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## ***Detour Guide* Opens TOMORROW!**



### **Come Celebrate Opening Weekend**

March 11–April 7, 2019

*Detour Guide*

A World Premiere

Co-Produced with Stage Left Theatre

Written and Performed by Karim Nagi

Directed by Anna C. Bahow



**“Rich”**

**“Engaging”**

**“Unique”**

These are the words audiences are using to describe our newest show, *Detour Guide*, which celebrates its official opening tomorrow night.

Master storyteller and musician Karim Nagi leads us on a journey through the Arab World and Arab America, stopping to introduce us to different beats and people along the way.

Through dance, humor, and music, *Detour Guide* challenges stereotypes, shares dreams, and lifts up untold stories.



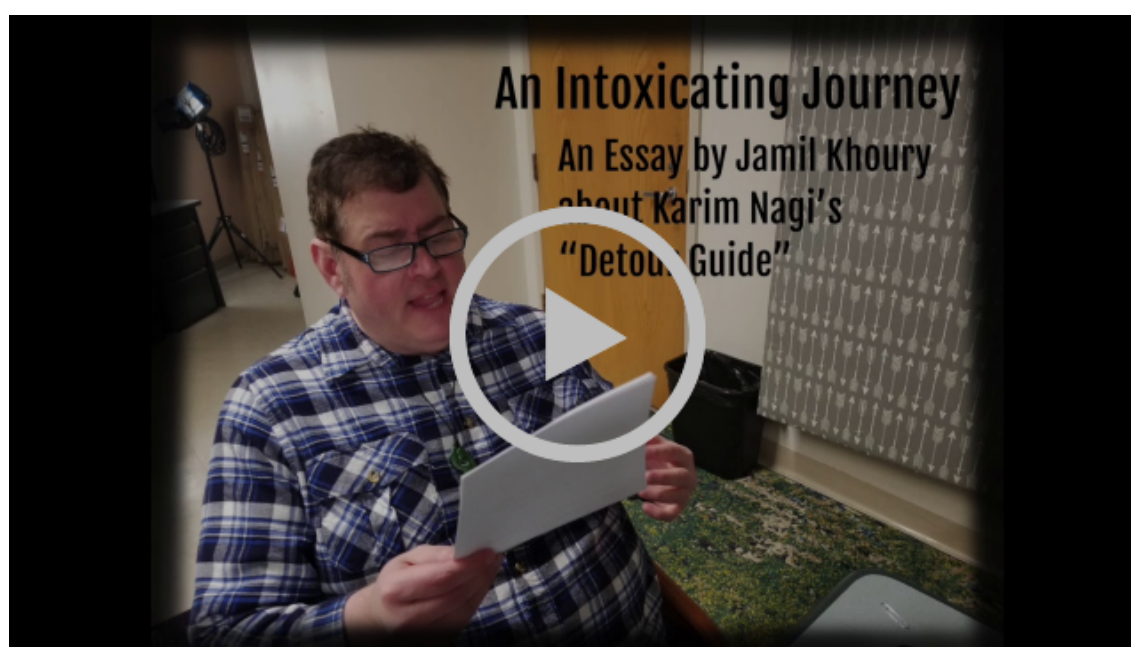
**“I expected music, but I didn’t realize that we’d be getting such a wide-reaching tour of Arab culture through the rhythms Karim played,”** one

felt very familiar.”

***Detour Guide* opens Friday, March 15 and runs through April 7.**

Get Your Tickets Now!

## From the Desk of Jamil Khoury



### An Intoxicating Journey

Hear Jamil Read His Essay for You

Karim Nagi is an Egyptian American storyteller, musician, and dancer, and the creative force behind *Detour Guide*, a discerningly entertaining alternative tour of the Arab World. Wielding lyrics, percussion, and an urban soundscape, Karim takes audiences on a musical journey through a part of our planet all too often discarded for being “mysterious,” “foreboding,” and unduly “complicated.” But for me, *Detour Guide* is a stroll down memory lane, coupling nostalgia with stark reality and romanticism with risk.

Upon first hearing Karim’s songs, I was overcome with an intoxicating sense of déjà vu. The kind of giddiness you might associate with trick-or-treating as a child. For Karim’s lyrics induce flashbacks, recalling a spirit of Arab nationalism I encountered decades ago. And I don’t even know that he set out to evoke Arab nationalism! Certainly not the Arab nationalism that gave us despotism, authoritarianism, and the persecution of non-Arabs.

Karim’s pan-Arabism is genuine, one that exudes love, not only for his native Egypt but for the 22 countries of the Arab World. That is, the Arab World as defined by the League of Arab States. And while some “purists” might deny the Arabness of two or three of those states, Karim takes an all-inclusive view. Which may lead you to wonder, who is an Arab? The simplest definition suggests someone with origins in a predominantly Arabic-speaking country. In this case, simplicity is the path of least resistance.





But back to Arab nationalism. In conjuring the hopes and dreams of a ubiquitous “Arab street” Karim performs an aspirational nationalism, one that even a curmudgeonly critic of nationalism like me can start singing along to. Karim sees an Arab World united by history, language, and culture; an Arab World bursting with hope and potential, confidence and self-love, yet tethered by deficits of freedom and opportunity. His journey reveals a region as diverse as it is determined, a terrain marked by struggles, anti-colonialist and anti-imperialist.



The lens through which Karim guides us on his (de)tour isn't that of Arab elites, but that of the Arab working classes, the Arab masses if you will, erased by our media's dueling fixations on perverse opulence and jihadist violence. Karim's subjects are the forgotten Arabs, the “ordinary” Arabs, those for whom dignity and dreams can

sometimes produce extraordinary results. In *Detour Guide* we're introduced to Arabs who are modest and seemingly content, yet undeterred in their demand for economic justice, an equitable sharing of their region's resources and wealth.

Always the navigator, Karim maneuvers us around on a tuk-tuk ride that is bumpy, unwieldy, and fun. Whether he be lambasting Orientalists or simply lampooning a personality cult, he weaves the threads of being American, Arab, Egyptian, Muslim, talented, and smart into, well, a magic carpet. His words, not mine. Ali Baba, eat your heart out.

**Don't Miss Out! Grab Your Tickets!**

## Co-Founder Malik Gillani Honored



Malik Gillani  
Silk Road Rising

**AXELSON CENTER FOR  
NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT**

*Strengthening Leaders. Developing Communities.*



## 20 Years and 20 Leaders Award

As a part of their 20th year anniversary, Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management announced a new leadership awards program, the Axelson Center for Nonprofit Management's **20 Years and 20 Leaders Awards**.

We are thrilled to announce that our founding Executive Director, Malik Gillani, has been recognized for his work, service, and leadership in the nonprofit sector. He will be recognized at the May 2nd, 20th anniversary conference, [The Arc of Innovation: Timeless Lessons from Thriving Nonprofits](#).

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