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**AUTHENTIC.
DARING.
NEW.**



Announcing Our 2016/17 Season

A Letter from Artistic Director Jamil Khoury

From stand-up comedy to musical theatre, from global conflict to Charles Dickens. Some might call it eclectic, but I call it exciting! And the talent, oh the talent.



In kicking things off, why not give the Islamophobes something to really fear? You know, like that incorrigibly irreverent, equal opportunity offender, Azhar Usman. As in, Dave Chappelle's favorite opening act. Azhar promises to (dis)grace our stage with his no-holds-barred, take-no-prisoners, laugh-till-you-cry, world premiere of *Ultra American: A Patriot Act*. Whatever you may think of Muslims, get ready to be ripped out of your (dis)comfort zone. Trust me, Azhar leaves no stone unturned, including your own pet rock. Even the folks at the TSA are gonna bust a gut.

And in case you've forgotten, Christianity is a Silk Road religion, Christmas is a Silk Road holiday, and the Philippines (by way of adjoining sea lanes and connecting trade routes) is part of the Silk Road. But don't worry, *Christmas at Christine's* will remind you—with music, nostalgia, and a spicy melange of naughty and nice. And besides, who can resist the insanely gifted, and outrageously lovable, actor-chanteuse Christine Bunuan? Journey with Christine as she breaks out the carols and weaves us tales in this world premiere celebration of that most wonderful time of the year.



Moving on to Israel/Palestine, that seemingly intractable, yet utterly soluble conflict that just keeps on giving! Wow, folks, could you please stop being so generous? Fortunately, we get great art for our misery. And the bar is about to be raised with *Semitic Commonwealth: Staged Readings of Plays about Israel and Palestine*. Six plays in all, soon to be announced. But these aren't your grandparent's predictable old narratives (no offense to anyone's grandparents). We ain't dusting off any cherished heirlooms this time around. No, we're going to make you work. Maybe even squirm.

And last but certainly not least, what's a Silk Road Rising season without a robust rumination on our most repeated c-word: colonialism? Call it the karmic spoils of imperialism. If Brits got to colonize India, now Indians get to colonize British literature. Far more humanely, I might add, and with stunning results! In a cartographical switcheroo worth its weight in parchment, playwright Tanika Gupta has adapted Charles Dickens' classic novel *Great Expectations* onto a 19th century Bengali landscape. In a stroke of mission-alignment genius, we'll be co-producing this subcontinental Great Expectations with Chicago's distinguished [Remy Bumpo Theatre Company](#). Between Gupta and Dickens, Silk Road and Remy Bumpo, the British Raj has surely met its match. Yes

So there you have it. Silk Road Rising's 2016-17 season. I think it's a real doozy. And with your impeccable taste, you will, too.



**Download our
Season Brochure!**



Ultra American: A Patriot Act



September 6 - 25, 2016

THE WORLD PREMIERE

WRITTEN AND PERFORMED BY

AZHAR USMAN

DIRECTED BY AARON TODD DOUGLAS

Famed comedian, Azhar Usman, takes to the stage with this brutally honest, unflinching one-man show. Ultra American explores the tensions and paradoxes surrounding the double consciousness of American Muslims living in an ever-polarizing world.

[Learn More »](#)

Christmas at Christine's

December 1 - 23, 2016

THE WORLD PREMIERE

WRITTEN & PERFORMED BY

CHRISTINE BUNUAN

DIRECTED BY J.R. SULLIVAN

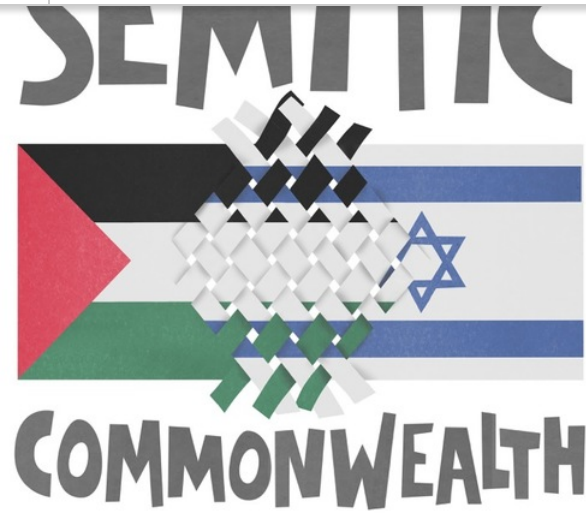
This new holiday musical revue puts a Silk Road spin on the Christmas season. Chicago favorite Christine Bunuan invites you into her world with *Christmas at Christine's*. Journey from California to Chicago to the Philippines to a Catholic-Jewish household, as Christine sings her way through the holiday songbook and a lifetime of yuletide memories.

[Learn More »](#)



Semitic Commonwealth

February 10 - 26, 2017



A staged reading series comprised of six plays by Arab and Jewish playwrights exploring the human toll of the Israeli–Palestinian conflict. Rather than strive to achieve balance and moral equivalency between "competing" narratives, these works investigate themes of identity, occupation, exile, and home with remarkable honesty. [Learn More »](#)

Great Expectations

May 11th - July 2nd, 2017

THE U.S. PREMIERE

WRITTEN BY CHARLES DICKENS
ADAPTED BY TANIKA GUPTA

CO-DIRECTED BY LAVINA JADHWANI
& NICK SANDYS

Dickens' beloved tale of aspiration, intrigue, and romance is thrillingly transplanted to a colonized India by award-winning British Bengali playwright Tanika Gupta. When Indian orphan Pip receives a mysterious inheritance, he must choose between his humble rural life and the city life of an English "gentleman." In a vibrant clash of cultures, classes, and conscience, Gupta's brilliant adaptation expands Dickens' enduring question: Is it worth losing who you are for who you might become? [Learn More »](#)



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