



THE KIMMEL CENTER
ACADEMY OF MUSIC
MERRIAM THEATER

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A play about a dreamer for the dreamers! Don't miss the Philadelphia premiere of the funny and fantastical Palestinian play #GreyRock at the @KimmelCenter 2/6-2/9. More Info @ Kimmelcenter.org

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KIMMEL CENTER CULTURAL CAMPUS PRESENTS PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE OF THE HUMOROUS & WONDROUS PALESTINIAN PLAY *GREY ROCK* FEBRUARY 6 – 9, 2020

“Making theater shows in Palestine’ — ‘sometimes feels like building rockets,’ [Amir Nizar Zuabi playwright] said.

‘But when they take off, it’s glorious.’”

– *The New York Times*

“*Grey Rock* is about the inalienable right to dream.”

– Remote Theater Project’s Alexandra Aron

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (Philadelphia, PA, December 19, 2019) – The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus presents the Philadelphia premiere of the humorous, fantastical play ***Grey Rock*** at the SEI Innovation Studio from Thursday, February 6, 2020 through Sunday, February 9, 2020. This exciting, new theatrical work from director and playwright Amir Nizar Zuabi is commissioned and produced by the Remote Theater Project, in association with GOH Productions. The Philadelphia production of *Grey Rock* will be performed in English, featuring a 5-member cast of actors from across Palestine, including renowned actor, Khalifa Natour. This performance is BYOB.

Set in the present day and reflecting on the 1969 moon landing, *Grey Rock* tells the story of an ordinary Palestinian so enamored with the U.S. landing that he muses, “Shouldn’t Palestine, the land

of prophets, also have a presence on the moon?" Without money or technology, but with the help of his bemused West Bank neighbors, he sets out to build a space rocket in his shed. *Through Grey Rock*, Zuabi creates a poetic, absurdist exploration of the inalienable right to dream and how American culture has permeated and influenced Palestinian culture.

"Amir Nizar Zuabi's imaginative *Grey Rock* marks the first time a U.S. theater company has commissioned a Palestinian artist to create an original work of art for American audiences, proving that art truly has no borders or boundaries," said Anne Ewers, President and CEO of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts. "We hope that by presenting *Grey Rock*'s Philadelphia premiere on the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus, we will not only entertain audiences with this uplifting piece, but cultivate conversation surrounding inclusivity, diversity, and multicultural storytelling within our city."

Amir Nizar Zuabi is considered by his peers and theater critics to be one of the leading theatre directors in the Middle East. After graduating with honors from Israel's prestigious Nissan Native Acting Studio and attending workshops in France and Russia, Zuabi first cut his teeth directing *Stories Under Occupation* for Al Kasabah theatre in Ramallah. (Best Production – Cairo Theatre festival and Cartage festival). The show toured extensively, to wide acclaim, at the Royal Court London, Tokyo International Arts Festival, Goteborg Festival, amongst other destinations. His other directing experience includes *When the World Was Green* by Sam Sheppard at the Young Vic and *In pergone con Wittgenstein* by Mariano Apria at the Teatro Colosseo.

Grey Rock first premiered at La MaMa Theatre and was featured at the Melbourne International Arts Festival. The play was developed with support from The A. M. Qattan Foundation, Tajwaal Foundation, CEC Arts Link, Tilt Left Fund, The Still Point Fund, La MaMa Theatre, and many private individuals.

Remote Theater Project is a U.S. theater company founded and led by Producing Artistic Director Alexandra Aron. The company is dedicated to bringing theater artists who are geographically or politically isolated to New York City to develop new work and help them to tour internationally to have their voices heard outside the confines of their region and reach. Remote Theater Project is currently developing a new production with artists from East Africa, in collaboration with *Grey Rock*'s Fidaa Zaidan.

"*Grey Rock* is about the inalienable right to dream," said Remote Theater Project's Alexandra Aron. "In 1995, when I first worked in Palestine, I met a vibrant theater community whose work spoke to me in profound ways. Following the war in Gaza in 2014, I was determined to bring the work of Palestinian artists to New York and, after meeting Amir Nizar Zuabi in 2016, I knew that commissioning a new work for American audiences was the best way to explore the relationship between the United States and Palestine."

Other featured upcoming performances at the Kimmel Center Cultural Campus include: ***Turn*** (February 26 – 29, 2020, SEI Innovation Studio), ***Paula Poundstone*** (March 7, 2020, Merriam Theater), ***Ethan Lipton & his Orchestra*** (March 14, 2020, SEI Innovation Studio), ***National Geographic Live! When Women Ruled the World with Egyptologist Kara Cooney*** (March 18, 2020, Merriam Theater), and ***TWO BLUES: Two Plays*** (April 2 – 5, 2020, SEI Innovation Studio).

GREY ROCK

Kimmel Center Cultural Campus' SEI Innovation Studio

February 6, 2020, 8:00 p.m.

February 7, 2020, 8:00 p.m.

February 8, 2020, 2:00 p.m. & 8:00 p.m.

February 9, 2020, 2:00 p.m.

Tickets

Tickets are on sale now starting at \$25.00. Tickets can be purchased by calling 215-893-1999, online at www.kimmelcenter.org, or at the Kimmel Center Box Office. Group sales are available for groups of 10 or more and can be purchased by calling 215-790-5883. See www.kimmelcenter.org for more information.

This is a designated BYO performances. Acceptable forms of BYO are 6-pack of beer and/or 750ml bottles of wine only; no liquor or open containers are permitted. Limit of one (1) 750ml bottle of wine OR one (1) six-pack of beer per two guests. Corkscrews and rolling coolers are not permitted. Ice, cups and corking service available at venue at no cost. All BYO Night guests are subject to lawful ID checks and bag checks at the manager's discretion.

The Kimmel Center Cultural Campus

Located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia, our mission is to engage the region's diverse communities with art through performance and education. Our Cultural Campus serves more than 1 million guests per year and includes the **Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts**, the **Academy of Music**, and the **Merriam Theater**- representing more than 160 years of rich history for the performing arts along Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts. We are home to eight esteemed Resident Companies: **The Philadelphia Orchestra**, **Opera Philadelphia**, **Pennsylvania Ballet**, **The Philly POPS**, **PHILADANCO**, **The Chamber Orchestra of Philadelphia**, **The Philadelphia Chamber Music Society**, and **Curtis Institute of Music**. With nearly 9,000 seats per night, we are the region's most impactful performing arts center, and the second largest in the country. Our Cultural Campus serves as a preeminent and inclusive place to enjoy exceptional experiences that reflect the spirit of our region by cultivating a creative and socially-responsible environment where our community shares experiences that are delivered with pride, integrity, and respect. As a 501 c 3 nonprofit organization, we collaborate on, present, and produce a broad range of relevant and meaningful events, we serve as an active gathering space for social and community events, we educate the region's young people through access to quality arts experiences, and we provide support to artists in the creation of new work. TD Bank, America's Most Convenient Bank, is our proud sponsor of the Kimmel Center's 2019-2020 Season. American Airlines is the official airline of Broadway Philadelphia. For additional information, visit www.kimmelcenter.org.

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