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## American Like Us



On July 28, 2010, Silk Road Rising was invited to sing the national anthem at US Cellular Field, home of the Chicago White Sox, as part of Asian Heritage Night. We reunited some of the artists from our first-ever *Silk Road Cabaret* to perform this powerful rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner". The video features cast members Christine Bunuan, Dipika Cherala, Joseph Anthony Foronda, Erik Kaiko, Govind Kumar, and David Rhee, under the musical direction of Peter Storms.

All too often patriotism, and expressions of patriotism, get conflated with chauvinism, nationalism, and racism. We at Silk Road Rising consider ourselves great American patriots, and we believe it to be essential to our mission that we reclaim a truer spirit of patriotism. Our patriotism is defined by what we love about America, namely, the values of inclusion, fairness, license to dream, respect for human and civil rights, and the inherent dignity and worth of all peoples.

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***Good Fortune Will Follow. If We Somehow Survive.***



From playwright David Henry Hwang and our friends at Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles comes this powerful entry in their #ArtGoesOn video series.

Silk Road Rising Artistic Ambassador, David Henry Hwang (whose plays *Golden Child*, *A Very DNA Reunion*, and *Yellow Face* were produced by Silk Road Rising) delivers a moving and disturbing autobiographical monologue from his play *Soft Power* that we find particularly poignant today.

Hwang dedicates this monologue to “all the Asian Pacific Americans who are being targeted right now because of our appearance.”

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## Celebrating National Arab American Heritage Month

Did you know that April is National Arab American Heritage Month? Silk Road Rising commemorates this month by celebrating the accomplishments, contributions, hopes, and dreams of the Arab American community.



(Click the image to view a full-size version and read the text corresponding to each photo. Silk Road Rising designed this image as part of the lobby display for our 2013 production of Jonas Hassen Khemiri's *Invasion!*)

## Who Is an Arab?

The simplest definitions we can offer is that an Arab is someone who a) self-identifies as an Arab, b) speaks Arabic as their mother tongue, and/or c) claims Arab culture and history as their own.

An Arab American is an American who a) self-identifies as an Arab American and b) traces their full or partial heritage to a predominantly Arabic-speaking country or region.

Contrary to popular misperception, neither "Arab" nor "Arab American" denote a specific religious identity, as Arabness is inherently pluralistic and includes Muslims, Christians, Jews, Druze, Baha'is, atheists, agnostics, and secularists.

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