

A Three-Day Whirlwind  
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# Our Texas Tech Recap



This past February, Co-Executive Artistic Directors Malik Gillani and Jamil Khoury traveled to Lubbock, Texas for a three-day residency at Texas Tech University. The purpose of the trip was to begin laying the groundwork for a partnership with the university's Health Sciences Center, the Stroke and Aphasia Recovery (STAR) program, and the Talkington College of Visual and Performing Arts.

While in-residence, Malik and Jamil had the opportunity to meet with faculty, researchers, and students from various disciplines, including theatre and speech pathology. They screened Silk Road Rising's video play, *Multi Meets Poly: Multiculturalism and Polyculturalism Go on a First Date*, to a

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class. The theory and practice of polyculturalism made for a lively and robust conversation.

Malik and Jamil also participated in “Dramatizing Aphasia: Arts, Speech, and Healing,” an illuminating panel discussion about aphasia, neuro-recovery, and the visual and performing arts. An edited version of the panel appears below. We encourage you to watch it.



The crux of their visit was spent meeting with a core group of scholars and practitioners including: Mark Charney (Director of Theatre), Melinda Corwin (Director of the STAR program), Kelsie Jackson (Project Manager - Grants, Research, and Innovation), Peter Martens (Associate Dean for Faculty, Research, and Creative Activity), and David Sears (Co-Director of the Performing Arts Research Laboratory).

It was determined that Silk Road Rising and Texas Tech University will jointly develop and produce *The Art of Aphasia*, a devised theatre piece that centers Malik’s journey as a person living with stroke-induced aphasia. The goals of the project are to generate greater awareness of aphasia, inspire hope for people living with aphasia and their loved ones, and examine the role of the arts in building new neural pathways and recovering language.

Malik and Jamil will return to Texas Tech University this June for a two-week residency that will significantly further this innovative partnership. We are inspired by the conversations that took place last month and look forward to developing *The Art of Aphasia* and its anticipated premiere in 2026.



## Watch the Panel Discussion



## Dramatizing Aphasia



Dr. Melinda Corwin  
Dept. of Speech, Language,  
& Hearing Sciences  
School of Health Professions



David Sears  
Interdisciplinary Arts  
Performing Arts Research Lab



Malik Gillani  
(person with aphasia)  
Silk Road Rising



Jamil Khoury  
Silk Road Rising

## Join Us at Northeastern Illinois

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Live and in-person! Our friends at Northeastern Illinois University have invited Silk Road Rising to screen our 2019 video play, *Obstacle Course*, to help generate conversations about public policy, Islamophobia, NIMBYism, and the limits of free speech. We hope that our Silk Road audience will join us for this lively exchange featuring playwright Jamil Khoury and actor Fouad Teymour. And the event is free!

**Thursday, March 31 at 7:00pm CDT**



**Auditorium  
Northeastern Illinois University  
5500 N St Louis Ave  
Chicago, IL 60625**

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**About *Obstacle Course*:** Set in Naperville, Illinois, this 45-minute video play, adapted from Jamil Khoury's stage play *Mosque Alert*, explores reactions to a proposed Islamic Community Center on the site of a beloved landmark. Allyship, municipal politics, and Islamophobia all intersect in this head-on collision between Not in My Backyard fear mongering, well-intentioned liberalism, and the peaceful practice of faith.



[Click Here to Check Out the Facebook Event](#)

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