Theatre Festival. Stephen is a North Central College graduate. For more, visit [stephenkossak.com](http://stephenkossak.com).



## AMONG OUR OWN

By Novid Parsi, Playwright

Just over two years ago, when I began writing *Through the Elevated Line*, the waves of our nation's latest anti-foreigner fervor had only begun to rise.

The play started with the idea of two siblings—one on either side of our distinction between the good immigrant and the bad. We sanctify immigrants or vilify them. We see them as the hard worker or the freeloader. I wanted to complicate that easy distinction by exploring two immigrant characters not as types, but as individuals. They would not exist on separate sides of some imagined divide. As siblings, they would be intimately bound together.

Soraya left her homeland, Iran, for the United States when she was a teenager. For over a decade, she has dutifully ticked off all the boxes of the good immigrant: education, profession (a doctor, no less), marriage, family. Her husband, Chuck, who proudly claims his Irish heritage, and his friend, Benjamin, the grandchild of Japanese immigrants, represent the successful transition that Soraya has begun to make. That transition is also echoed in the three Latino characters, each increasingly American.

Yet this path is not so accessible to Soraya's brother, Razi. As a young gay man, he has been scarred by a repressive regime. Arriving at his sister's Chicago doorstep without money or work, he proceeds to shake the foundation upon which his sister and her husband have built their lives.

Razi Gol is an unwanted traveller: caught between two worlds, accepted by neither.

When I saw Razi in that light, when I understood the triangle joining him, his sister, and her husband, I realized that I was conjuring *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Blanche DuBois is likewise caught between two worlds: the old (or her fantasy of it) and the modern. I decided to embrace that influence by reimagining *Streetcar*, a play whose passion and poetry I've always admired. Like any contemporary spin on a classic text, *Through the Elevated Line* shows the past living in the present. Attitudes toward our own Blanches, our own others, have progressed...and haven't.

*Through the Elevated Line* looks at our idea of ourselves as inherently different from others, and above them. It considers the effects of believing ourselves not only exceptional but superior—elevated. We ride the elevated line, or we strive to. And not just we Americans: witness Razi's defensive sense of Iran's cultural superiority.

But what if we don't group other peoples into either allies aspiring to be like us, or villains aiming to destroy us? For one thing, it becomes less easy to think of ourselves as elevated. It becomes less easy to condemn any of these characters—Razi, Soraya, Chuck, Sean, Beth—for the terrible and even impossible choices they make.

Is Razi Gol deserving of our empathy? Our sanctuary? Where is his home? I think, in the end, *Through the Elevated Line* poses this question: who do we count among our own?

# A STAR IS RISING

By Jamil Khoury, Founding Artistic Director of Silk Road Rising



In the next few years, we'll be hearing a lot about playwright Novid Parsi. He'll be championed as an exciting new voice in the American theatre and his plays will be produced nationally. He'll be in the company of playwrights being lauded for bringing new energy and new consciousness to theatrical storytelling. And I say this knowing just two of Novid's plays, both profound in how they negotiate vulnerability and courage: *Our Mother's Meal* and *Through the Elevated Line*.

Whether or not I'm a reliable prognosticator, only time will tell. But I believe my predictions are more than just wishful thinking. On American stages, the complicated, the questioning, and the curious, are enjoying newfound currency. Novid Parsi, with his impressive capacity to create characters that are charming, prickly, compromised, and resilient, understands that one can be challenged by adversity without being defined by adversity.

*Through the Elevated Line* honors Tennessee Williams and *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and yet it was never intended to be an adaptation. As Novid notes, the contours of his story emerged first, before he recognized some distinct parallels with *Streetcar*. His steadfast admiration for Williams' classic permitted him to explore those parallels organically—albeit with caveats, qualifiers, and a contemporary reboot. The play is equally at home amidst immigrant narratives, queer narratives, Chicago narratives, and the narratives of Middle Eastern Diasporas. That said, it is neither a genre play, nor an issues play, nor an identity play. Rather, it inhabits a fluid space all its own. It is, at once, wildly relational, cunningly political, and deliciously subtextual, and yet never manipulative.

From its Uptown two-flat to its Iranian memories to its Chicago Cubs fandom, *Through the Elevated Line* constructs a world that is remarkably inviting. Novid's writing manages to be hospitable and unnerving at the same time. The interior worlds of his characters are never easy. They're neither predictable nor stereotypical. Theirs are worlds shaped by loss, trauma, and expectations of future gain. Materialism, superficiality, and crude measures of success go toe-to-toe with tradition, heritage, and Old World romanticism. Cosmetic surgery and furtive sexuality coexist alongside Persian poetry and immigration law. The breakneck speed at which the world around them changes forces each character to re-calibrate norms and redefine hopes, with scant time for reflection.

We first met Novid in the early days of Silk Road Rising. Back then, we knew him as a theatre critic and journalist. Today we see him first and foremost as an artist of great merit. Thus, it is a source of much pride that our production of *Through the Elevated Line* marks both the play's world premiere and Novid's first-ever full-length professional production. May it be the spark that ignites a brilliant and luminous career.



## THE MANY QUESTIONS OF *THROUGH THE ELEVATED LINE*

By Carin Silkaitis, Director

With *Through The Elevated Line*, Novid Parsi has crafted a script that's timely, necessary, powerful, and unapologetic. The play asks us to parse questions of inclusion, identity, power, privilege, and sexuality.

Jamil Khoury sent me this play back in March of 2017. When I finished reading I was both completely devastated and buzzing with ideas. Our country was in turmoil over Donald Trump's immigration reform and the "extreme vetting" of immigrants, travelers, and asylum seekers coming into the United States. Here in Chicago, lawyers were flocking to O'Hare to assist Middle Eastern travelers detained at the airport. This play couldn't be more relevant. Two things were very clear: I wanted to direct *Through The Elevated Line*, and I needed to meet Novid Parsi as soon as possible!

I connect with this play on a number of levels. As an activist and an ally, I am interested in telling stories about inequality and injustice. As a queer woman, I am interested in telling stories about the experience of queer folks both locally and globally. That fight has yet to be won. From recent anti-queer legislation in Russia and the rumors of gay men in Chechnya being thrown into concentration camps, to Indiana's recent legalization of bigotry under the guise of religious freedom, attempts to suppress queer identity and practice still abound, in the U.S. and in many places around the world. And so we ask: what are the challenges of living queer today? What are the responsibilities of bystanders and allies to queer-identifying people?

And why flash back to *A Streetcar Named Desire*? Tennessee Williams and Novid Parsi both ask us to consider what it means to be an American. What does it mean, and what is sacrificed, when we are accepted into the ruling class? Given the atrocities that surround us, *Through The Elevated Line* might be the mirror we hold up to reflect these questions. My hope is that our audiences will examine their own internal biases and ask even more questions. Are we willing to elevate ourselves to the peril of those around us? As "others" begin to face struggles we cannot even predict, what will we do with our power as bystanders and as allies? Will we watch helplessly as dreamers are dragged off? Will we continue to shut our eyes to the asylum seekers? Or will we use our bodies and our voices to stop the seemingly never-ending madness that flows out of our nation's capital? How can we as citizens respond to the reality that not everyone views the police as protectors? How do people react when they feel like their lives don't matter? How do people make sense of violence they have witnessed firsthand? How can we force systemic change where change is so urgently needed? What kind of future do we wish for ourselves and for our children? *Give me your tired, your poor...*

Really...?

In the Chicago of today our questions are many, and *Through The Elevated Line* helps us explore many of them. There aren't any easy answers to these questions, but Novid Parsi is asking. And it's up to us to respond.

Thank you for watching! I look forward to hearing from you.

## HOW'S THE WATER?

By Kate Cuellar, Dramaturg

In his now famous 2005 commencement address at Kenyon College, David Foster Wallace opens with a story about two young fish who, while swimming one morning, happen to meet an older fish who greets them with a friendly “how’s the water?” After the young fish have swum on a while, one of them turns to the other and asks, “what the hell is water?” I’ve thought about this story many times while serving as dramaturg on *Through the Elevated Line*.

It’s easy to feel at home in the narrative of *Elevated Line*. In form it recalls *A Streetcar Named Desire*, and there is pleasure and comfort in recognizing the familiar notes of that play in harmony with the rhythms and sounds of Chicago. As the characters onstage name neighborhoods, foods, or train lines, the Chicago audience member can establish a satisfying sense of location. Chuck, Soraya, Ben, and Beth—they’re nearby neighbors. And in the 24-hour cycle of information, even far-reaching words like “sanctions” and “asylum” have become domestic. This is our living room with the news turned on, reconstructed for us and illuminated by stage lights.

Enter Razi Gol.

Razi is a stranger in our backyard, and everything about Chicago is as alien to him as it is banal to us. For better or worse, his outsider’s perspective allows him to see things about us we take for granted. Through Razi’s eyes the existence of Boystown, American beauty standards, and baseball culture are all rendered anew, and Razi’s view has the power to convert, to move, or to threaten us. Likewise, as we spend time looking out from Razi’s eyes and slowly uncovering the intimate details of his life, what is at first strange to us begins to become familiar. If we don’t know the poems of Hafez, we can see their significance, and we understand. If we cannot relate to the exact circumstances of Razi’s life in Iran, we can still empathize with the lingering scars of suffering.

The interloper who disrupts an established order is a well-known and effective player in the theatrical canon, but rarely does the disruption feel so local or well-timed. With its alchemy of strange, familiar, mystical, and mundane, *Through the Elevated Line* reminds us that our values and habits are not self-evident. They are as worthy of examination and as firmly situated within a broader context as any we don’t readily recognize. *Elevated Line* doesn’t ask its audience to come with detailed knowledge of modern Iranian history or the American immigration system or the poet Hafez. Neither is it a polemic. It doesn’t ask us to condemn or condone any of its deeply human characters. Rather, it encourages us simply to look around and see the world with fresh eyes. It gestures out over us and says, “This is the water.”

# TIMELINE OF U.S.-IRANIAN RELATIONS

By Kate Cuellar, Dramaturg

## *Iranian History*

1953



CIA orchestrates a coup to overthrow Prime Minister Mossadegh and restore power to the Shah.

1979

Iran's Islamic Revolution forces the Shah to flee. Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini becomes the supreme religious leader in Iran.

1980

Iraq, controlled by Saddam Hussein, invades Iran.

1986

1995

2005

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is elected the sixth president of Iran.

2007

2013

Pragmatist Hassan Rouhani is elected Iran's president on a platform of improving relations with the world and easing sanctions

2015

2016

2018

Wide-ranging protests, which began in December 2017, carry on into the new year. Iranians are dissatisfied with the state of Iran's economy, rising costs, and government corruption.

## U.S.-Iranian Relations

## LGBT/Human Rights in Iran

After the installation of Shah Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, the U.S. and Iran begin a close alliance.

Students seize the U.S. embassy in Tehran and hold the staff hostage for 444 days. The United States imposes economic sanctions on Iran.

Throughout Iran-Iraq War, the U.S. provides Iraq with money, intelligence reports, and weapons.

U.S. Sanctions against Iran are expanded further.

Obama and Rouhani speak on the telephone, the highest level of contact between the U.S. and Iran in 30 years.

Iran agrees to depress its nuclear program in exchange for the easing of sanctions.

The United States and Iran perform a prisoner swap.

Supreme Leader Khamenei asserts that protests have been brought on by Iran's "enemies," shorthand for the U.S. and its allies.

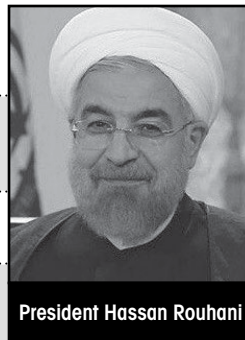
When asked if he condones the killing of homosexuals following the revolution, Imam Khomeini replies "the society that we want to build does not permit such things [as homosexuality]."

Under the new penal code, homosexual acts are punishable by lashing or even death.

Khomeini legally recognizes transgendered individuals. To this day, the Iranian government subsidizes sex reassignment surgeries. Those who do not wish to have the operation are treated as homosexuals with the risks therein.

Teenagers, Mahmoud Asgari and Ayaz Marhoni, are publicly executed after being convicted of assault against a thirteen-year-old boy. An international outcry followed the execution.

While addressing students at Columbia University, President Ahmadinejad asserts that there are no homosexuals in Iran.

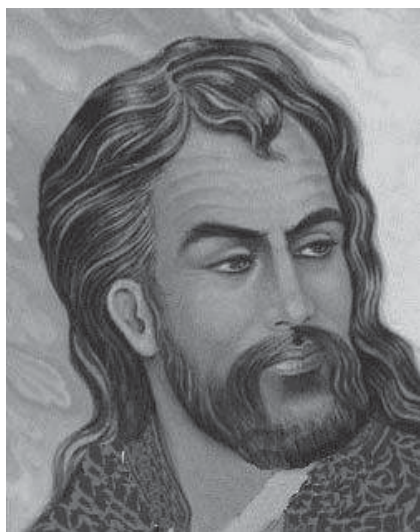


President Hassan Rouhani

## ON THE POET HAFEZ

By Kate Cuellar, Dramaturg

Hafez was a 14<sup>th</sup> century Sufi mystic and Persian poet, whose collected works are regarded as the pinnacle of Persian literature. He was born in Shiraz and though very little is known about his early life, it is thought that he memorized the Quran in his adolescence after listening to his father recite passages. (The word *hafez* denotes a person who has completely memorized the Quran). As a poet, he was patronized by successive local regimes—most notably in the time of Shah Shuja—and developed a personal style of lyric verse that dealt with themes of love, faith, wine, ecstasy, and exposing hypocrisy.



### Once a Young Woman Said to Me

*Once a young woman said to me,  
“[Hafez], what is the sign  
of someone who knows God?”*

*I became very quiet,  
and looked deep into her eyes,  
then replied,*

*“My dear, they have dropped the knife.  
Someone who knows God has dropped  
the cruel knife*

*that most so often use upon their tender self  
and others.”*

In *Through the Elevated Line*, Razi explains to Sean that looking to the poems of Hafez is a popular form of fortune telling in Iran. Holding a question or conflict in mind, the reader will open the collected works of Hafez and divine meaning from the poem that presents itself. This is one of the many ways the poet Hafez remains a part of daily life in Iran, hundreds of years after his death.

# ABOUT SILK ROAD RISING

## HISTORY

Malik Gillani (a Pakistani American Muslim) and Jamil Khoury (a mixed blood Arab American Christian) founded Silk Road Rising in 2002 as an artistic response to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. Harnessing the power of theatre, they set out to challenge the ignorance and hatred that fueled both the attacks and the anti-Muslim, anti-Middle Eastern, anti-South Asian backlash that soon followed.

As a result of incredible support from our donors, today Silk Road Rising is the only U.S. theatre company dedicated to commissioning and producing works of Asian American and Middle Eastern American playwrights, and, more broadly, to cultivating empathy and understanding toward Silk Road communities. Over the past 15 years, we have worked with 94 playwrights to produce 35 plays and 68 staged readings in our theatre space in the Historic Chicago Temple Building.

To support students who attend Chicago Public Schools in disinvested neighborhoods, we deliver Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course (EPIC). Guided by experienced teaching artists over the course of twenty classroom sessions, students learn to find and value their voice; and, to express complex social ideas through the art of playwriting.

Silk Road Rising is also a leader in digital storytelling. We create online video plays and documentary films, allowing us to transcend our brick and mortar venue and engage audiences online. We also tour our digital work into communities and corporate offices with our “Courageous Conversations” training program to generate understanding and build a more enlightened citizenry.

## VISION

Silk Road Rising believes the human mind is fundamentally curious and that a well crafted story unleashes curiosity and reveals possibilities. We understand that cultures are inherently linked. We seek the intersections of cultures without denying the specificities of cultures. And we strive to create a world that values art over ideology and inquiry over dogma.

## ARTISTIC GOALS

- 1 | To advance the creation of and expand access to works of Asian American and Middle Eastern American artists.
- 2 | To deepen understanding of Silk Road cultures within the broader community.
- 3 | To provide resources and learning opportunities that allow individuals to explore, express, and embrace a more complex perspective.

## CONTACT US

Silk Road Rising  
150 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 1970  
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Tel: 312-857-1234  
Fax: 312-577-0849  
info@silkroadrising.org  
www.SilkRoadRising.org

# SUPPORTING DONATIONS FOR SILK ROAD RISING

January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2017

## **CORPORATE, FOUNDATION, GOVERNMENT, AND MATCHING GIFTS DONORS**

150 N. Michigan  
The Albert Pick, Jr. Fund  
Alphawood Foundation  
American Theatre Wing  
Paul M. Angell Family  
Foundation  
Arts Work Fund for  
Organizational  
Development  
Asian Giving Circle  
Robert and Isabelle Bass  
Foundation, Inc.  
The Bass Fund  
Bayless Family Foundation  
Bella Bacino's  
Beef & Brandy  
Chicago Community Trust  
Chicago Foundation  
for Women  
The Chicago Temple, First  
United Methodist  
Church  
CityArts, City of Chicago,  
Department of Cultural  
Affairs and Special  
Events  
ComEd  
Gaylord & Dorothy  
Donnelley Foundation  
Field Foundation of Illinois  
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation  
GE Foundation  
James P. & Brenda S.  
Grusecki Family  
Foundation  
Hyatt  
Illinois Arts Council Agency  
The Joyce Foundation  
Landau Family Foundation  
The Left Tilt Fund  
MacArthur Fund for Arts  
and Culture at Prince  
The Elizabeth Morse  
Charitable Trust  
Motorola Solutions  
Foundation  
National Endowment for  
the Arts

Polk Bros. Foundation  
The Saints  
The Shubert Foundation, Inc.  
Siragusa Family Foundation  
US Bank Foundation  
Wrigley Company  
Foundation

## **INDIVIDUAL DONORS**

### UP TO \$99

Christina Adachi  
Fawzia Afzal-Khan  
Heidi Alfrey  
Roxane Assaf-Lynn &  
Michael Lynn  
Elizabeth Auman  
Larry Baldacci  
Eileen Barton  
Dr. Sheila F. Barton-Bosron  
& Dr. William F.  
Bosron  
Susan Beal  
Leanne & Phil Beaudoin-  
Ryan  
Jaqueline Bergen  
Barbara & Ronald  
Blumenthal  
Britta Bolin  
Cynthia Breunlin  
Kerstin Broockmann  
Leila Buck  
Janet Burroway  
Kathleen Cantone  
David Chambers  
Matthew Chicola  
Anna Lynn Christoff &  
Ken Sohn  
Fin Coe  
Joyce Cook  
Caroline Cracraft  
Tim Cross  
Adrienne Cury  
Erica Danos & Joe Schwartz  
Gwen D'Arcangelis  
Scott Dray  
Elizabeth Dunn  
Kaveh Ehsani &  
Norma Moruzzi  
Marilyn Eisenberg  
Noha El-Ganzouri  
Felicia Elias

Safaya Fawzi  
Janice Flinner  
Kirstin Franklin-  
Hammergren  
Natalie Fredrickson-Gardner  
Jesse Gaffney  
Minita Gandhi  
Mike & Minaz Gillani  
Janice Gintzler  
Suzanne Griffel  
Bonita Guerra  
Gail Guggenheim  
Janet Gunn  
Gulam & Mala Hajat  
Manal Hamzeh &  
Heather Sykes  
Fadwa Hasan  
Barbara Hayler  
Linda Henderson  
Carole Herhold  
Agnès Hofman  
Jeff Horler  
Gary Houston &  
Hedda Lubin  
Margaret & William Huyck  
Lois Iseminger  
Amy Isler  
Beth & Tom Jacobs  
Arvin Jalandoon  
Fran Johns &  
Angelo Kokkino  
Linda Keane  
Seema Khan  
Ann Kroll  
Michele Kurlander  
Stefanie Lau  
Lindsay Lawless  
Paul LeFort  
Wayne & Mary Levy  
Ann Lousin  
Matt Lumadue  
Corinne Lyon  
Jessica Lyons  
Christa Macbeth  
Nancy Malitz &  
Larry Johnson  
Sonia Mathew  
Lettie McSpadden  
Ute & Sven Menzel  
Sarah J. Miller  
Dorothy Milne  
William Molenaar  
Barbara Molotsky  
Madeline Moon  
Melinda Moore  
Rosalind Morris  
Omer & Mariam Mozaffar  
Amy Munice &  
Peter Kachergis

Sohail Murad  
Choudhri Naim  
Sunny Naru  
Ann Noling  
Mary Norris  
Karen & Erik Nussbaum  
Camille Odeh  
Marilyn Oorbeck  
Madhu Pallath  
Susan & Paul Paprocki  
Paul Pasulka  
Joe & Jo Ann Paszczyk  
Kim Pereira  
Marianne & Bernard Phelan  
Lisa Pildes & Michael Sehr  
Scott Pollock  
Alan Pulaski  
Remig Raffanti  
Naushina Rahman &  
Daniel Domin  
Sherry Rasmussen  
Scott & Marilyn Reber  
Joanna Riopelle  
Norman Robins  
Nik Rokop  
Anne Rooney  
Bettina Rousos  
Sunondo Roy  
Anthony Ruth  
Carolyn Ryffel  
Dr. Elaine Ades Sachnoff  
Kathryn Sapoznick  
Scott & Susan Sarran  
Suzanne Sawada  
Hedwig Schellbach  
Dieter Schulte  
Matthew Scothorn  
Miriam Scott  
Michael Shapiro &  
Elizabeth Klein  
Nandita Shenoy  
Anne Shimojima  
John Shindler  
Tom Simpson  
Emel Singer  
Daniel Smith  
Bamboo Solzman &  
Eli Lewis  
Justin Sondak  
Peter Storms & Juliana Engel  
Jerome Stromberg  
Owais & Jennet Succari  
James Swanson  
Wendy Taeuber  
Michael Takada  
Kathy Tate-Bradish  
Martin Till  
Dominic Tocci  
James & Karen Troxel

Victoria Ursitti  
Linda & Ken Vanderweele  
Nina Vidal  
Maria & Nathan Wagner  
Andre Walker  
Barbara & Bruce Williams  
Lesley Williams  
Mingxin Xu  
Fran Zell  
George Zrust

\$100 TO \$249

Christine Albertini  
Arlene Alpert-Mehlman &  
David Mehlman  
Dr. Sana Attar  
Danny Au &  
Jonathan Abarbanel  
Elise Auerbach  
Doreen Baker  
Manatosh & Basanti Banerji  
Enid Baron  
Kay Berkson &  
Sidney Hollander  
Ranjana & Vijay Bhargava  
Roger Bialcik  
Patricia & Edward A.  
Blumen  
Michelle T. Boone  
Juan Calixto  
Kelly Carroll  
Courtney Cazden  
Chia-Pei Chang  
Victor Chao & Elaine Low  
Mark Chiang  
Linda & Dean Conlin  
Carol Cory & Jay Althouse  
John Eisner &  
Jennifer Dorr White  
Brent & Jessica Ervin-  
Eickhoff  
Darcy Evon  
Kathleen Fassl  
Florence Forshey  
Susan Foster  
Judith Ann Friedman  
Diane Furuta  
David Gitomer  
Michael Glass  
Susan & Peter Gray  
Dana Green  
Margaret Griffiths &  
Ron Adams  
Norm & Linda Groetzinger  
Joan & Guy Gunzberg  
Venu Gupta &  
Sendhil Revuluri  
Mary Lou Haddad &  
Sam Perry

William & Sandra Haddad  
Angeline Heisler  
Brent Hoffmann  
Sandra Hulstedt  
Ruth & Dale IBis  
Ruth Johnston  
Jan Kallish  
Linda Kateeb &  
Don Wagner  
Claudia Katz  
Rana Kazkaz  
Dr. William & Ausrine Kerr  
Catherine Key  
Al & Sameena Khalfan  
Omar S. Khalil  
Jamilee Khoury-Bellone  
& Rainier Bellone  
D'Altavilla  
Helen Kim  
Judy Kirk  
Beverly Kirks  
Lorraine A. Kulpa  
Christine & Joel Lehmann  
Fran & Chuck Licht  
Juu Lien & Robert Cross  
H. B. Lottero  
Mary McAuliffe  
Nancy McDaniel  
James L. McFarland  
John & Erta McKenna  
John & Nancy Mead  
Mia & Adi Mehta  
Fred & Ellen Meyer  
Pamela Milchrist  
Linda Miller  
Paula Morrow  
Abed Moughrabi  
Effat Moussa  
Patricia Naguib  
Randy Nornes  
Tamara O'Leary  
Leslie & Larry Osterberg  
Kristin Patton &  
John Coleman  
Richard Roberts  
Marshall Rousseau  
Howard & Lisa Sachs  
Sara Schneider  
Phil Shayne  
B. Gail Shiman  
Irene Shimizu  
Rick Stoneham  
Lynne Townley  
Valery True  
Christine Ye  
Cheryl Yuen &  
Thomas Chin  
Rita Zralek

\$250 TO \$499

Mary & Paul Anderson  
Susan Bart  
Karim Basaria  
Mardic Crow Bergen  
Sally & Phil Blackwell  
Matthew Blakely &  
Novid Parsi  
Raymond Bobgan  
Christine Bunuan & Sean  
Fawcett  
Karen A. Callaway  
John & Erin Dern  
Deanna Dunagan  
Carol & Charles Emmons  
Margaret Franson  
Sono Fujii & Claudio Katz  
Barbara Gaines  
Al Gillani  
Trish & Harp Harper  
Aimee Hilliard  
Jann Ingmire  
Juanita Jernigan  
Rizwan Khan  
Neil & Diana King  
John & Karen Lambert  
David Mook &  
Kathy Stodgell  
Ted & Nancy Otto  
Susan Payne  
Jessie Pedron  
Megha Ralapati &  
Adam Waytz  
Carol J. Roberts  
Sheila Ryan-Henry &  
Dr. Robert Henry  
Sala & Kevin Sander  
Roche Schulfert &  
Mary Beth Fisher  
Jerome Seidenfeld &  
Linda Camras  
Dr. Surendra &  
Dorothie Shah  
Saadia Shah &  
Naveed Malik  
Norm Sloan  
Nikki & Fred Stein  
Charles & Frances Steinberg  
Deanna Ver Steeg  
Amy & Chad Williams

\$500 TO \$999

Geoffrey Anderson &  
Dennis Monteverde  
Susan Aurinko-Mostow &  
Gary S. Mostow  
Maree Bullock  
Frank Buttitta &  
Edwards Buice

Karena Fiorenza &  
Emrys Ingersoll  
Jon & Mary Harmon  
John & Megan Hepokoski  
Karen Hutt  
Fadel Khoury  
Jeanne Martineau  
Karen & Larry McCracken  
Evemarie Moore  
Raja & Prakash Nadimpalli  
Lyn Ridgeway  
Lillie & Ethan Sellers  
Carol & Cliff Van Dyke  
Chris Walters &  
Eun-Hye Choi

\$1,000 +

Anonymous  
Rick & Deann Bayless  
& Family  
Aldridge Bousfield  
Sheila J. Chapman  
Jeff Conlin &  
Jennifer Turkal  
Jo Anne Davis  
Nancy & Bernie Dunkle  
Linda Fuller  
Malik Gillani &  
Jamil Khoury  
Aldona & Russ Gorman  
Ezzat Goushegir &  
Robert Jenkins  
Brenda & James Grusecki  
Jo Ellen & Steve Ham  
David Hiller  
Rummana Hussain &  
Mick Dumke  
George & Joanna Khoury  
Carolyn & Gordon Kirk  
Ryan & Carol Lahurd  
Linda Usher &  
Malcolm Lambe  
Helen Young Lee  
Sandy & Judy Macnab  
David Myers  
Susan Noel  
Haytham Safi  
Steve Salameh  
Angelique Sallas  
Joani Tarsitano

*If we have inadvertently  
left you off of the donor  
list, please accept our  
apologies and notify us  
of our oversight.*

## COMPANY LIST

**Malik Gillani** | Founding Executive Director  
**Jamil Khoury** | Chief Programming Officer & Mission Trustee  
**Corey Pond** | Associate Producer  
**Vanessa Kucera** | Development Associate  
**Kathryn McNall** | Production Manager  
**Colin Smith** | Marketing Coordinator  
**Tracy Strimple** | Education Coordinator  
**Al Gillani** | Box Office and IT Manager  
**Sarah Kim** | Business Development Associate  
**David Henry Hwang** | Artistic Ambassador  
**Dan Stratton** | Resident Scenic Designer  
**Sarah Hughey** | Resident Lighting Designer  
**Lavina Jadhvani** | Artistic Associate  
**Amelia Hefferon** | Teaching Artist  
**Levi Holloway** | Teaching Artist  
**Lindsay Hopkins** | Teaching Artist  
**Lexi Saunders** | Teaching Artist  
**Alex Stein** | Teaching Artist  
**Kristin Patton, Ensemble Consulting** | Organizational Development Consultant  
**Alexander Macnab** | Major Gifts Consultant  
**Wagner Accounting Services, LLC** | Accountants  
**Brent Ervin-Eickhoff** | Webmaster  
**Deann Baker** | Video Coordinator and Editor  
**Andrew Skwish** | Poster Art Illustrator  
**Darrel Reese** | Graphic Designer  
**Nick Johnson** | House Manager  
**Phil Shayne** | Saints Coordinator  
**Sarah Ibis** | Editor

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Ryan LaHurd** | President  
**John Hepokoski** | Treasurer  
**Rummana Hussain** | Secretary  
  
**Jeff Conlin** | Board Member  
**Malik Gillani** | Board Member  
**Aldona Gorman** | Board Member  
**Priya Khatkhate** | Board Member  
**Jamil Khoury** | Board Member  
**Lillie Sellers** | Board Member  
**Nirav Shah** | Board Member  
  
**Sheila Chapman** | Alumni Board Chair  
**Karen Atwood** | Alumni Board Member  
**Frank Buttitta** | Alumni Board Member  
**Jo Ann Davis** | Alumni Board Member  
**Jon Harmon** | Alumni Board Member  
**Laura Meyer** | Alumni Board Member

## SPONSOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Through the Elevated Line* was produced, in part, with support from:



THE CHICAGO  
COMMUNITY TRUST  
AND AFFILIATES



The Company opening night party is sponsored by **Beef 'n Brandy**.

This project is partially supported by a CityArts Grant from the **City of Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs & Special Events**.

This program is partially supported by a grant from the Illinois Arts Council Agency.

## SPECIAL THANKS

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

Use the enclosed remittance envelope and give now to support our production of *Through the Elevated Line*!

*Thank you for supporting great art!*



## Next On Our Stage:

May 17 to May 27, 2018 | *The World Premiere*

### HOLLOW/WAVE

Written and Performed by **Anu Bhatt**  
Directed by **Barbara Zahora**

Anu Bhatt combines the personal with the poetic in her new one-woman show about depression, body image, and sexual assault. Seeking a balance of identities as a South Asian working actor in Chicago, Bhatt investigates the meaning of success as she embraces her own unique identity. With courage and self-effacing humor, she combines raw memories with lyricism in a daring dance for empowerment through imperfection.

**WELCOME**  
TO THE HEART OF THE CITY



**77 W WASHINGTON ST.**  
CHICAGO IL, 60602

**CHURCH OFFICE 312.236.4548**  
[www.chicagotemple.org](http://www.chicagotemple.org)

First United  
Methodist Church at

# THE CHICAGO TEMPLE



## **INCLUSIVE & DIVERSE**

We believe that all are welcome in the Kingdom of God: encompassing race, socio-economic status, marriage status, sexual orientation, age, gender identity, disability and life experiences.

## **VARIED WORSHIP EXPERIENCES**

We believe in creating an atmosphere that allows individuals to meet God wherever they are in their spiritual journey with services that are quiet, intimate, and introspective, to being filled with “joyful noise” and spirited fellowship — all with compelling sermons.

## **COMMITTED TO SOCIAL JUSTICE**

We are a congregation committed to supporting the basic rights of all in our society. We actively use our talents and resources to help those in need while also reaching out to those in positions of power to make positive, lasting change for the entirety of God's creation.

## **OPEN-MINDED**

We believe that to open our hearts to God, we must willingly consider ideas, experiences, values, lifestyles, and religious beliefs other than our own, allowing us to grow in faith, love, and service.

## **PIONEERING**

As the oldest faith community in Chicago, we continue to embrace our pioneering spirit to find new ways to positively impact our congregation and the world around us.

---

## **JOIN US FOR WORSHIP**

MAIN SANCTUARY

**SUN at 8:30 & 11 A.M.**

MAIN SANCTUARY

**WED at 12:00 P.M.**

HOLY COMMUNION *(Main Sanctuary)*

**WED at 7:30-9:00 A.M.**

DIXON CHAPEL

**SAT at 5 P.M.**

TAIZÉ IN DIXON CHAPEL

**FRI\* at 6 P.M.**

*\*1 Friday of the Month*

# SAVE THE DATE!



Since 1985, Chicago House has served individuals and families disenfranchised by HIV/AIDS, LGBTQ marginalization, poverty, homelessness, and/or gender nonconformity.

Do you want to support the crucial programming we provide to over 2,000 individuals annually? Come show your passion for Chicago House's mission at *REVIVE! Rally on the Runway*

Chicago House  
32 Annual Spring Brunch & Fashion Show  
Sunday, May 6th | 12 PM - 3:30 PM

The Winter Garden at the Harold Washington Library  
400 S State St. | Chicago, IL 60605

Individuals tickets and runway, preferred, and general tables will go on sale to the general public on **Friday, March 30th**

For more information, please contact  
Alejandro Hernandez, Development Coordinator  
773-248-5200 x209 | [ahernandez@chicagohouse.org](mailto:ahernandez@chicagohouse.org)

To learn more about Chicago House and its services,  
please visit: [www.chicagohouse.org](http://www.chicagohouse.org)



Proud opening night sponsors of *Through the Elevated Line*



# Beef 'n Brandy

## RESTAURANT AND BAR

*Casual American Diner in the Heart of the Loop*

Visit Beef N' Brandy for true American comfort food in a family-friendly diner smack dab in The Loop at 127 S State Street (a ten minute walk from Silk Road Rising).

### HOURS

Open Everyday for Breakfast and Lunch from 7am to 3pm.

### SPECIAL OFFER FOR SILK ROAD RISING PATRONS

Receive 15% discount on your food (not applicable to liquor)  
Mention "SILK ROAD" when requesting discount.



## DINNER - COCKTAILS

The Bar Below is a neighborhood prohibition era bar tucked below the busy streets of downtown Chicago at 127 S State Street (a ten minute walk from Silk Road Rising).

The newly restored bar features original woods, tin ceilings and a fireplace, as well as classic prohibition era cocktails and craft beers.

### HOURS

Open until 2am on weeknights

Open until 3am on Saturdays and 10pm on Sundays