

Golden Thread Productions presents



ReOrient²⁰¹⁷

Festival of Short Plays

November 17–December 10, 2017
Potrero Stage, San Francisco



WELCOME TO REORIENT 2017!



You are in for a treat tonight! Some of the Bay Area's most talented artists have gathered to bring you seven world premieres from or about the Middle East, all in one evening. ReOrient is unique not only in its vision of cultural diversity, but also for encouraging artistic collaboration and experimentation. These are stories you are unlikely to encounter anywhere else.

The festival is now produced on a two-year cycle, starting with an international selection process (more on that on page 5). Once the plays are in place, we select a diverse creative team in time for the "ReOrient Camp" developmental workshop held over July 4th weekend. By the time we are in production, more than a year has passed from when the plays were selected.

There is always the concern that because of the long lead time, some of the plays will lose their urgency. But every time, I'm reminded that artists are tuned into the collective unconscious, as Jung called it. Producing primal images and ideas both familiar and surprising. Many of this year's plays are set here in the U.S. and deal with simple domestic issues that have profound meaning in the context of an immigrant family. To me, this reflects our struggle with our place in this country.

As you watch the plays, tune into their common themes. In developing their ideas, the festival designers pay close attention to commonalities, as well as each play's unique elements. We work very hard to create an evening that tells a full story.

I want to thank Roberto Varea at USF for hosting the Camp once again; Nakissa Etemad, who suggested and facilitated the LMDA partnership; and Evren Odickin, who fearlessly ventured where no man has gone before and produced this year's festival.

But at the end of the day, this work is about you, and we want to hear your responses. Find us in the lobby, at the post-play conversation, or online. Talk to us, write to us, fill out our audience survey! Let us know what you think and how our work impacts you.



Torange Yeghiazarian
Founding Artistic Director

Take our audience survey!
Tell us who you are and why you're here:
goldenthread.org/survey

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ReOrient 2017 Festival of Short Plays

featuring plays by **Melis Aker, E.H. Benedict, Sevan K. Greene, Hannah Khalil, Junichi P. Semitsu, Betty Shamieh, and Torange Yeghiazarian**

Ensemble

Atosa Babaoff*

Mohamed Chakmakchi

Naseem Etemad*

Stephen Kanaski

Lawrence Radecker*

Jessica Lea Risco

Bella Warda

Production Team

Directors **Erin Gilley, Susannah Martin, Evren Odcikin
Sara Razavi, Torange Yeghiazarian**

Dramaturgs **Nakissa Etemad, Emily DeDakis, Maddie Gaw,
Vidhu Singh, Anna Woodruff**

Scenic Designer **Kate Boyd**

Lighting Designer **Cassie Barnes**

Sound Designer **James Ard**

Costume Designer **Brooke Jennings**

Properties Designer **Grisel Torres**

Projection Designer **Erin Gilley**

Makeup Designer **Kenan Arun**

Graphic Designer **Navid G. Maghami**

Technical Director **Beckett Finn**

Stage Manager **Karen Runk***

Assistant Stage Manager ... **Benjamin Shiu**

Production Assistants **Apollonia, Keith Arcuragi**

Costume Assistant **Kathleen Qiu**

Box Office Associate **Niku Sharei**

Thanks to our generous sponsors of ReOrient 2017

San Francisco Arts Commission, National Endowment for the Arts, Walter & Elise Haas Fund, The Fleishhacker Foundation, The Center for Middle Eastern Studies at UC Berkeley, University of San Francisco, and Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas

Golden Thread is a resident company of **Potrero Stage**, operated by **PlayGround**, and this show is presented as part of PlayGround's Potrero Stage Presenting Program.

** Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers*



REORIENT 2017 LINE-UP

WAR ON TERROR by E.H. Benedict

directed by Sara Razavi

Mr. Sadat	Mohamed Chakmakchi	Darlene	Jessica Lea Risco
Mrs. Sadat	Bella Warda	Junior	Stephen Kanaski

A IS FOR ALI by Sevan K. Greene

directed by Sara Razavi

Waleed	Mohamed Chakmakchi
Naomi	Atosa Babaoﬀ*

MANAR by Melis Aker

directed by Erin Gilley | dramaturged by Anna Woodruff

A Mother	Jessica Lea Risco	A Son	Stephen Kanaski
A Father	Lawrence Radecker*	Najla	Naseem Etemad*

15 -MINUTE INTERMISSION

MAKE NO MISTAKE by Betty Shamieh

directed by Susannah Martin | dramaturged by Nakissa Etemad

Amy	Jessica Lea Risco
Amal	Atosa Babaoﬀ*

THE REHEARSAL by Hannah Khalil

directed by Evren Odcikin

Woman	Bella Warda	Woman 2	Naseem Etemad*
Man	Lawrence Radecker*	Director	Stephen Kanaski

SHELTER poetry by Junichi P. Semitsu

stage soundscape adapted by Torange Yeghiazarian and James Ard

featuring the voices of Shoresch Alaudini, Nida Fuad Khalil, and Mikiko Uesugi

THANKSGIVING AT KHODABAKHSHIAN'S by Torange Yeghiazarian

directed by Susannah Martin | dramaturged by Nakissa Etemad

Bridget	Jessica Lea Risco	Dina	Bella Warda
Peter	Lawrence Radecker*	Fay	Atosa Babaoﬀ*



SELECTING A FESTIVAL

by Evren Odcikin, Director of New Plays and Festival Producer



Managing the ReOrient selection every two years might be my favorite part of the Director of New Plays job. The process starts with an international call for submissions. And the response is, indeed, international: the seven ReOrient 2017 plays were culled from 79 submissions from 14 countries, and the festival features artists and stories from Armenia, India, Iraq, Iran, Japan, Lebanon, Palestine, Syria, Tunisia, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the U.S.

We owe a debt of gratitude to our 2017 selection committee: **Catherine Coray**, who heads the theatre program at NYU Abu Dhabi and the Middle East/United States Playwright Exchange at The Lark; award-winning playwright and UC Berkeley professor **Philip Kan Gotanda**; Theatre Without Borders co-founder **Roberta Levitow**, who is the Senior Program Associate at Sundance Institute's Middle East North Africa Theatre Program, and **Roberto Gutiérrez Varea**, founding faculty at the USF Performing Arts and Social Justice Program. The generosity and care they took with each play set the tone for the whole process.

Selecting the final ReOrient line-up from the committee's recommendations falls on the Golden Thread staff. Balancing the artistic and technical needs of such a festival is a complicated puzzle. We create casting matrixes. We pay close attention to stylistic diversity and the range of Middle Eastern cultures represented. But at the end of the day, the selection process is more art than science. The line-up comes together when we believe the whole evening presents a thoughtful and surprising snapshot of our Here and Now.

Each year, there is a wealth of worthy playwrights that we're not able to include in the festival. In 2017, 10 playwrights were named as **Honorable Mentions**:

Hassan Abdulrazzak
Harut Akopyan
Mudar Alhaggi
Leila Buck

Shay Goldstein
Atar Hadari
Uday Jhunjhunwala

Mustafa Kaymak
Daria Polatin
Lilly Thomassian

No rest for the weary! The next selection process has already begun — the ReOrient 2019 call for plays is out. **Submission deadline is May 1, 2018!**

Find out more and submit your play at goldenthread.org/reorient2019.



A NEW PARTNERSHIP

This year's ReOrient Festival marks our first collaboration with **Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (LMDA)**, the international service organization founded in 1985 dedicated to the practice, promotion, advocacy, and education of the field of dramaturgy. The partnership, led by Iranian American dramaturg **Nakissa Etemad**, provides ReOrient with a team of five dramaturgs bringing their expertise in new play development, research, and contextualization. Production Dramaturgs Etemad and **Anna Woodruff** supported the production process of the plays. Publications Dramaturgs **Emily DeDakis**, **Maddie Gaw**, and **Vidhu Singh** have written feature articles about the ReOrient artists and creative process to help bring audiences behind-the-scenes of the festival.

For more information on LMDA and dramaturgy, visit lmda.org.

(An excerpt from the first partnership article)

“Are You Ready to ReOrient? by Vidhu Singh

As one of three Publications Dramaturgs for ReOrient, I am attending the first company read-through for ReOrient 2017. The buzz is palpable as introductions are made among a large company of 38 artists. It takes a village to put on a festival as ambitious as ReOrient!

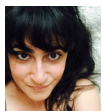
In this first rehearsal, a vital context is being declared by the festival's producers to fuel the intense creative process of the coming weeks. Torange Yeghiazarian relays the genesis of the festival: “Why do we ReOrient? As a small theatre company that produces only one or two mainstage productions a year, there was no way for us to really reflect the diversity of the Middle East... cultural, religious, linguistic, but also artistic, aesthetic diversity. That's always been an important part of ReOrient.” She invites spirited intellectual engagement from the artists present. “The art of conversation and meaningful exchange has been lost,” she adds. “I look to you to provide it, and to challenge each other to learn more and question your own assumptions.” She urges them to “dig deep into the plays” and investigate ideas with a spirit of curiosity.

The family of artists is energized by this rehearsal, inspired to launch into the upcoming work.

”

Read the full article and access more ReOrient content at
goldenthread.org/reorient2017

CAST



Atosa Babaoff* (Naomi, *A is for Ali*; Amal, *Make No Mistake*; Fay, *Thanksgiving*)

has worked at many Bay Area theatres, including A.C.T., Berkeley Rep, Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Word for Word, and Golden Thread. She is a co-founder of the Affinity Project along with Beatrice Basso, Nora el Samahy, and Emily Hoffman, and was a member of Laura Arrington Dance and Liz Tenuto Dance and a Half. M.F.A., American Conservatory Theater.



Mohamed Chakmakchi (Mr. Sadat, *War on Terror*; Waleed, *A is for Ali*) is a Bay

Area writer, actor, teacher, poet, father, and husband. The stories in his family intertwine with the poly-cultural fabric of the Middle East (specifically Iraq), as well as Spain through marriage. He gravitates towards art that works around issues of identity, loss, and obsession; art that is testimonial, personal, and universal; that opens spaces for hidden histories, questions dominant narratives, and leads to difficult conversations and greater truths.



Naseem Etemad* (Najla, *Manar*; Woman 2, *The Rehearsal*) is a Los Angeles-based actor that has worked

both behind-the-scenes and on stage with Golden Thread over the last three years, appearing in the New Threads Reading Series and in ReOrient 2015 as Yuliana in *Turning Tricks*. Favorite roles include Pakeeza in *Suburbia* at Breach Once More; Maryam in *Strength and Fortune*, a short film by Zein Productions; and Samar in *Veils* at Pear Theatre.



Stephen Kanaski (Junior, *War on Terror*; A Son, *Manar*; Director, *The Rehearsal*) is

honored to be joining Golden Thread's ReOrient 2017. Past credits include A Young Man in *Infinite*, a New

Musical; Arthur Lake in *Castle Happy*; Miss Understanding/Lars/Ensemble in *Priscilla, Queen of the Desert*; Charles in *Sons of the Prophet* (TBA Award nominated); Alan in the West Coast premiere of *On a Clear Day You Can See Forever*; Seymour in *Little Shop of Horrors*; Enjolras in *Les Misérables*; amongst others.



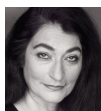
Lawrence Radecker* (A Father, *Manar*; Man, *The Rehearsal*; Peter, *Thanksgiving*) was last seen in the

ReOrient 2015 Festival with Golden Thread. Other Golden Thread productions include *Night Over Erzinga*, *Isfahan Blues*, and a number of other ReOrients and readings. He is a resident artist with Crowded Fire Theatre Company, where he has developed and debuted roles in numerous world premieres. He has also performed with Magic Theatre, Aurora Theatre, San Jose Stage, Marin Theatre Company, Bootstrap Theatre, and Impact Theatre, amongst others.



Jessica Lea Risco (Darlene, *War on Terror*; A Mother, *Manar*; Amy, *Make No Mistake*; Bridget, *Thanksgiving*)

is so excited to be working with Golden Thread for the first time. She has worked in Minneapolis, New York City, Tucson, Dublin, Honolulu, and now the San Francisco Bay Area, which has become her home. Locally, she has worked with Berkeley Rep, SF Playhouse, Playwrights Foundation, The O'Neill Foundation, and most recently, Boxcar Theatre, where she originated the role of Dorothy in *The Speakeasy*, performing more than 100 times. Shokran bezzaf to everyone in this amazing festival!



Bella Warda (Mrs. Sadat, *War on Terror*; Woman, *The Rehearsal*; Dina, *Thanksgiving*),

an Iranian-born Berkeley resident, is a founding member of the Darvag Theater Group, which celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2015. She is happy to be working once again with Golden Thread Productions. Bella has worn many hats



in the world of theatre, including acting, directing, and set and costume design. Some hats looked better than others. She hopes the hat she is wearing this time will fit and please you.

PLAYWRIGHTS

Melis Aker (Playwright, *Manar*) is an actor, playwright, and musician from Turkey. Plays include *Manar* (LaMaMa, LaGuardia Performing Arts Center's Rough Draft Festival) and *330 Pegasus: A Love Letter (Part I)* (Noor Theatre's Highlight Series). Her *Untitled Coup D'etat Play* will receive a run at the Signature in 2018. She is writing the book for Tatiana Pandiani's *Ruben Dario Project* as part of the NYTW 2050 Fellowship. M.F.A. in Playwriting, Columbia University. melisaker.com

E.H. Benedict (Playwright, *War on Terror*) is honored to be included in the ReOrient Festival, where her play *Orhan* was produced in 2012. Her plays have been developed locally and at the Lark (NYC). *American Royals* and *Rashomon in Kansas* were semifinalists for the O'Neill Playwrights Conference. Her short play *Gloria Steinem & Lotte Lenya & Scout Are Waiting* won best in festival at the WCPA in Westcliffe, CO. She is a 2016 TBA TITAN Award recipient and a member of the Dramatists Guild.

Sevan K. Greene (Playwright, *A is for Ali*) is an award-winning playwright and actor based in London and NYC. Sevan's work has been seen at The Public Theater, New York Theatre Workshop, The Flea Theater, The Sheen Center, The Bush Theatre, Theatre Royal Stratford East, Theatre503, Rich Mix, and The Old Red Lion. He is a member of The Bush Theatre inaugural 2015 Emerging Writers Group, The Public Theater 2011 Emerging Writers Group, NYTW Usual Suspects, and the Rising Circle Theatre Collective 2010 InkTANK Lab. sevangreene.com

Hannah Khalil's (Playwright, *The Rehearsal*) stage plays include *The Scar Test* (Soho Theatre, London; "Political Theatre at its best" —*Exeunt*); *Scenes from 68* Years* (Arcola Theatre, London; shortlisted for James Tait Black Award; "Confirms Khalil as a dramatist of compelling potential" —*Daily Telegraph*); *Bitterenders* (Golden Thread's ReOrient 2015 Festival; winner of Sandpit Arts' Bulbul 2013); *Plan D* (Tristan Bates Theatre; nominee, Meyer Whitworth Award); and *Ring* (winner, Soho Theatre London's Westminster Prize). Radio plays include *Last of the Pearl Fishers* and *The Deportation Room* for BBC Radio 4.

Betty Shamieh (Playwright, *Make No Mistake*) is the author of fifteen plays. Credits include *The Strangest* (The Semitic Root), *Fit for the Queen* (Classical Theatre of Harlem), *The Black Eyed* (New York Theatre Workshop, Magic Theatre), *Territories* (Magic Theatre), and *Roar* (The New Group). She was a Clifton Visiting Artist at Harvard College, a Playwriting Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute, a UNESCO Young Artist for Intercultural Dialogue, and a Guggenheim Fellow in Drama and Performance Art. M.F.A., Yale School of Drama. bettyshamieh.com.

Torance Yeghiazarian (Founding Artistic Director; Playwright, *Thanksgiving*; Adapter, *Shelter*) founded Golden Thread in 1996, where she has directed *Our Enemies: Lively Scenes of Love and Combat* and *Scenic Routes* by Yussef El Guindi, *The Myth of Creation* by Sadegh Hedayat, *Tamam* by Betty Shamieh, *Stuck* by Amir Al-Azraki and *Voice Room* by Reza Soroor, amongst others. She is also a playwright, whose plays include *Isfahan Blues* (Gerbode-Hewlett Playwright Commission Award), *444 Days*, *The Fifth String: Ziriyab's Passage to Cordoba* (ICCNC commission), and *Call Me Mehdi* (published in the TCG anthology "Salaam. Peace: An Anthology of Middle Eastern-American Drama"). Her articles have been published in *The Drama Review*, *American Theatre Magazine*, and




Theatre Bay Area Magazine. Born in Iran and of Armenian heritage, she holds a Master's degree in Theatre Arts from SFSU. She is one of the TCG Legacy Leaders of Color. She has received honors from the Cairo International Theatre Festival, the Symposium on Equity in the Entertainment Industry, and Theatre Bay Area.

DIRECTORS

Erin Gilley (Director, *Manar*; Projection Designer) Credits include *The Speakeasy* and *Equus* (Boxcar Theatre); *Fiction* (Dragon Theatre); *Criminal Genius* and *Making Noise Quietly* (TheatreFirst); *Turning Tricks* and *Counting in Sha'ab* (Golden Thread); *Longitude* and *Peek A Boo* (London International Festival of Theatre); *The Lily's Revenge* (Magic Theatre); *The Unauthorized Autobiography of Kim Deal* and *Beautiful* (elastic future); *Wreckage* (Crowded Fire); *The Woods* (Theatre in the Woods). B.A., Princeton University; M.F.A., Birkbeck, University of London. eringilley.com

Susannah Martin (Director, *Make No Mistake* and *Thanksgiving*) is exceedingly grateful to embrace her Tunisian-American heritage and work with Golden Thread Productions for the first time. She has directed for Shotgun Players (company member), A.C.T., Boxcar Theatre, Crowded Fire, Magic Theatre, Marin Theatre Company, Mugwumpin (company member), Playwrights Foundation, and Z Space, amongst others. Upcoming projects include *Participants* at TheatreFIRST, *Next to Normal* with YMTC, and the world premiere of Dipika Guha's *In Braunau* at SF Playhouse. susannahmartin.net

Evren Odcikin's (Director of New Plays and Marketing; Festival Producer; Director, *The Rehearsal*) first Golden Thread credit was set designing the 2005 ReOrient Festival, so it feels like coming full circle producing the festival 12 years later. Directing credits include work at South Coast Rep, Cleveland Public Theatre, TheatreSquared, The Lark, O'Neill Theater Center, Kennedy Center, Magic Theatre,



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Sara Razavi (Director, *War on Terror* and *A is for Ali*) Directing credits include Mona Mansour and Tala Manassah's *The Letter* and *The House*, Farzam Farrokhi's *2012*, Nahal Navidar's *Songs of Our Childhood* (Golden Thread Productions); Maryam Rostami's *Persepolis, Texas* (CounterPULSE); and Denmo Ibrahim's *BABA* (Alter Theatre, Bay Area Theatre Critics' Circle Award for Best Original Script). She is the Interim CEO of Working Solutions, and has served on the Golden Thread Board of Trustees (2010-2016). B.A., UC Davis; M.B.A., University of San Francisco.

DRAMATURGS

Nakissa Etemad (Lead Dramaturg; Production Dramaturg, *Make No Mistake* and *Thanksgiving*) is a dramaturg, producer, director, French translator, and LMDA's Regional VP for Metro Bay Area. Select premieres: *The River Bride* (OSF), *Heart Shaped Nebula* (Shotgun Players), *Isfahan Blues* (Golden Thread and African-American Shakespeare), *Be Bop Baby: A Musical Memoir* (Z Space), *every tongue confess* (Arena Stage). Current: Marcus Gardley's *King Lear* (Play On!). Elliott Hayes Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dramaturgy for The Lark's multi-city premieres of Gardley's *the road weeps, the well runs dry*. M.F.A. in Dramaturgy, UC San Diego.

Anna Woodruff (Production Dramaturg, *Manar*) has worked at The Lark, A.C.T., Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, and Soho Rep. Recent projects include *Book of Esther* by Gina Stevensen (Know Theatre, Fancy

Boys Creative), *Good Man* by Melis Aker (Columbia Stages), and *A DollZes HoUse* by Becca Plunkett (Columbia Thesis, Signature Theatre). Anna is a frequent collaborator with Melis Aker, and has been working on *Manar* since its initial phase. B.A. in Theatre Studies, University of Connecticut; M.F.A. candidate in Dramaturgy, Columbia University.

PRODUCTION TEAM

James Ard (Sound Designer; Adapter, *Shelter*) is a San Francisco-based designer, noisemaker, mechanic, and theatre vagrant. His sound design work has been heard here at Potrero Stage in collaborations with Golden Thread Productions and Crowded Fire. His designs have also been heard at the Strand Theater, Cutting Ball, Z Space, New Conservatory Theatre Center, Getty Villa, and the Ashby Stage. He is a co-founder of SoundPlay.media, where he currently produces short plays for podcast at BareWireTheatre.com.

Kenan Arun (Makeup Designer) is a makeup artist for theatre, specializing in FX, character, and drag makeup since 2008. He is thrilled to be working on his second ReOrient with Golden Thread. kenanarunmakeup.com

Cassie Barnes (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer all across the Bay Area for companies such as Golden Thread Productions, Breadbox, Bay Area Children's Theatre, 99 Stock Productions, Wiley West Productions, and Custom Made. She has recently expanded her career to include dance, which has led her to work with Applegate Dance Company, Bayer Ballet, Bay Pointe Ballet, Ledoh with Salt Farm, and Meredith Webster. She also works as a lighting technician at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music.

Kate Boyd (Scenic Designer) is a resident designer for Golden Thread, and recently designed sets and lights for *Isfahan Blues*, and sets for *The Most Dangerous*



Highway in the World (TBA Award nomination). Other credits: Aurora Theatre, Center Rep, Magic Theatre, Merola Opera, SF Conservatory of Music, Marin Theatre Company, TheatreWorks, and Brava. Kate teaches stagecraft and design at Lick-Wilmerding High School, and was a recipient of the Gerbode Design Fellowship.

Navid G. Maghami (Graphic Designer) began working with Golden Thread in 2008. Through his full-service graphic design studio NaMa, he offers design services to numerous arts and cultural institutions, visual artists, musicians, theatre companies, filmmakers, and film festivals locally and internationally since 1999. M.F.A. in Design, CCA in San Francisco. namadesignstudio.com

Brooke Jennings (Costume Designer) is ecstatic to return to Golden Thread for her second ReOrient! Credits include *Barbecue*, *Colossal*, *The Nether* (SF Playhouse); *Romeo and Juliet*, *Midsummer of Love*,

Ondine (We Players); *A Lie of the Mind*, *Bad Jews* (Magic Theatre, assistant designer); *#bros*, *Every 28 Hours*, *Maggie's Riff* (Fault-Line Theatre). Brooke won the 2015 TBA Award for Outstanding Costume Design for We Players's *Ondine* at Sutro. M.A., UC Santa Cruz.

Michelle Mulholland (Managing Director) has more than 17 years of non-profit management experience from some of San Francisco's finest arts and environmental justice organizations, including Theater Artaud, Beach Blanket Babylon, Brava Theater, the Commonwealth Club of California, The Coral Reef Alliance, and Forests Forever. Since joining Golden Thread in 2012, she has been managing and improving day to day operations, enabling the company's exponential growth laid out in its five-year strategic plan by professionalizing policies and procedures, implementing a fully-integrated patron management system,



DEEPEN THE CONVERSATION **REORIENT 2017 FORUM**

Join us for post-show conversations with ReOrient artists and occasional special guests, as well as these two panels featuring master artists:

Sat, Nov 25, 4-6pm **Centering the Margins: Immigrant Voices and Brown Bodies Claiming the Narrative**

Whose stories are told on American stages and from what lens? (*Presented in association with USF*)

Sat, Dec 2, 4-6pm **Dramaturgs ReOrient: Contextualizing the Middle East for American Audiences**

Master Bay Area dramaturgs share challenges and successes of their work with Middle Eastern writers and plays. (*Presented in association with LMDA*)

For full list of panelists, please visit goldenthread.org/reorient2017.



and creating a year-round fundraising calendar focused on donor cultivation. A freelance costume designer since 2008, Michelle has designed for companies such as Crowded Fire, NCTC, Z Space, African-American Shakespeare, Golden Thread, Cutting Ball, and Brava.

Karen Runk* (Stage Manager) moved to San Francisco with the intention of only staying for a few months... Two decades later, she's still here! This is largely due to the talented folks at the SF Mime Troupe, where Runk is the resident Production Stage Manager, but mostly due to rent control. Runk has also stage managed with Magic Theatre, SF Shakes, Intersection for the Arts, Word For Word, African-American Shakespeare Company, and, of course, Golden Thread Productions.

Kathleen Qiu (Costume Assistant) is excited to be working on the ReOrient Festival. She has previously designed at Pear Theatre (*Enemy of the People*), Custom Made (*The House of Yes*, *How I Learned to Drive*), SF Playhouse (*You Mean to Do Me Harm*), Palo Alto Players (*The Graduate*), amongst others. She would like to thank Brooke Jennings, the production team, and her family and friends for their continued support.

Benjamin Shiu (Assistant Stage Manager) Golden Thread credits: *Autobiography of a Terrorist* (stage manager), *Oh My Sweet Land* (assistant stage manager), *Our Enemies: Lively Scenes of Love and Combat* (production assistant). Other credits: *Belleville* at Custom Made (stage

manager); *A Tale of Autumn*, *You For Me For You*, *The Shipment*, and *I Call My Brothers* at Crowded Fire (assistant stage manager); *Chinglish* at Palo Alto Players (set crew); and *Crane* at Ferocious Lotus (front of house management). B.A. in Drama, SFSU.

Bay Area native **Grisel Torres (Properties Designer)** studied Technical Theatre and Light Design at SFSU. Since then, she has expanded her artistry to stage management, props design, tech direction, sound play, painting, and performing. She works often with Golden Thread, as well as with PUSH Dance Company, foolsFURY, Circo Zero/Keith Hennessy, SF Conservatory of Music, and EyeZen Presents. She is grateful for the opportunity to have a hand in making some of Bay Area's best radical art.



Potrero Stage is a 99-seat state-of-the-art performance space located in the heart of San Francisco's Potrero Hill neighborhood, operated by PlayGround, and serving as home to some of the Bay Area's leading new play developers and producers, including PlayGround, Crowded Fire, Golden Thread, and Playwrights Foundation, among others. For more information or to inquire about rentals, email info@potrerostage.org or call 415.992.6677.



*** Actors' Equity Association (AEA)**, founded in 1913, represents more than 49,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. actorsequity.org



LITERARY MANAGERS & DRAMATURGS OF THE AMERICAS

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MIDDLE EAST CENTER STAGE **ART. ACTIVISM. FAMILY.**

Golden Thread Productions, founded in 1996, is the first American theatre company devoted to the Middle East. We produce passionate and provocative plays from or about the Middle East that celebrate the multiplicity of its perspectives and identities. We are a developmental catalyst and vibrant artistic home to artists at various stages of their careers. We bring the Middle East to the American stage, creating treasured cultural experiences for audiences of all ages and backgrounds.



Staff

Torance Yeghiazarian, *Founding Artistic Director*
Michelle Mulholland, *Managing Director*
Evren Odcikin, *Director of Marketing and New Plays*
Navid G. Maghami, *Art Director*
Niku Sharei, *Development Assistant*

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Ella Shohat, *Professor, Art & Public Policy and Middle Eastern & Islamic Studies, NYU Tisch School of the Arts*
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OUR 2018 SEASON IS FOR DIALOGUE

Public discourse in mainstream media and politics gets more fraught each day. Join us for a season that fosters real conversations about issues that matter.



March | Touring Bay Area kitchens

OH MY SWEET LAND by Amir Nizar Zuabi

directed by **Torance Yeghiazarian**, featuring **Nora el Samahy**

Inspired by interviews with Syrian refugees, the critically-acclaimed production returns for an extended run!

"Extraordinary . . . el Samahy's storytelling is as riveting as her cooking." —*San Francisco Chronicle*



April-May | U.S. Premiere | Potrero Stage

LOVE, BOMBS, AND APPLES by Hassan Abdulrazzak

directed by **Rosemunde Hutt**, featuring **Asif Khan**

presented in association with **Turtle Key Arts**

The tour-de-force solo show makes it U.S. debut after two sold-out runs in London!

"Quartet of monologues with a profound ability to find bubbling humor in the most over-trodden tragedies" —*The Stage*



November-December | World Premiere | Potrero Stage

WE SWIM, WE TALK, WE GO TO WAR by Mona Mansour

directed by **Evren Odcikin**

A **Middle East America: A National New Play Initiative** commission with **Silk Road Rising** (Chicago) and **The Lark** (NYC)

A woman of Arab descent and her nephew, who has enlisted in the military, dip into the treacherous waters of family and allegiance.

"What distinguishes Mansour's work is its compassion for the thorny nature of family, identity, and politics." —*American Theatre Magazine*

Wednesday, March 8 | Brava Theater Center

WHAT DO THE WOMEN SAY?

Our annual celebration of International Women's Day

September | Brava Theater Center

NEW THREADS STAGED READING SERIES

Be a part of the process of birthing new plays from or about the Middle East.

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Ask about our season passes at the box office.

They are the most affordable way to be a part of our 2018 season!