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## A Panel Discussion on *Brahman/i*



*Brahman/i* is a fictional story written by a female playwright of mixed Indian and Bulgarian ancestry, told from the perspective of a South Asian American intersex person, and performed by a South Asian Muslim queer woman.

While *Brahman/i* has received rave reviews from audiences and critics alike, it also raises challenging questions about identity and representation, art and authenticity—questions that are increasingly being echoed in today's media.

In just the past few weeks, for instance, reactions to Jared Leto's Oscar-winning performance in *Dallas Buyers Club* and to Amazon's new original series *Transparent* have provoked heated debates about actors portraying "the other" when they are not the other themselves.

With this panel discussion we intend to probe and explore questions of identity and representation as they pertain to

storytelling, both historically and in our rapidly changing, ever-globalizing world.

Is it okay for a straight actor to play a gay or bisexual character? Can a white author write about the black experience? Can a cisgendered person portray a transgender person, or a Muslim portray a Hindu?

In other words: who gets to tell whose story and how? Where are the boundaries? Who sets the boundaries? And how do we bring about empathy and cultural acceptance without engaging in cultural appropriation and mimicry?

### DATE

April 13, 2014

### TIME

Immediately following the 4pm performance of *Brahman/i*

### TICKETS & RSVP

Attend the 4pm performance of *Brahman/i* - purchase tickets [HERE](#)  
Panel is free to attend. Self register [HERE](#)

### LOCATION

Pierce Hall at the Chicago Temple, 77 W Washington St

### FACILITATOR

Jamil Khoury, Artistic Director, Silk Road Rising

### PANELISTS

**Mohamed Mehdi**, Assistant Professor of Humanities and Philosophy at Oakton  
**Mary Anne Mohanraj**, Author, Clinical Assistant Professor of fiction and literature and Associate Director of Asian and Asian American Studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago  
**Pidgeon Pagonis**, Intersex Activist

### GUEST RESPONDENTS

**Wendy Doniger**, Mircea Eliade Distinguished Service Professor of the History of Religions at the University of Chicago  
**Nisha Kommattam**, Lecturer at University of Chicago

To download a flyer about the panel discussion, *In the Other's Shoes: Identity and Representation in Storytelling*, [CLICK HERE](#).

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