

# MOSQUE ALERT

WRITTEN BY JAMIL KHOURY • DIRECTED BY CARIN SILKAITIS



THE THEATRE AT  
MEILEY-SWALLOW

## **Cast (in order of appearance):**

Nathan Calaranan (Mostafa Khalil)  
Michael Frohling (Ted Baker)  
Juan Munoz Terrazas (Tawfiq Qabbani)  
Kat Davis (Aisha Khalil)  
Laura Ebsworth (Emily Baker)  
Alex Poe (Carl Baker)  
Darraugh Griffin (Samar Qabbani)  
Shelby Slager (Jen Baker)  
Nik Kmiecik (Farid Qabbani)  
Jake Elkins (Daniel Baker)  
Maddie DePorter (Aminah Qabbani)

## **Designers:**

Carin Silkaitis (Director)  
Dave Peterson (Director/Dramaturg)  
Stephen Kossak (Production Stage Manager)  
Elizabeth Miller (Stage Manager)  
Tegan Follis (Assistant Stage Manager)  
Michelle Reaska (Master Carpenter)  
Peter O'Neill (Technical Director)  
Katie White (Assistant Technical Director)  
Jesus Martinez (Dramaturg)  
David Cordero (Costume Designer)  
Christopher McCoy (Architectural Designer)  
Daniel Stratton (Scenic Designer)  
Ruby Lowe (Lighting Designer)  
Thomas Dixon (Original Music)  
Jessie Eastman (Props master)

## **Crew:**

Christina Freiboth (Light Board Operator)  
Erin Keegan (Run Crew)  
Marissa Olavarria (Costume Crew/Run Crew)  
Torie Trenter (Hair/Makeup Crew Head)  
Brian McLeod (Sound Board Operator)  
Nick Baumgartner (Run Crew)  
Kellyn Maguire (Run Crew)

**Please Join us for talk backs immediately following the performances and Friday and Saturday.**

**Following Sunday's performance there will be discussion at 6:30 in The Theater at Meiley Swallow. The discussion is entitled "Islam in America" and is organized by the Department of Religious Studies in conjunction with the Muslim Student Association.**

# Cast

---

**Nathan Calaranan** (*Mostafa Khalil*) is a freshman musical theatre major from Chicago, IL. His most recent credits are Benjamin Richards in both *Grounds for Divorce* and *Grounds for Divorce 2*. This is Nathan's first show at North Central College, and he is very excited to be working with everyone on the cast and production.

**Kat Davis** (*Aisha Khalil*) is extremely excited to be a part of North Central's Production of *Mosque Alert*. Kat is a Junior Theatre and Sociology double major and this is her third time lending her talents to the NCC stage. Previously, Kat was an ensemble member in *Miranda Writes* and a puppeteer of Audrey II in *Little Shop of Horrors*. The subject matter of the show and the setting being Naperville makes this play remarkably relevant to this community Kat has come to know as a second home. She would like to thank all her friends and family for their unwavering support and her fellow cast and crew members for making this experience so worth while and meaningful. She hopes you enjoy the show and that you can take away something meaningful from this production.

**Maddie Deporter** (*Aminah Qabbani*) is a 2015 grad of North Central College. She is so honored and thrilled to be back in her favorite theatre working on such a timely, important play. Some favorite NCC credits include: *The Taming of the Shrew* (Petruccio), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Puck), *Macbeth* (Weird Sister), and *October Mourning* (Ensemble). Maddie's professional Chicago credits include: *Gypsy* at Chicago Shakespeare Theater, *Sucker Punch* at Victory Gardens Theater, and The Other Theatre Company's Production of *Twilight: Los Angeles, 1992*. Film credits: *Traveling Without Moving* (Feature Film), *Teacher* (Short Film), *Monument* (Web), *The Onion: Sportology* (Web) Thanks to Mom, Dad, Carin and Nik for everything, always.

**Laura Ebsworth** (*Emily Baker*) is thrilled to return to the stage with the NCC Theatre Department! Previous NCC credits include *Machinal* (Nurse, Jail Matron), *Fragments* (Dancer), *Shout!* (Orange Understudy/Dance Ensemble), and *Cynics* (Jo). This Baltimore native is a Musical Theatre major and Music and Dance double-minor, and a killer tour guide for the Office of Admissions. Thanks to Carin, Dave, Jamil, Stephen, Liz, Tegan, and the cast and crew for the opportunity and experience, and thanks to Adam, Matt, "The Astronomy Tower," and Sarah for their unconditional love and support, always. Enjoy the show!

**Jake Elkins** (*Daniel Baker*) is excited to perform in his first NCC production, *Mosque Alert*. Jake is a freshman Musical Theatre major out of Aurora, Illinois. He'd like to thank the cast and crew for being so welcoming, and his mom and dad for their constant support.

**Michael Frohling** (*Ted Baker*) is a first year at North Central College from Sterling, Illinois, majoring in Musical Theatre with minors in Music and Broadcast Communication. Michael's most recent credits include Rev. Shaw Moore in *Footloose* and Uncle Fester in *Adams Family the Musical*. Michael is excited to make his debut performance in *Mosque Alert*. He would like to thank Carin Silkaitis and Dave Peterson for the opportunity to perform in this show.

# Cast

---

**Darraugh Griffin (Samar Qabbani)** is super excited to be involved in her first North Central College production! She is a sophomore Musical Theatre major, and she worked crew last year for *The Light in the Piazza* and *Little Shop of Horrors*. She would like to thank God, her family and friends, and the cast, crew, and creative team of *Mosque Alert*. Hope you enjoy the show!

**Nik Kmiecik (Farid Qabbani)** is proud alumni from NCC and is happy to back on the Meiley-Swallow stage for *Mosque Alert*! Nik graduated in 2015 where he appeared in many shows including *Into the Woods* (Baker), *Urinetown* (Bobby Strong), and *Parade* (Leo Frank). Nik's professional Chicago credits include productions of *Twelfth Night* and *Henry V* with Chicago Shakespeare Theater, *Pinocchio: the Folk Musical* with Filament Theatre, and *The Distance* with Haven Theatre. Finally, Nik wants to thank Carin, David, and Jamil for the wonderful opportunity to bring this character and show to life!

**Juan Munoz (Tawfiq Qabbani)** is a transfer student from JJC and Theatre major making his North Central College performance debut. Juan's last role at JJC was Dr. Frank N Furter in *The Rocky Horror Show* (Bozzie Award-Best Actor.) This year Juan also directed and wrote the original play *Terms and Conditions* performed at JJC. Juan kept busy this summer and was involved in a production of the musical *Dogfight* with The Drama Group, while working as an actor with Chicago Theater Works as well as with Artists Walk Theatre in *The Fantasticks*, where he played Mortimer. Juan can be seen next as Angel in *Into the Beautiful North* with 16th Street Theatre March 2017.

**Alexander Poe (Carl Baker)** is a Sophomore Theater major here at North Central College, he is receiving his B.A in both Theatrical Design & Technology as well as Theater Performance with a minor in Spanish. Recent performance and design credits include *Machinal*, *The Cherub's Mask*, and *The Light in The Piazza*. He would like to thank the cast, the crew, Carin, Dave, Jamil, Liz, and Stephen for all of their hard work. In addition, he would like to extend his gratitude to his family and friends for all of their support.

**Shelby Slager (Jen Baker)** is a freshman at North Central and is thrilled for *Mosque Alert* to be her first college show. Her theatre credits include directing *Friday Night Live* and starring in *Death of a Salesman* at her high school last year. She'd like to thank Carin Silkaitis and Dave Peterson for this amazing opportunity, the cast and crew for making it all possible, and her family and friends for supporting her through everything.

# Design Team

---

**David Cordero** (*Costume Designer*) (b. 1982) currently lives and works in Chicago, IL. Recent exhibitions include *Inversion* in Havana, re: a memo to peregrine staff in Mexico City and *Prolegomena* at Jack Hanley Gallery, New York. His work has been featured in *Hunter and Cook*, *The Chicago Tribune* and *The Art Newspaper*. Cordero was a teaching fellow at the University of Chicago, where he received his MFA in 2010. He received his BFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago in 2007.

**Jessie Eastman** (*Props master*) is a senior at NCC and is double majoring in Broadcast and Organizational Communication with a minor in Human Resource Management. She is originally from Morris, IL. Over the past three years, Jessie has been in one production and has held crew positions for numerous others. She is very excited to take on a role with the design team this year and would like to thank everyone for their dedication and hard work on this show.

**Tegan Follis** (*Assistant Stage Manager*) is a Senior Theatre Major and English Minor. This is her first time ever being an ASM, and she is very grateful that she did not crash and burn during the experience. She sends her thanks to Carin and Dave, her awesome parents, her amazing big brothers, John Stanley, Liz, and the entire cast and crew!

**Stephen Kossak** (*Production Stage Manager*): Stephen is a senior double majoring in Theatre and Theatrical Design and Technology with a minor in Studio Art. He is the resident Casting Director at The Other Company, and is a freelance casting director, recently working for Haven Theatre, Pursuit Productions, and the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Recent credits include *Gefilte Fish Chronicles* at the Chicago Musical Theatre Festival (Stage manager/Casting director/Lighting Designer), *Late, a Cowboy Song* (Stage manager), and *Doctor Faustus Lights the Lights* (Assistant director), both at North Central.

**Ruby Lowe** (*Lighting Designer*) feels so privileged to be a part of *Mosque Alert* and this amazing production team. Ruby is an NCC junior majoring in Theatrical Design & Technology and minoring in Studio Art. Recent credits include lighting design for NCC Summer Music Theatre's *Suessical* and *Oklahoma*, and scenic design for *Time Wasted* just earlier this month. As always, thanks to Dad, Mom, Terry, and Gio for the love and support.

**Jesus Martinez** (*Assistant Dramaturg*) is excited to be working on *Mosque Alert* at North Central College. Jesus' recent credits include run crew for *Machinal* and *Little Shop of Horrors* at North Central. He also created a lobby display for Teatro Vista's production of *In the Time of the Butterflies*. He will be co-directing *Far From Normal*, an original play, at North Central College in the end of January 2017. Jesus would like to thank Laura for helping him catch the dramaturgy bug and Ross for always being there for him in high school.

**Elizabeth Miller** (*Stage Manager*) Liz is a sophomore double majoring in Theatre and Theatrical Design and Technology with a double minor in Accounting and Studio Art. Recent NCC credits include *A Streetcar Named Desire* (Assistant Stage Manager), *The Cherub's Mask* (Assistant Stage Manager), and *Late, A Cowboy Song* (Assistant Director). Thanks to Carin, Dave, Stephen, and Tegan for all their hard work and help throughout the process.

**Dave Peterson** (*Director/Dramaturg*) is a visiting assistant professor theatre. Directing highlights: *Late, A Cowboy Song* (NCC) and *The Servant and of Two Masters* (Colby College). Dramaturgy highlights: *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (NCC) and *As You Like It* (Michigan Shakespeare Festival)

# Design Team

---

**Carin Silkaitis** (*Director*) is an Associate Professor of Theatre, Coordinator of Theatre, and Department Chair of Art and Theatre at North Central. Recent directing credits at North Central include *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *October Mourning*, and *4.48 Psychosis*. Carin also is the Founding Artistic Director for The Other Theatre Company, where her credits include *The Realm*, *Other Letters*, *Others: A 24 Hour Play Festival*, *Daughters of Ire*, and *Barney the Elf* (Director). She also has had notable camera credits including *Chicago Fire*, *Unexpected* (Starring Cobie Smulders and Anders Holm), *Blood and Water*, back-to-back commercials for the Arkansas Lottery, The Onion, Progressive Insurance, and Instant Care. She has also performed for theatres such as Eclipse Theatre, American Theatre Company, Goodman Theatre, Theatre Wit, and Oak Park Festival Theatre. Carin received her MFA in acting from the Theatre Conservatory at Roosevelt University and is a recent graduate of the School at Steppenwolf.

**Jamil Khoury** (*Author*) is the Founding Artistic Director of Silk Road Rising. Promoting playwrights of Silk Road backgrounds (Asian and Middle Eastern) is a passion that dovetails well with Khoury's experiences living in the Middle East and his eleven years as a cross-cultural trainer and international relocations consultant. A theatre producer, playwright, essayist, and filmmaker, Khoury's work focuses on Middle Eastern themes and questions of Diaspora. He is particularly interested in the intersections of culture, national identity, and citizenship, as well as ever-evolving notions of Americanness. Khoury's play *Mosque Alert* received its professional world premiere at Silk Road Rising in spring 2016.

He is greatly honored to be receiving his third college production of the play at North Central College and to be working with director Carin Schapiro Silkaitis and this fantastic cast and production team. *Mosque Alert* grew out of an online interactive new play development and civic engagement project that was launched in 2011, exploring resistance to the building of mosques in communities across the U.S. This unique, first-of-its-kind pairing of artistic and civic processes received the 2013 Change Maker Award from South Asian Americans Leading Together (SAALT). *Mosque Alert* received its college world premiere at Illinois' Knox College in February 2015 and a second college production at Indiana's Valparaiso University in November 2015. With support from the MacArthur Foundation, the play was translated into German by playwright/translator Ulrike Syha and received two public staged readings at Hamburg, Germany's Lichthof Theatre in October 2016.

Khoury holds a M.A. degree in Religious Studies from The University of Chicago Divinity School and a B.S. degree in International Relations from Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service. He is a Kellogg Executive Scholar (Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University) and has been awarded a Certificate of Professional Achievement in Nonprofit Management. Khoury is the 2015 recipient of the Community Leader Award from the Association for Asian American Studies, the 2013 recipient of the Actor's Equity Association's Kathryn V. Lamkey Award for promoting diversity and inclusion in theatre, and the 2010 recipient of the 3Arts Artist Award for Playwriting.

# Author Note

---

## Jamil Khoury

If it takes a village to write a play, then it's taken a mid-sized city to write *Mosque Alert*. Five years of artistic input and output, including over a year and a half of actually writing the play, fostered communities-in-dialogue that would have never emerged otherwise. A lot of amazing people, many of whom I've never met, have weighed in on this story. And despite being someone who loves to talk, I found myself doing a great deal of listening and ended up learning more than I ever imagined. Invite co-creators, and they will come. Invite them from the very beginning, and they will be heard.

In 2011, with the ten-year commemoration of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 fast approaching, I was busy reflecting on 9/11 and its impact on American culture and public policy. I was particularly concerned with challenges facing America's Muslim communities. The year prior, in the summer of 2010, I found myself feeling both galvanized and unsettled by the controversy surrounding Cordoba House (later Park 51), the bold visionary Islamic Community Center that had been proposed for Lower Manhattan, in close proximity to the site of the World Trade Center. The proposed building incited raucous debate on a national level. Pejoratively dubbed the "Ground Zero Mosque," Cordoba House revealed to me one of the most pernicious symptoms of post-9/11 anti-Muslim backlash—namely, a resistance to the building of mosques in communities across the U.S.

Since proposed masjids, or mosques, face levels of scrutiny and suspicion rarely directed at similarly proposed Christian, Jewish, Hindu, and Buddhist houses of worship, I felt this a conflict worthy of dramatization, and I found several examples right here in Chicagoland. Two such cases, here in Naperville, propelled me to make Naperville the setting for what became *Mosque Alert*. And despite the passage of time, prejudice continues to inform zoning policies in American cities and towns, and mosque proposals still provoke kneejerk, not-in-my-backyard opposition that often gets conflated with national security fears, cultural anxieties, and perceived existential threats.

Little did I know, back in 2011, that we were on the cusp of creating a radical, truly unconventional, first-of-its-kind, online, new play development and civic engagement process. The idea was to wed playwriting with public discourse, to blend a 4,000 year old art form with modern-day digital technology, and to write a new play while exploring resistance to the building of mosques. In its original, online video-driven iteration, my theatre company, Silk Road Rising, introduced a nine-stage process that attracted participants as both artistic collaborators and engaged citizens. We solicited input on character development, plot points, and narrative arcs, while facilitating discourse on civil rights, Islamophobia, and religious pluralism. Our presumed audience was primarily local, but we quickly noticed downloads from around the world, including countries in which certain conversations of ours may be censored and/or prohibitively dangerous. Now, five years, one ten-minute play, two video essays, 24 video blogs, nine digital conflict scenes, one compilation video, dozens of live screenings (at colleges, libraries, houses of worship, and civic organizations), countless surveys, questionnaires, newsletters, and postings (via websites, social media, email, and print outs), table reads, numerous workshops, four public staged readings, three college productions, a professional world premiere, 25,000+ global downloads, seven directors, dozens of actors, a high school playwriting course, a steady evolution from four to six to eleven characters, and hundreds of live and online conversations later, we've finally arrived at a this version of the script, being produced in Naperville, at North Central College, in partnership with Silk Road Rising, and supported by ArtPlace America's National Creative Placemaking Fund. Talk about a full-circle homecoming. If the feedback I've been receiving for five years now tells me anything, it's how critical this issue is to America's cultural zeitgeist. Clearly our mid-sized city never sleeps!

*Continued on next page*

# Author Note

---

## Jamil Khoury

*Mosque Alert* wrestles with ideas that are complicated and messy. The play exists in shades of gray, eschewing worldviews that are black and white. My intent has been to create characters that are complex, mostly well-intentioned, confident yet flawed, and, perhaps at times, self-contradictory. Everyone's on a journey. Some may demonstrate change, others may not. There's no protagonist or main character in this play, and that is by design. It's truly an ensemble piece. Furthermore, as the playwright of *Mosque Alert*, I find it necessary to address my positionality in writing this play. First and foremost, I am of course an artist. I have a particular interest in the dramatization of ideas, theories, and debates, and in creating characters for whom social and political activism informs identities and relationships. I am not Muslim. I'm a mixed blood Arab American of Syrian Christian heritage, raised in the Antiochian Orthodox Church. My husband Malik Gillani is Muslim. I write this play as an anti-Islamophobia activist, an advocate for Muslim American civil rights, and an ally to progressive Muslim, feminist Muslim, and queer Muslim communities. *Mosque Alert* belongs to an emerging body of Arab American plays that intersect politics and discursive arguments within the everyday lives of characters.

With that, I thank you for supporting live theatre and the North Central College Department of Fine & Performing Arts, and I hope that you enjoy *Mosque Alert*!

# Dramaturg Note

---

Dave Peterson

Casting and Representation in North Central's *Mosque Alert*

When casting any college performance, issues of artistry, pedagogy, and social responsibility are all central concerns. As of late, issues of social responsibility and casting have taken center stage. Many have praised the Broadway hit *Hamilton* for showcasing black and Latino actors in "white" roles. On the flip side of the coin, many theatres and colleges have come under scrutiny for casting "white" actors in roles that are written for actors of color. While it is vital that the professional theatre continue to create opportunities for actors and theatre artists outside of European lineages, a small college setting must often meet these imperatives on their own terms. This being said we still must make sure we educate our students and tell stories that represent the diversity of our world. Characters in *Mosque Alert* have lineages from Syria and Egypt, and we debated the best way to depict these characters based on our students. We did not feel the need to cast only actors who were of Egyptian or Syrian descent, or only cast Muslim actors, but we were also committed to the idea that the play should not be told exclusively through the voices of European-descended communities. As we cast the show we looked at actors from a variety of viewpoints that could both create a sense of believability in the roles, but who also might bring with them experiences of being excluded from certain "mainstream" values or power systems. We wanted our cast to reflect the diversity of views the play itself prizes. In searching for actors that "fit" roles, we endeavoured to honor the idea that Arab Muslims are diverse in both views and in appearance, but also be careful not replicate the systems of exclusion the play so thoughtfully examines.

As we we worked on this production, we also knew that education is a vital part of any North Central theatre process, and that our students could expand their knowledge of Muslim communities here and abroad. Our process spent time educating students about Muslim practices, the Syrian Civil War, variations in the Arabic language, and other ideas central to the play. We were fortunate to have both a playwright with broad knowledge and experiences in the room with us, but also students and scholars on campus who helped our students better understand the identities and issues at the center of this play. We want to be responsible in representing characters on stage, and we believe one route to this responsibility on a college campus is through creating opportunities for students to understand identities outside of their own. Just as this process has allowed our students a greater understanding of Islam and the challenges and traditions of Arab families living in the US, we hope this production allows you to see stories not depicted on stage and screen as often as stories of European-descended Americans. Maybe these stories are new to you, maybe these stories are ones you live but rarely see on stage, or you may have another relationship to the material. All of us involved in this play started with different perspectives and levels of awareness, but each of us grew in our understanding and knowledge throughout this production process. We hope that no matter what background you bring to this play, you leave with a new and valuable experience from our time together.

# Production History

---

*Mosque Alert* was originally commissioned and developed by Silk Road Rising, Chicago, Illinois, Founding Artistic Director Jamil Khoury and Founding Executive Director Malik Gillani, with additional development support provided by Knox College. Originally produced in a college world premiere (February 2015) at Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois, directed by Neil Blackadder.

*Mosque Alert* received two staged readings in New York City, New York, produced by Queens College Center for Ethnic, Racial, and Religious Understanding and Voyage Theater Company (October 2015), directed by Wayne Maugans.

In Chicago and Naperville, Illinois, *Mosque Alert* received two staged readings, produced by Silk Road Rising in partnership with North Central College (October 2015), directed by Carin Silkaitis.

Further development support was provided by Valparaiso University, Valparaiso, Indiana, which culminated in a second college production (November 2015), directed by George Potter.

*Mosque Alert* had its professional world premiere at Silk Road Rising in Chicago, Illinois on April 2, 2016, directed by Edward Torres. Including preview performances and an extension, *Mosque Alert* ran for eight weeks. The set design was by Dan Stratton, the costume design was by Elsa Hiltner, the lighting design was by Lindsey Lyddan, the sound design and original compositions were by Thomas Dixon, the properties design was by Alec Long, the production manager was Corey Pond, the stage manager was Caitlin Roper, the developmental dramaturg was Neal Ryan Shaw, the production dramaturg was Anneliese McSweeney, and the cultural consultant was Fouad Teymour.

# Thank You

---

Jamil Khoury, Malik Gillani, Corey Pond, and everyone at Silk Road Rising

Jack Shindler

Miranda Harris

Youssef Mekawy and the Muslim Student Association

Andrew Butler, Jon Rippe, and Fine Arts Production Staff

Wioleta Polinska

Erin Keegan

Kellyn Maguire

Nick Baumgartner

Brian McLeod

Kim Magett

Saira Deane

Andrew Stratton

Saily Joshi

Promila Kumar

Islamic Center of Naperville

SO many members of the 9 to 5 cast - who came to build furniture!

Finally, our families and friends to support us in what we do. We couldn't do it without you!

# NORTH CENTRAL COLLEGE

## 2016-2017 SEASON

---

*9 to 5: The Musical*, music and lyrics by Dolly Parton  
Based on the book by Patricia Resnick  
Directed by Scott Weinstein

Musical Direction by Jermaine Hill, Assistant Professor  
November 10-13, 2016, Pfeiffer Hall

*Far From Normal* by Jesus Martinez  
Directed by Jesus Martinez and Lexii Gravis  
January 26-29, 2017, Meiley-Swallow Hall

*Once on This Island* book and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens  
Music by Stephen Flaherty  
Directed by Miranda Harris, Musical Direction by Bobby Taves  
February 23-26, 2017, Pfeiffer Hall

*The Navigator* by Eddie Antar  
Directed by Laura A. Lodewyck, Assistant Professor  
April 20-23, 2017, Meiley-Swallow Hall

*Improv: On Ice!*  
An improvised sketch comedy  
Directed by Alex Moerer  
May 4-6, 2017, Madden Theatre

*Troilus and Cressida* by William Shakespeare  
Directed by Dave Peterson, Visiting Assistant Professor  
May 18-21, 2017, Meiley-Swallow Hall