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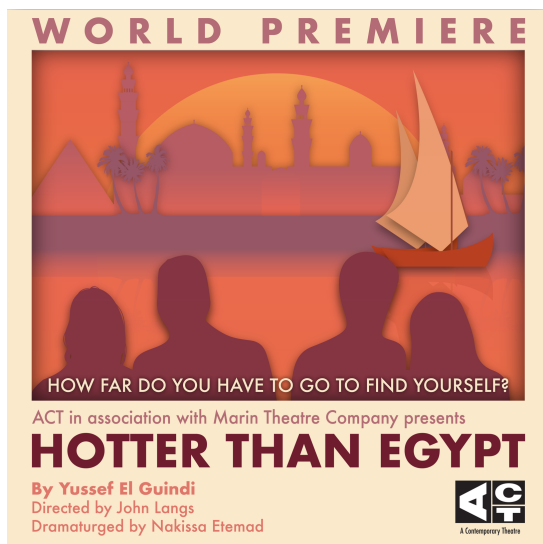


ACT - A Contemporary Theatre in Association with  
Marin Theatre Company presents  
**HOTTER THAN EGYPT**

By Yussef El Guindi  
Directed by John Langs  
Dramaturged by Nakissa Etemad

Loyalty is Pit Against Attraction in  
ACT's Fiery World Premiere Dramey.

*ACT opens 2022 Season with its 50th World Premiere new play –  
on stage January 28 - February 20 – tickets on sale now.*



**SEATTLE, WA (January 5, 2022)** — It's 2022 and **ACT - A Contemporary Theatre** is thrilled to officially announce casting for the first production of its return season, *Hotter Than Egypt*, written by acclaimed local playwright, **Yussef El Guindi** (*Threesome* and *People of the Book*). Featuring performances from five world-class actors including **Naseem Etemad** (The Dairy Arts Center: *Wisdom From Everything*; The Pear Theatre: *Veils*), **Ahmad Kamal** (Adventure Theatre: *Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp*), **Wasim No'mani** (ACT: *People of the Book, Oslo; Yellowstone*), **Paul Morgan Stetler** (ACT: *The Crucible; Letters Aloud*), and **Jen Taylor** (ACT: *Dangerous Liaisons; Halo on Paramount+*). *Hotter Than Egypt* is presented in association with Marin Theatre Company and is directed by **ACT**

**Artistic Director, John Langs** with dramaturgy by **Associate Artistic Director of the Marin Theatre Company, Nakissa Etemad**. *Hotter Than Egypt* will run January 28-February 20, 2022 (media invite night is February 3) and tickets may be purchased online now at [acttheatre.org](http://acttheatre.org).

After 20 months of forced shutdown due to the worldwide pandemic, ACT boldly reopens for its 55th mainstage season with a World Premiere new play – its 50th World Premiere to date. This new dramedy from Seattle playwright and [ACT Core Company](http://ACT Core Company) artist **Yussef El Guindi**, follows Paul and Jean, an American couple, who travel to Cairo for their 24th wedding anniversary.

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## **A Contemporary Theatre**

Long-dormant troubles within the marriage start to percolate, and their two Egyptian tour guides, newly engaged Maha and Seif, become drawn into the crisis. The play, set in the heat of Cairo, explores the uneven power dynamics between these Western tourists and the locals. Dreams and relationships are put to the test when old connections lead to new temptations

Recently workshopped through the ACTLocal program, a partnership between ACT and Trial and Error Productions, *Hotter Than Egypt* marks El Guindi's fifth play to be produced on the ACT stage and serves as a model example of ACT's commitment to nurturing local theatre industry game-changers and their work.

"One of the great benefits of having A Contemporary Theatre in our community is that we, the audience, have a chance to experience the new voices that will be shaping the culture and the theatre of tomorrow," ACT Artistic Director, John Langs said. "When we are at our best, ACT is supporting these voices as they sharpen and grow, and we believe that many of these groundbreaking artists are plying their craft right here in our corner of the world. We feel very lucky as an institution that local writer Yussef El Guindi has chosen ACT as his artistic home base. And, creating 50 world premiere plays is an enormous accomplishment for us and it feels right and befitting the new vision of ACT, that Yussef's intimate portrait of personal revolution should hold this very special place in the history of the theatre."

### **COVID-19 PROTOCOLS AT ACT - A CONTEMPORARY THEATRE**

For the most up-to-date information about what to expect during your visit to ACT, please visit <https://acttheatre.org/covid-19/>.

### **ABOUT YUSSEF EL GUINDI (Playwright)**

Born in Egypt, raised in London, and now based in Seattle, Yussef El Guindi's work frequently examines the collision of ethnicities, cultures, and politics that face immigrants – Arab-Americans and Muslim Americans in particular. El Guindi holds an MFA in playwriting from Carnegie-Mellon University and has worked as a playwright at Silk Road Rising, literary manager for Golden Thread Productions, and playwright-in-residence at Duke University. He is the recipient of many honors, including the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award, the *Stranger's* Genius Award, and the 2010 Middle East America Distinguished Playwright Award. He recently won the American Blues Theater's Blue Ink Playwriting award for his play *Refugee Rhapsody*. El Guindi's past productions include *People of the Book* and *Threesome* at ACT, where he is a member of the Core Company. His plays *Back of the Throat* (winner of L.A. Weekly's Excellence in Playwriting Award for 2006), *Pilgrims Musa and Sheri in the New World*, *Jihad Jones and the Kalashnikov Babes*, *Such a Beautiful Voice is Sayeda* and *Karima's City* have been published by Dramatists Play Service.

### **ABOUT NAKISSA ETEMAD (Dramaturg)**

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Nakissa Etemad (she/her) is Associate Artistic Director of Marin Theatre Company (MTC) and an Iranian American dramaturg, producer, and French translator specializing in new BIPOC plays and musicals for over 25 years. She is a Resident Artist of Golden Thread Productions, Regional VP Metro Bay Area for Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (LMDA),

and a member of MENA Theater Makers Alliance and the Anti-Racism Task Force of LMDA. She is thrilled to serve as dramaturg on this co-production of her choosing between ACT and MTC of this brilliant new play, which she worked on with El Guindi at the 2020 Colorado New Play Summit. Recent dramaturgy: Heather Raffo's *Noura* (MTC/ Golden Thread), Marcus Gardley's *Play on!* commission of *King Lear* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), and recent world premiere productions with Marcus Gardley, Lauren Yee, Marisela Treviño Orta, Margo Hall, and Torange Yeghiazarian. She is a frequent collaborator on Golden Thread's ReOrient Festivals of Short Plays and Bay Area Playwrights Festivals. Former positions: Festival Director for the 5th Annual New America Playwrights Fest, featuring Lynn Nottage, Naomi Iizuka and Polly Pen (San Jose Rep); Dramaturg and Literary Manager of The Wilma Theater, San Jose Rep, and San Diego Rep, and Exec. VP Freelance of LMDA. Recipient of the 2015 Elliott Hayes Award for Outstanding Achievement in Dramaturgy for The Lark's four-city premieres of Gardley's *the road weeps, the well runs dry*. Nakissa dedicates this show to Dr. Galen A. Etemad, the patriarch, inspiration, role model, and guiding light to his family and friends for 99 wonderful years.

#### **ABOUT JOHN LANGS (Director)**

**John Langs** has served as Artistic Director since 2016. He joined ACT in 2013 as Associate Artistic Director. Langs' 16-year freelance career afforded him the opportunity to work with many prestigious theatre companies across the country. He has directed productions at Playwrights Horizons NY, Ensemble Studio Theater NY, Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, Lookingglass Theater Company in Chicago, Circle X in Los Angeles, The Resident Ensemble, New Century Theatre Company, Washington Ensemble Theatre, and Seattle Shakespeare Company. Langs received his directing degree from the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. Some of his favorite directing credits include *The Shaggs Philosophy of the World* (Los Angeles Drama Critic Circle Award for Best Original Musical), and *Brothers Karamazov* (seven LADCC Awards including Best Production of the year and Best Direction) and directing Kurt Beattie in *King Lear*. Langs received the first annual Seattle Gregory Award honoring excellence in direction for *The Adding Machine*. As a dedicated fan of original work, Langs has shepherded over a dozen projects to their premier production.

#### **THE CREATIVE TEAM**

Yussef El Guindi\* - Playwright  
John Langs - Director  
Nakissa Etemad - Dramaturg  
Carey Wong - Scenic Designer  
Melanie Burgess - Costume Designer  
Robert J. Aguilar - Lighting Designer  
Johanna Meleamad - Sound Designer

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Nihan Yesil - Composer  
Lynne Soffer - Dialect Coach

Ian Bond - Intimacy Director  
Lindsay Welliver\* - Core Company Liaison

\* Member of ACT's Core Company

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**FOR EDITORS/PRODUCERS:**

**WHAT:**

***Hotter Than Egypt***

*Hotter than Egypt* is a poignant play about personal revelation. Paul and Jean, an American couple, travel to Cairo for their 24th wedding anniversary. Long-dormant troubles within the marriage start to percolate, and their two Egyptian tour guides, newly engaged Maha and Seif, become drawn into the crisis. This dramedy explores the uneven power dynamics between these Western tourists and the locals. Dreams and relationships are put to the test when old connections lead to new temptations.

**WHERE:**

**ACT Theatre**  
**700 Union St, Seattle**

**WHEN:**

**January 28 - February 20, 2022**

Performance times: Tuesday–Sunday

Select Saturday and Sunday matinees at 2:00 p.m.

Press Invite Night: February 3 at 7:30 p.m.

The performance runs appx. 90 minutes with no intermission.

**TICKETS:**

**Start at \$27 - ON SALE NOW**

To purchase tickets, visit <https://acttheatre.org>

**PHOTOS/VIDEO:**

For available photography and video, please visit the [online press room here >>](#)

**CONNECT ON SOCIAL:**

**[acttheatre.org](https://acttheatre.org)**

Facebook - /ACTtheatre

Instagram - @ACTtheatre

#HotterThanEgypt

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## ABOUT ACT - A CONTEMPORARY THEATRE

Located in Seattle's Downtown Theatre District, ACT is home to five performance spaces under one roof. Since 1965, ACT has been a destination for experiencing new voices, stories and art. Reaching over 140,000 audience members each year, ACT is steadfast in its dedication to producing world-class work with contemporary playwrights and local performing artists through its Mainstage play series, community and artistic partnerships and Young Playwrights Program. Under the leadership of Managing Director Anita Shaw and Artistic Director John Langs, ACT is a community hub where artists and the public connect about today's issues and ideas and celebrate the shared experience of live theatre.

*Thank you to our season partners: Katharyn Alvord Gerlich, ArtsFund, Shubert Foundation, 4Culture, Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, Nesholm Family Foundation.*

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