



**SILKROAD**  
Chicago

**THE SILK ROAD STAGED READING SERIES**

**Proudly Presents**

***Balacarita:  
The Adventures of Young Krishna***

**by Bhasa**

**Adapted and Directed by Chris Johnson**

**A Staged Reading Followed by a  
Discussion with Adaptor/Director Chris Johnson**

**Tuesday, August 8, 2006**

**Claudia Cassidy Theatre at the Chicago Cultural Center**

**Artistic Director, Jamil Khoury ❖ Executive Director, Malik Gillani**

**www.srtp.org ❖ 312-857-1234**

## SPECIAL THANKS

Silk Road Theatre Project thanks the Chicago Office of Tourism and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs for sponsoring this evening's staged reading. We are particularly grateful to Amanda Friedberg, Jill Hurwitz, Emily Long, Eva Silverman, and the incomparable Claire Geall Sutton!

And of course, a heartfelt thanks to our gracious hosts at The Chicago Temple, First United Methodist Church.

## ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

The works of **Bhasa**, Sanskrit's earliest master-dramatist, were considered lost for centuries until a manuscript containing thirteen of his plays was discovered in 1912. Writing around 300 AD, Bhasa's plays contain the trademark language and physicality of the later classical Sanskrit theatre as well as a sense of danger and visceral violence notably absent from the tradition's later works. Bhasa's plays, particularly those in the epic-heroic style, represent an unsurpassed high point in the long evolution of Hindu theatre.

## ABOUT THE ADAPTOR/DIRECTOR

**Christopher Johnson** is thrilled to be making his Silk Road Theatre Project debut with *Balacarita: The Adventures of Young Krishna*. He was founder of Chicago's historic Defiant Theatre and served as that organization's first artistic director. During his decade plus with Defiant he directed productions of *A Clockwork Orange*, *Titus Andronicus*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet*, *Red Dragon* and *Apt Pupil*, penned the original scripts *Godbaby* and *Dope*, and appeared in productions of *Action Movie: The Play*, *Burning Desires*, *Phaedra's Love*, *Caligula*, *Dracula*, *Ubu Raw*, *The Ugly Man*, *Women and Water* and *The Skriker*. He has also acted with Chicago Shakespeare Theatre, Redmoon Theatre and as the title character in The Building Stage's critically acclaimed production of *Hamlet*. He will be appearing this fall in the Goodman Theatre's production of *King Lear*. Outside the realm of the live theatrical, he has directed a music video for The Smoking Popes and recently wrote and directed his first short film *The Big Date*.

## CAST

<b>Krishna, Conch.....</b>	<b>Kareem Bandealy</b>
<b>Devaki, Putana, Gopi, Driver....</b>	<b>Melissa Canciller</b>
<b>Kansa.....</b>	<b>John Nyrere Frazier</b>
<b>Nanda, Ugrasana, Balaki, Garuda.....</b>	<b>Quinton Guyton</b>
<b>Vasudeva, Assistant, Chakra.....</b>	<b>Anil Hurkadli</b>
<b>Balarama, Assistant.....</b>	<b>Ray Kurut</b>
<b>Damaka, Sword, Kaliya, Mustika, Ganuka.....</b>	<b>Vishal Patel</b>
<b>Nidra, Yasoda, Trivakra, Gopi...</b>	<b>Jaya Subramanian</b>
<b>Narada, Mace, Arista, Soldier, Dyer, Utpalapida, Canura.....</b>	<b>Chris Walsh</b>

## PRODUCTION TEAM

<b>Stage Manager.....</b>	<b>Allie Herryman</b>
<b>Choreographer.....</b>	<b>Alka Nayer</b>
<b>Fight Choreographer.....</b>	<b>Jen Albert</b>

**Silk Road Theatre Project** showcases playwrights of Asian, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean backgrounds, whose works address themes relevant to the peoples of the Silk Road and their Diaspora communities. Through the creation and presentation of outstanding theatre, we aim to promote discourse and dialogue among multi-cultural audiences in Chicago.

**The Silk Road Staged Reading Series** is a series of four staged readings sponsored by the Chicago Office of Tourism and produced by Silk Road Theatre Project as part of **Silk Road Chicago: Summer 2006**, the citywide celebration of Chicago's multicultural legacy that features more than 200 events and activities from June 1 through September 30, 2006. For more information, please call toll free 1-877-CHICAGO (1-877-244-2246) or visit [www.silkroadchicago.org](http://www.silkroadchicago.org). The TTY toll-free number for the hearing impaired is 1-866-710-0294.

**Jamil Khoury, Artistic Director**, is Co-Founder of Silk Road Theatre Project, a position to which he brings extensive experience as a producer, playwright, and cross-cultural consultant. He is honored to be promoting the cultural production of Silk Road peoples and to be fostering the exchange of ideas within Chicago's theatre community. Khoury's vocation as a playwright lends a valuable currency to fulfilling our mission as a playwright driven theatre. His plays focus on Middle Eastern themes and questions of Diaspora. He is particularly interested in the intersections of culture, national identity, sexuality, and class. Khoury's play *Precious Stones* won Gay Chicago Magazine's 2003 After Dark Award for Outstanding New Work and has been performed in ten cities across the U.S. His play *Fitna* was performed at University Theatre of The University of Chicago. 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.

**Malik Gillani, Executive Director**, is Co-Founder of Silk Road Theatre Project, a position to which he brings extensive experience in producing, management, and business development. He is thrilled to be promoting both the rich cultural legacy of the Silk Road and greater visibility for Silk Road artists. Gillani nurtured Silk Road Theatre Project from its embryonic stage into a celebrated theatre company, integrating business acumen and fiscal responsibility within an artistic mission. He studied at The University of Chicago Graduate School of Business majoring in marketing and small business management and earned a Bachelor's in Liberal Arts from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, with an emphasis on the Great Books. Gillani has ten years experience operating technology consulting firms where at various points in his career he was responsible for sales, marketing, negotiations, contract management, and human resources. Gillani is the recipient of the 2003 IBM Business and Technology Leadership Award.

**To learn more about Silk Road Theatre Project, please visit our website  
at: <http://www.srtp.org>**

**To keep abreast of our activities & events, please sign up for our  
Monthly E-Newsletter at: <http://srtp.org/contact.html>**