

interview with the playwright

Rasaka and Vitalist welcome you and are delighted to present *Multitudes* in conjunction with the International Voices Project, where we first introduced the Chicago audience to this play as a staged reading. We are excited about the conversations we think this production will foster.

Allison Diamond, production dramaturg, conducted the following interview with the playwright, John Hollingworth. This will be the USA premiere and second full production of his first play, *Multitudes*, having previously been work-shopped at the National Theatre Studio and received its world premiere at The Tricycle Theatre on February 19, 2015.

What inspired you to write this play?

Specifically, the experiences of the younger brother of a friend of mine from school in Bradford. He said his shahada at university and underwent a profound change, and he and family and friends had to renegotiate their relationships to accommodate the change. Years later, I was working at the National Theatre as an actor and spending days--once the show was opened--at the NT Studio as an actor work-shopping new projects by writers. I did something like seven or eight weeks on the trot for them, and Purni Morell--the then Studio director--offered to develop any ideas I might have by way of thanks. That led to me writing a few early scenes of what became *Multitudes*. When I looked into conversion narratives, I was struck by the higher rate of female converts, and thought that would be an interesting story to tell. The Studio gave me a writing week and then--later on--a two day reading, and I asked Indhu Rubasingham--with whom I had worked as an actor at the Tricycle Theatre--to direct the reading. When she then went on to take over as Artistic Director at the Tricycle years later, I rang to congratulate her on her appointment and she said she'd like to continue developing the play.

Less specifically, I was fascinated by Islam and ashamed to know little about it and about the different factions of Political Islam that have come to dominate Western news headlines since the events of 9/11.

What would you say are the major differences between the original script and the Chicago script?

There are two new scenes in the Chicago production that replace scenes I felt didn't earn their place in the London production. I wanted the play to feel sprawling and overstuffed and full of voices - to allow a multitude of viewpoints to play out without drowning each other out. However, there's a difference between intentional mess and unintentional mess, and with all the rewriting that went on during rehearsals, I felt the two scenes in question were a little sloppy. It's been a real pleasure--and a rare one--to have the chance to revisit the play and (hopefully) improve it. Rasaka and Vitalist had such enthusiasm for the project that I was also excited to reciprocate that and make sure that they got the best play possible. Liz Carlin Metz was keen for me to re-tune some references that might be obscure to an American audience and that led to a separate pass through the script, which morphed from tweaking some moments to a more general tightening of the script.

cont. on page 2

interview cont.

Do you think the themes of this play have changed or evolved since Brexit?

I don't think that they have, no. I set the play in the near future after an electoral triumph for our right wing government here in the UK. It so happened that the Conservative Party won a very unlikely majority later on in the year it was staged in London. There was then an incident in the north of England where a local councillor's son fled the country to join IS/Da'esh--in an echo of Qadira's intended path. So the play felt prescient when it was first staged. However, the twin drivers that led to Brexit--concern about the challenge posed to UK sovereignty by EU membership and concern about immigration -- are, I would say, the same as when the play first went on.

Lyn would certainly have voted for Brexit and she echoes--in her tirade about what Bradford has become--the sentiments of a particular demographic across the north of England who feel that the country they know has been changed forever thanks to (mostly non-white) post-1945 mass immigration. Britain has undoubtedly undergone a huge transformation in the lifetime of anyone of pensionable age, and most data on the voting patterns indicate that it was that demographic who most overwhelmingly supported Brexit. I think the debate about who gets to call themselves British that is referenced in the play will rage on, as will the struggles of immigrants to both honour their cultural heritage and embrace a new culture. It was shocking to see a sharp rise in racist hate attacks in the wake of Brexit, and the whole wretched affair made me think that we need that Whitmanesque sentiment of celebrating difference more than ever here in the UK, as we wait to find out what the country will look and feel like once we've left the European Union.

Multitudes was first performed at The Tricycle Theatre, London, on 19th February, 2015.
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Setting

Bradford, England (West Yorkshire: population 500,000+), part of the third largest combined urban zone (population 2 million+) in the UK after London and Manchester. Bradford is home to the largest South Asian population in the UK (100,000+), representing 20% of the total city population. The ruling national conservative party, the Tories, are holding an important party conference in Bradford, which shortly will be followed by a by-election for a Member of Parliament in the House of Commons, due to an unexpected vacancy.

Time

The near future.

काश्त लिश्त in order of appearance

Andrew Saenz.....	Amir, Julian, Surgeon
Kamal Hans*	Kash
Kelly Lynn Hogan.....	Natalie
Luisa Blanco.....	Qadira
Priya Mohanty.....	Rukhsana, Waitress
Liz Carlin Metz	Lyn
Alka Nayyar*	Sam, Sister, Monica
Anand B. Bhatt.....	Imtiaz, Shaffiq

*Denotes actors represented by the Actors' Equity Association.

production इत्तर्फ

Producing Artistic Director for Rasaka Theatre.....	Kamal Hans
Associate Artistic Director for Rasaka Theatre	Alka Nayyar
Co-Producer for Rasaka Theatre.....	Anish Jethmalani
Producer for Vitalist Theatre	Robin Metz
Producing Artistic Director for Vitalist Theatre	Liz Carlin Metz
Producing Artistic Director for the International Voices Project	Patrizia Acerra
Administrative Manager for the International Voices Project	Maggie Carlin
Director	Liz Carlin Metz
Assistant Director	Emily Antoff
Dramaturg.....	Allison Diamond
Cultural Consultant.....	Fouad Teymour
Production Manager	Kathleen Dickinson
Assistant Stage Manager	Caroline Foulk
Assistant Stage Manager	Emily Ioppolo
Dialect Coach.....	Catherine Gillespie
Set Designer	Craig Choma
Lighting Designer.....	Ivy Reid
Master Electrician	Andrew Purvis
Projections Designer	Brock Alter
Sound Designer	Gregor Mortis
Costume Designer	Allison Smith Hahn
Master Carpenter.....	Ian Tully
Shop Foreman	Martin Helms
Set Crew.....	Jasmine Artis, Zac Cirone, Danny Donnelly, Kevin Goetsch, Jack Harmon, Emily Ioppolo, Jennie Jeoung, Andre Leewright, Nathan Levine, Greg Miller, Julia Porter, Ben Rezko, Joel Schleicher, Eric Sisco
Lighting Crew	Kathleen Dickinson, Kat Rieser, Oakton Reynolds
Stage Violence	Andrew Saenz
Publicity	Treefalls, Karin McKie
Graphic Design.....	Holden Meier
Production Photographer	Scott Dray

Special Thanks

Chicago Ballet Center, Chitrahara Cultural Academy, Fantasy Costumes HDQ, Filament Theatre, Knox College Department of Theatre, Knox College Faculty Development, Porchlight Theatre, SHE Events, Silk Road Rising, Victory Gardens Theatre, Zarda King Ltd., Bilal Dardai, Jaclynn Jutting, Anna Karwowska, Nikhaar Kishnani, Jennifer Lazarz, Robin Metz, Puja Mohindra, Lori Reed, Margo Shively, Murad/Crystal Fazal, Kevin Scott, and Walter Stearns

Cast



Anand B. Bhatt (Imtiaz/Shafiq) is represented by the prestigious Gray Talent Agency. He has had the privilege to work on *A Widow of No Importance*, *A Nice Indian*

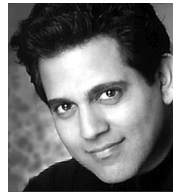
Boy and *Washer/Dryer* (Rasaka Theatre); *Mosque Alert* (Silk Road Rising). He holds the title of Mr. Desi IL 2012 and Mr. India IL 2013. His first Bollywood feature film *Koi Aae Na* was released in theaters February 20, 2015 in India. While primarily focused on acting, Anand also seeks to hone his skills in martial arts, acrobatics, stunts, and dance. He continuously works on multiple projects and at multiple training venues in order to hone his skills as an entertainer and to take his career to the next level.



Luisa Blanco (Qadira) is thrilled to be making her debut with Rasaka Theatre Company and Vitalist Theatre. Originally from Bloomfield Hills, MI, Luisa studied at Loyola

University (Chicago). She most recently was seen with her sketch group The Lullabisexuals at (Second City's De Maat Studio Theater). Along with being a part of this incredible production, Luisa also is currently performing at the Annoyance Theatre in an improvised show, *Fortunate*, with her many talented friends. Luisa

would like to thank the entire cast and crew for allowing her to be a part of this important and beautifully written story. She would also like to thank her family, friends, and Brian for their constant support and guidance. Enjoy the show!



Kamal Hans (Kash; Producing Artistic Director, Rasaka Theatre)

is an actor and producer whose work includes: *Widow of No Importance* (producer), *Washer/Dryer*

(producer) *A Nice Indian Boy* (actor & producer). Kamal's "day job" is Chief Operating Officer for Zarda King Ltd. (one of the largest distributors of South Asian products in the USA). Kamal recently appeared in *Chicago PD*, Showtime's *Shameless*, and the feature film, *Consumed*. Favorite roles in theatre include: Dr. Aziz in *A Passage to India* (Vitalist Theatre); *Invasion!* (Silk Road Theatre); Avinash in *Disconnect* (Victory Gardens Theatre); Leonato in *Much Ado About Nothing* (Rasaka); Mayor in *F*#kn' A* (Urban Theater); Marius in *Fanny*; and Caliban in Shakespeare's *Tempest* (ITC); Devendra in *Merchant On Venice* (Silk Road Theatre); Salieri in *Amadeus* and Anatoly in *Chess* (Phoenix). Kamal studied acting at the Theatre School, Julliard, the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, the University of Chicago, Loyola, and IWU. This show is dedicated to my daughter Karina.



Kelly Lynn Hogan (Natalie) holds an MA in Performance Studies (NYU), MFA (The Academy for Classical Acting at GWU), and is an inaugural company member of Vitalist Theatre. Jeff nominated for *The Night Season*, she also received critical acclaim for *Mother Courage* and *Anna Karenina* (Vitalist). Directing: *The Walruses* (Cuba) (IVP/Vitalist 2015); *In Perpetuity Throughout the Universe* and *The Conduct of Life* (Frump Tucker Theatre); AD for *The Heidi Chronicles* (St. Louis Rep and Cincinnati Playhouse); *Macbeth*, *The Revenger's Tragedy*, and *Cardenio* (The Shakespeare Project of Chicago). She served as Visiting Instructor in Theatre at Knox College, where she directed *Cloud 9*, *Intimate Apparel*, and *Angels in America*: Millennium Approaches. Selected Chicago Acting: Silk Road Rising, Court, Metropolis, Live Bait, Chicago Dramatists, Body Politic, Piven, ATC, Piccolo, Raven, Aston Rep, Eclectic, OPFT, The ARC, Theatre-Hikes, Muse of Fire. Represented by Shirley Hamilton, Kelly co-stars in Dreaming Tree Films' SAG feature *Traveling Without Moving* (2017).



Liz Carlin Metz (Director; Lyn; Artistic Director, Vitalist Theatre) cofounded Vitalist Theatre in 1997 with Robin Metz. Directing: (*Mother Courage* and *Her Children* (After Dark Theatre Awards for Excellence in Directing, Acting, and Composition); *The Mill on the Floss*, *A Passage to India* (After Dark Award for All Around Technical Achievement), *The Night Season* (Jeff Award for Best Supporting Actress, *The Three Lives of Lucie Cabrol*, *Anung's First*

American Christmas (World Premiere), *Anna Karenina*, *Life is a Dream* (Jeff nominated); *Pool* (no water); and *King Lear* (Vitalist Theatre). She is a contributing author to *The Voice* and *Speech Workout Book*, *Embodied Consciousness: Performance Technologies*, and *The DAH Theatre Sourcebook*. Other theatre credentials include Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Seattle Repertory Theatre, The Mark Taper Forum, California Shakespeare Theatre, and multiple seasons at Williamstown Theatre Festival. She serves on the board of directors for The International Voices Project (Chicago) where she also is an Associate Artist (directing) and is on the Advisory Board for Working Title Playwrights Theatre (Atlanta). She holds an MFA (Temple University) and currently teaches at Knox College, (Smith V. Brand Distinguished Professor of Theatre).



Priya Mohanty (Rukhsana / Waitress) came to the USA in 2008 to pursue her MBA at Duke University (Go Blue Devils!), after which she started working in corporate America. A series of fortunate events led her to an acting workshop where she was bitten by the proverbial acting bug. In 2015, she quit her corporate job to pursue acting full time. She graduated from the ACADEMY at Black Box in 2015. Since then, she has performed in *A Widow of No Importance* (Rasaka Theatre), *Love in 90 Minutes* (Thorpedo Productions), and *Anon(ymous)* (The Cuckoo's Theatre Project). She also is a founding member of Chimera Ensemble. Many thanks to her husband, Lalith, for all his support. www.priyamohanty.com



Alka Nayar (Sam / Sister / Monica; Associate Artistic Director, Rasaka Theatre)

is a performer and choreographer whose selected work

includes: *The Jungle Book* (Goodman Theatre, Huntington Theatre); *The Secret Garden* (Court Theatre); *The Masrayana* (Jeff nomination: choreography); *A Widow of No Importance*, *A Nice Indian Boy*, and *Yoni Ki Baat* (Rasaka Theatre); *Merchant on Venice* (Silk Road Rising); *A Passage to India* (Vitalist Theatre); *Djamileh* (City of Chicago DCASE Summer Opera); *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* (Halcyon Theatre); *LeapFest: Thirst* (Stage Left Theatre); *Around the World in 80 Days* (Theatre-Hikes); *A Night at the Oscars* (Chicago Humanities Festival); *After Dark* (Collaboration at the Art Institute), and Chicago's "Amazing India!" festivals (Navy Pier). A PR Consultant by day, she also teaches dance at the Old Town School of Folk Music and through her organization, Chitrahhar Cultural Academy. Alka holds a B.A. in Linguistics (University of Chicago) and is grateful to the artists and teachers she has learned from – and for family, without whom nothing is possible.



Andrew L. Saenz (Amir/ Julian/Surgeon) makes his debut with both Rasaka and Vitalist Theatres in *Multitudes*.

He has recently been seen in *Mosque Alert* (Silk Road Rising), *Barbecue Apocalypse* (The Ruckus Theater) and *Exit Strategy* (Jackalope Theatre Company). His Chicago credits also include work with TimeLine Theatre Company, Remy Bumpo Theatre, A Red Orchid Theatre, Profiles Theatre, Raven Theatre, (re)discover theatre, InFusion Theatre Co. among many others. His film/TV credits include *Chicago P.D.*

(NBC), *Sirens* (USA Network), the Chicago webseries *Jacketman* (Clarion New Media) and the independent feature *En Algun Lugar* (Iconoclast Films, Inc.). He received his B.F.A. in Performance (Baylor University) and is proudly represented by Stewart Talent.



Sunny Anam

(Understudy: Imtiaz/ Shafiq) is pleased to be a part of the collaboration between Vitalist Theatre and Rasaka Theatre. Originally from Ann

Arbor MI, Sunny began his theatre training at the Purple Rose Theatre. Sunny relocated to Chicago earlier this year, and was seen most recently onstage in the Jeff Recommended production of *Human Terrain* (Broken Nose Theatre). Sunny's other selected theatre credits include *Sunset Park* (Clarkston Village Players), *A Widow of No Importance* (Rasaka Theatre), and *The Joy Of Solitude* (Michigan Actors Studio). He would like to thank the entire cast and crew of this wonderful production.



Morgan Laurel Cohen
(Understudy: Natalie / Sam / Sister)

is excited to be making her Rasaka and Vitalist debut with *Multitudes*. West Coast born and bred, Morgan

came to Chicago by way of Knox College, and she was last seen in Eclipse Theatre's *Our Lady of 121st Street* (performed u/s Marcia and Sonia). She has worked with a number of Chicago companies including Victory Gardens, Chicago Dramatists, The Mammals, and CIC Theatre. Morgan has been a proud member of SAG since six years old, and most recently filmed the pilot for a new comedy, *Unfocused*. When not acting, Morgan can be found inventing new recipes, rock climbing, and thrifting

for vintage dresses. More about Morgan and her upcoming work can be found at www.MorganLaurelCohen.com.



Pat Parks (Understudy: Lyn) is pleased to be working with Vitalist and Rasaka. She has most recently worked at Steppenwolf Theatre as an understudy for *Tribes*

and *The Herd*. She will soon be seen in an upcoming episode of Chicago PD. Pat has also appeared with Strangeloop, Twenty Percent, Polarity, Muse of Fire, Stage Left, and Babes with Blades Theatre Companies in Chicago and various Theatres in NYC of which she is a native.



Subhash Thakrar (Understudy: Amir/ Julian/Surgeon) is pleased to be understudying the roles of Amir, Julian, and the Surgeon. He is excited to

be working with Rasaka Theatre Company again and to be working with Vitalist Theatre for the first time! Subhash is a graduate of the Improvisation programs at both The Second City and iO Theaters, and has trained in Meisner Technique at Act

One Studios. Subhash was a writer and actor with the sketch comedy group Sketchnicity and has been performing stand up comedy for the last 5 years. He is known for his roles as Chirag and Sandeep in *A Widow of No Importance* (Rasaka Theatre Company), a staged adaptation of The Bible (ACTA Publishers), and as Azim in a series of short films produced on interfaith relationships in post-9/11 America (Jesse Oxford Studios).



Brenna Welsh (Understudy: Qadira/ Monica) is a performer whose Chicago credits include: *Yankee Tavern* (Steel Beam Theatre); *Steel Magnolias* (Ignite

Theatre); and the Women's Theatre Alliance Showcase 2015. Arizona credits include *How I Learned to Drive*, *Lend Me a Tenor*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, *Julius Caesar*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Arizona Repertory Theatre); *Romeo & Juliet*, *Other Desert Cities* u/s (Arizona Theatre Company). She is a graduate of The University of Arizona (BFA Acting). Brenna would like to thank cast, and crew of *Multitudes* for this amazing opportunity, her family, friends, and David.

Rasaka Theatre Co. presents the World Premiere of

Vanya (or "That's Life!")

adapted by Lavina Jadhvani from Anton Chekhov's Uncle Vanya

Uncle Vanya continues to be one of the greatest and continually relevant of plays, concerned with and sending up family relationships, broken hearts, and the rampant disappointment of midlife crisis. In this hilarious and sharp reinvention, there is great providence in the shattering of a teacup, time moves backwards, and our bored, sad Chekhovian friends have a tendency to lapse into singing American Indie Folk tunes. What could be more Russian? Or American?

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artistic staff



Patrizia Lombardi Acerra (Artistic Director, the International Voices Project) is a Chicago-based stage director, deviser, and producer.

She is the founding Artistic Director of Premiere Theatre & Performance, and creator of the International Voices Project. From 2000 - 2002, she resided in Rome, Italy, working with The English Theatre of Rome, and created an ensemble of actors for the then newly formed International Theatre of Chicago (now Premiere Theatre & Performance). Ms. Acerra holds Masters Degrees in Theology and Directing. Favorite projects include *Iphigenia In Kingman*, *Immaginalo!* with the English Theatre of Rome, *Right!* (adapted from Pirandello's *Così è' (se vi pare!)*), and the original performance pieces *Ocean Sea/Oceano Mare*, *Einstein's Dreams* and *The Quiltmaker's Gift* (in collaboration with Dawn Arnold and The Moving Dock Theatre) and *The Sultan's Dilemma*. Locally, she has directed for and collaborated with Silk Road Theatre Project, Clock Productions, Moving Dock Theatre Company, Rasaka Theatre and the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs. She is pursuing her doctorate in Performance Philosophy at Salve Regina University in Rhode Island.

Brock Alter (Projection Designer) is a Chicago based video and projection artist working in theaters, concerts, and corporate events. He works primarily with Chicago companies *Blue Man Group*, *Stoptime Live*, and *Theo Ubique Cabaret Theatre*. As a live video artist, he has performed with *KC & The Sunshine Band*, been on tour with *Tiesto & Calvin Harris*, and performed at *Electric Daisy Carnival Chicago*, *Ultra Music Festival*, *Summer Set Music Festival*, and *Freaky*

Deaky Halloween. He has designed projections for Theo Ubique's productions of *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Rent*.



Emily Antoff (Assistant Director) is thrilled to be making her Chicago debut with Rasaka and Vitalist Theatres. Originally from Minnesota, Emily holds a BA in theatre from

Knox College, and has also studied theatre with the Eugene O'Neill National Theatre Institute and with Theatre d'Complicite in London. Directing credits include *La Maestra* (Chicago Danztheatre Ensemble), *The Clean House* (Studio Theatre, Knox College), assisting Jeff Grace for *Rapture*, *Blister*, *Burn* (Harbach Theatre, Knox College), Neil Blackadder for *Maple and Vine* and *At Night's End* (Harbach Theatre, Knox College), and Liz Carlin Metz for *The Green Bird* (Harbach Theatre, Knox College). She would like to thank her families, both biological and theatrical, as well as the entire cast and crew for this fantastic production.

Craig Choma (Scenic Designer) is an inaugural member of Vitalist Theatre Company, whose designs include the award winning productions of *A Passage to India* (sets) *Mother Courage and Her Children* (sets), *Anna Karenina* (sets), *Floating Rhoda and the Glue Man* (sets), *King Lear* (lighting), *The Mill On The Floss* (set and lighting), and the world premiere of *Anung's First American Christmas* (set). Other Chicago designs include the sets for *Death and the Maiden* (Timeline), *Pippin*, *Night Sky*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Museum*. Craig holds a BA in Theatre and Philosophy (Knox College) and MFA's in both Scenic and Lighting Design (Carnegie Mellon University). Craig currently is an Associate Professor of Theatre at Knox College. Favorite Knox designs include *Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere*;

Rapture, Blister, Burn; In The Next Room (or the vibrator play); Twelfth Night; A Lie of The Mind; Medea; and Angels in America.

Allison Diamond (Dramaturg): Originally from Cleveland, OH, she can now be found working at multiple box offices throughout Chicago. Her past dramaturgy credits include *Under Construction* (Studio Theatre, Knox College), *In the Next Room (or the vibrator play)* (Harbach Theatre, Knox College), and *Fly* (Gompertz Theatre, Florida Studio Theatre). She has previously worked as a general intern at Ko Festival of Performance in Amherst, MA, as an artistic intern at Cleveland Play House, and as a literary intern at Florida Studio Theatre in Sarasota, FL. She earned her BA in Theatre from Knox College in 2014 and hopes to continue her academic studies of dramaturgy and theatre theory in the near future.

Kathleen Dickinson (Production Stage Manager) is excited to be working with Vitalist Theatre again, and with Rasaka Theatre for the first time. Vitalist Theatre productions include *Pool (no water)*, *The Ghost is Here*, *Life is a Dream*, and *The Night Season*. Other Stage Management credits include *Sick By Seven* (A Red Orchid Theatre); *Heat Wave* (Steppenwolf 2015 Garage Rep); *Bedroom Farce*, *The Trestle at Pope Lick Creek*, *Memory of Two Mondays*, *Democracy* (Eclipse Theatre); *Church*, *Pullman, WA* (Red Tape Theatre); *Girls vs Boys* (The House Theatre of Chicago); *Beauty of the Father* (Urban Theatre Company). Assistant Stage Management credits include *Hushabye* (Steppenwolf Garage); *Clean House*, *Fallen Angels* (Remy Bumpo Theatre); *United Flight 232* (The House Theatre of Chicago). Kathleen also completed the 2013-2014 Steppenwolf Stage Management Apprenticeship. Kathleen thanks her family, especially her parents,

for their love and support, and G.M. Kathleen is a graduate of Knox College.



Caroline Foulk (Assistant Stage Manager) is a senior at Knox College, graduating in 2016 with a B.A. in Theatre, Creative Writing, and Spanish. Previous works include: assistant stage manager for *Leapfest XIII* (Stage Left), stage manager for *Before Birth, or The Womb Play*, assistant stage manager for *Neil Gaiman's Neverwhere*, stage manager for *Burning Out*, and stage manager *Stop Kiss* (Knox College). Caroline will stage-manage *The Nether* this fall at Knox College. She is grateful for the opportunity to be working with Vitalist and Rasaka theatres for the first time, and especially would like to thank Kathleen Dickinson for sharing her awesome stage management wisdom.

Catherine Gillespie (Dialect Coach) is a teaching artist and dialect coach. She works for The Viola Project, a Chicago organization that provides Shakespeare empowerment programming for young women (www.violaproject.org). As a dialect coach, she has been delighted to work on projects with City Lit Theater, Promethean Theatre Ensemble, Haven Theatre, Red Theatre Chicago, Citadel Theatre and many more. She has taught at Columbia College Chicago, Oakland University's Music Prep Division, and the City of Evanston's Young Artists Program, among others. Much love to Russell and the mighty Quinn.

Emily Ioppolo (Assistant Stage Manager) is delighted to be working with Vitalist and Rasaka Theatres for the first time. Other Chicago credits include *Our Lady of 121st Street*, *Jesus Hopped the 'A' Train*, *A Perfect Ganesh* (Eclipse Theatre Company), *London Wall* (Griffin Theatre

ARTISTIC STAFF

Company), and *Love and Information* (Remy Bumpo Theatre Company). Emily is a proud graduate of Knox College where she received her B.A. in Theatre. Special thanks to everyone who continues to guide her to success, especially Kathleen, Liz, Craig, Jeff, and Nora.



Allison Smith Hahn (Costume Designer) is delighted to rejoin Vitalist Theatre in this collaboration with Rasaka Theatre.

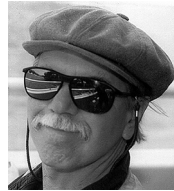
Previously with Vitalist she designed *Pool (no water)*. Most recently she designed *Good People; The American Clock; Red; I and You; and Another Bone* (Redtwist Theater: Resident Designer). Her other Chicago designs include *Miles Away; Mike and Seth; Hello Failure; F.X. Kroetz's Through the Leaves, and Request Concert* (Side Project Theatre), as well as *All Shook Up, How to Succeed in Business [...], and You're a Good Man Charlie Brown* (Wilmette Center for the Arts). She studied costume design and artistry at Knox College, where she was also a Post-Baccalaureate Fellow (2010-11). She is grateful to so many, but especially to Margo Shively, Resident Designer at Knox.



John Hollingworth (Playwright) John's first full-length play, *Multitudes*, played at the Tricycle Theatre London in February/March 2015 under the direction of

the theatre's Artistic Director, Indhu Rubasingham. He was subsequently awarded attachments to the National Theatre Studio and the West Yorkshire Playhouse. He has recently been working with Out of Joint in collaboration with the National Theatre on a new version of a modern classic. He is a graduate of Trinity

College Dublin and UCLA. John also acts - having trained at RADA - and has appeared in productions at the National, Donmar, Old Vic, Hampstead and Tricycle theatres, among others. More recently he's originated and continues to play the regular character of Captain Henshawe in BBC Television One's *Poldark*. He will shortly be seen on Masterpiece PBS in *Dark Angel* before *Poldark's* second season debuts in late fall.



Robin Metz (Vitalist Theatre Executive Producer) received the Rainer Maria Rilke International Poetry Prize for his book *Unbidden Angel* (Cross-Cultural

Communications), as well as a citation for excellence from US President William Jefferson Clinton. He won the *Literal Latté* International Poetry Prize (NYC), the Marshall Frankel American Fiction Prize (*Other Voices*), and 16 additional international awards. His play *Anung's First American Christmas* received 4 Best of Season citations for its 2009 world premiere (Theatre Building, Chicago). His poetry, fiction, and nonfiction (more than 100 publications) have appeared in numerous national and international journals including *Paris Review, Epoch, International Poetry Review, Rosebud, Other Voices, Fourth River, Oberon, Writers' Forum, Visions International, Abiko Quarterly* (Japan), *New Welsh Review* (Wales), *The Wolf* (England), *Van Gogh's Ear* (France), *NewFront* (Nepal), *Convorbiri Literare* (Romania), *The Seventh Quarry* (Wales). He has presented in more than 70 US cities and 24 nations (including Kosovo, Nepal, India, Wales, Cuba). In the U.S., he has received grants and fellowships from the Illinois Arts Council, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Music Corporation of America (MCA) among

many others. He is the Director of Creative Writing, Knox College.

Gregor Mortis (Sound Designer) For Vitalist: *Pool No Water, The Ghost is Here, Life Is A Dream, The Night Season, Anung's First American Christmas, A Passage To India, Mother Courage and Her Children*, and *Anna Karenina*. Other notable designs: *When the Messenger Is Hot* (59E59th Street Theatre, NYC), *Gary, Tranquility Woods*, and *Creative Disobedience And Why The World Can't Wait* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company); *Aristocrats, The Proper Papers, A Lie Of The Mind* (Jeff Award: Original Incidental Music), *Julius Caesar, Wireless: Radio Theatre, Return To The Howard Bowl*, and *Disco Pigs* (Strawdog Theatre Company); *Action Movie: The Play* (Jeff Award: Original Music/Design, After Dark Award) and *Ubu Raw* (After Dark Award) (Defiant Theatre Company). Gregor is an Audio Engineer for Steppenwolf Theatre Co. and recently finished composing music and designing sound for the independent films *Air Conditions* and *Restoration* as a member of Deathblow Productions.

Andrew Purvis (Master Electrician and Assistant Lighting Designer) is delighted to be making his Chicago theatre debut with Vitalist Theatre and Rasaka Theatre. He has worked with Peninsula Players Theatre in Door County, WI, and the Ko Festival of Performance in Amherst, MA. He is a recent graduate of Knox College to which he gives many thanks for the support and direction that has landed him here in the exceptional theatre community of Chicago.



Ivy Reid (Lighting Designer) is a designer and master electrician based in Chicago. This is her second production with Vitalist, and she is excited to be back in the

room with these artists. Chicago design credits include *A Phase, From White Plains*, and *Bechdel Fest* (Broken Nose Theatre); *Julia de Burgos, First Class*, and *Devil Land* (Urban Theater Company); *Pseudo-Chum* (Neofuturists); and assistant on *Garage Rep 2014* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company). She continued her relationship with Knox after graduating in 2012 by designing for Knox College Dance in appearances at the American College Dance Festival 2013 and 2016, RAD Fest 2015, Dance Chicago 2013 and 2014, and on their home turf for the Choreographer's Workshop 2013 and 2015. Ivy is the Resident Master Electrician at Lookingglass Theatre Company. Thanks to Craig, Liz, and Kathleen for their guidance and support.

Fouad Teymour (Cultural Consultant) is an Egyptian American playwright. He is a Network Playwright at Chicago Dramatists, and a board member for International Voices Project (IVP). He has had 6 full-length plays in development with Chicago Dramatists First Draft series. Other performances/readings of his plays include: *The Night Jesus Joined the Revolution* (Silk Road Rising); *An Afternoon With My Mother*, *Blue Fish in A Tall Clear Vase* (New Work Festival at Three Cat Productions). His translation of Ahmed Serag's *The Castle and The Sparrow* (Arabic) was performed in IVP 2014 and published in June 2015 by Dar Ibda'a (Egypt). Fouad has directed staged readings of 2 plays by Syrian playwright Mohamed Al-Attar (IVP 2015). He served as the cultural consultant for Jamil Khoury's *Mosque Alert* (Silk Road Rising). Fouad is a Professor of Engineering at Illinois Institute of Technology.

Note on usage of “reverting”

The term reverting refers to a “returning” to the fundamental meaning of Islam: submission of one’s soul into God’s hands. In this context it is believed that all faiths involve this process of submission – that we are all born to this principle and might have strayed away because of environmental and circumstantial causes. This is in contrast with the more commonly used term “converting,” which refers to a move from one faith to another.

Glossary of Arabic and Urdu terms used in *Multitudes*

Azaan: Call to worship

Barelvi: A term used for the movement following the Sunni Hanafi school of jurisprudence.

Da’wah: Invitation, often used to describe when Muslims share their faith with others in order to teach them more about Islam.

Deobandi: A revivalist movement within Sunni Islam. Centered in India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, recently spread to the United Kingdom.

Haraam: Forbidden, sinful

Halaal: Permissible to use or engage with according to Islamic law, associated with food and drink but also with all matters of daily life.

Hijab: The act of covering up, often used to describe the headscarves worn by Muslim women. The most commonly worn hijab in the West covers the head and neck but leaves the face clear.

Ismaili: Ismaili Muslims seceded from the main Shiite group in the 8th century because of their belief that Ismail, the son of the sixth Shiite imam, should have become the seventh imam.

Jilbab: A full-length outer garment

Mashallah: An Arabic expression meaning “it is as god has willed,” used to convey joy and thankfulness

Nikaah: Marriage ceremony and contract

Niqab: Veil or mask worn by some Muslim women that partially covers the face

Wahhabism: A religious movement or branch of Sunni Islam, described as ultraconservative

Salafis: Fundamentalists who believe in a return to the original ways of Islam

Shahada : Testimony, an Islamic creed declaring belief in the oneness of God and the acceptance of Muhammad as God’s prophet

Sufism: The mystical dimension of Islam

Surah: A chapter of the Quran

Twelver: A member of a major Shi-ite sect of Islam that acknowledges 12 imams and holds that the 12th will reappear as the Mahdi before the Last Day.

Ummah: The whole community of Muslims