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Build Back ~~Better~~ BOLDER

2022 is shaping up to be an exciting bridge year for Silk Road Rising. A year of building, innovating, and expanding. Think “infrastructure week” times 52 except we’re actually being sincere.

Yes, we’ve learned our lessons about planning live shows during a pandemic, and on that front, we’re going to wait until COVID settles into some semblance of normalcy. It’s a bit strange taking our stage cues from a virus, but silver linings abound in the time freed up to focus on other key priorities. Here are the biggies, in alphabetical order:

APHASIA ARTS FORUM

The Aphasia Arts Forum will focus on the unique roles of theatre, music, dance, and the visual arts in advancing neuro-recovery. This is a collaborative effort in partnership with the Stroke and Aphasia Recovery (STAR) program at Texas Tech University’s Health Sciences Center and the J.T. & Margaret Talkington College of Visual and Performing

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stroke and aphasia recovery of Silk Road Rising's Founding Co-Executive Artistic Director, Malik Gillani, the goal is to create art and digital media that provides knowledge, resources, and hope to stroke survivors and their families. In 2026, Silk Road Rising will produce Malik's one-man-plus new play-in-progress, *The Art of Aphasia*.

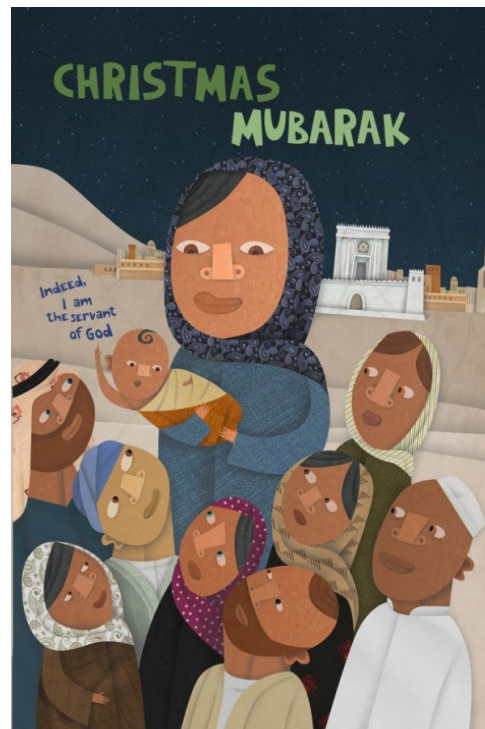


CHRISTMAS MUBARAK

Silk Road Rising now plans to produce *Christmas Mubarak* in

November/December 2023 after the cancellation of our fall 2021 production due to COVID-19. *Christmas Mubarak* ("Blessed Christmas") tells the stories of Jesus and Mary as they appear in Islamic scripture, commentary, and tradition.

Switching seamlessly between story, song, and reflection, this world premiere "interfaith medley" parallels key narratives within Islam and Christianity while illuminating the Jewish origins of both traditions. In situating Islam within its rightful Abrahamic context, we refute the otherizing of Muslim beliefs and the segregating of religious texts. Associate Producer Corey Pond and collaborators continue to develop the script and original music.



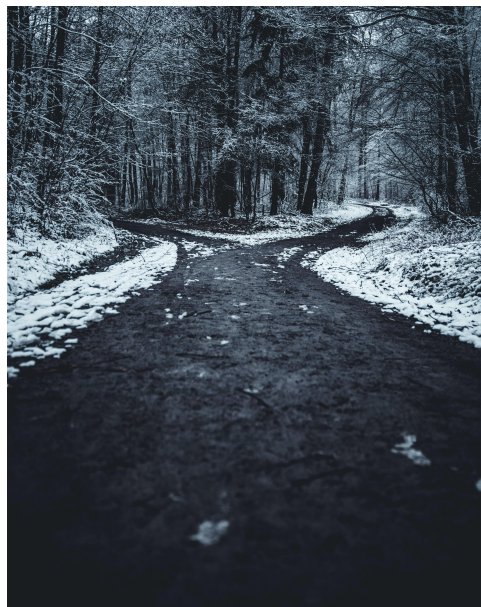
Think of
polyculturalism as
multiculturalism 2.0.
In addressing “what
comes next?”,



polyculturalism offers critical and timely answers to our nation’s multicultural projects and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion initiatives. Polyculturalism strengthens social cohesion through cultural interchange and coalition politics. Grounded in the idea that cultures are fluid, flexible, and curious, not static, fixed, and closed, polyculturalism recognizes that cultures evolve in relationship with one another. Putting theory into practice, the mission of Polycultural Institute is to generate art and ideas that illuminate practices of cultural connectivity. Generative processes will be interdisciplinary, transnational, anti-racist, and pro-feminist. Truly an idea whose time has come.

ROAD LESS TRAVELED

Inspired by Robert Frost’s iconic poem “The Road Not Taken,” *Road Less Traveled* will be a three-season web series showcasing playwrights of Pan-Asian, North African, and Muslim backgrounds. Each season will be comprised of unique standalone episodes that are connected by overarching themes and inspiring ideas.



The first season, titled *Poetic License*, will grapple most overtly with Frost’s poem and its reflection on life choices

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seasons, titled *Colonial Cartography* and *Polycultural Dreamin'* respectively, will springboard off the poem into decidedly new contemplations of place, community, belonging, and cultural evolution.

SOUND STAGE

Our vision is to build a small but fully-functioning sound stage to elevate and expand Silk Road Rising's digital creative output (a talk show, a web series, video plays, documentaries, spoken essays, and live streaming, among other ideas). The ability to design and control a space that is exclusively dedicated to digital production will allow Silk Road Rising to advance our mission and build our capacity for serving Silk Road diaspora communities and wider audiences. In the months to come, we will embark on a fundraising campaign to support the realization of this long-held vision.



And, of course:

- the ongoing expansion of our EPIC (Empathic Playwriting Intensive Course) and Myths to Drama educational programs
- the continued building of our living archives
- a complete redesign of the silkroadrising.org website
- the launching of the Polycultural Institute website and the Silk Road Archives website

Last, but certainly not least, we're building partnerships for live-theatre productions and staged readings that will hopefully manifest into exciting new models of producing and community engagement.

Silk Road Announces New Paths

by Kerry Reid | January 14, 2022



"Now Silk Road is giving up their downtown space. But their mission remains expansive.

"I caught up with Khoury and Gillani earlier this week to discuss their next steps."

[Read the Full Story Here](#)

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