

in association with Remote Theater Project and Roots Mbili Theatre

Uganda. Palestine. 5 Decades. 5 Prisons.

April 25 - May 12, 2024



The Downstairs 66 East 4th Street, NYC, 10003 April 25 - May 12, 2024

# **LINES**

#### Writers and Creators

John Rwothomack
Fidaa Zidan
Junaid Sarieddeen
Alexandra Aron

Director & Dramaturgy: Junaid Sarieddeen
Additional Writing: Asiimwe Deborah Kawe
Set & Costume Design: Kevin Jenkins

**Light Design:** K.J **Sound Design:** Lee Affen

Projection Design: Tal Yarden

Movement Director: Robia Milliner

Producer/ Remote Theater Project: Alexandra Aron

Producer/Roots Mbili Theatre: Sam Holland

**Digital Director**: John David West **Digital Director (UK)**: Smart Banda

Production Stage Manager: Callie Stribling

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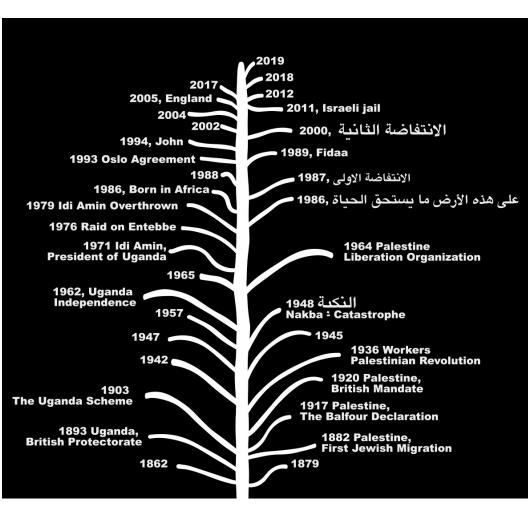
John Wyszniewski, Everyman Productions

Additional Music: Mazen Kerbaj

- selections from Walls Will Fall & Always Dreamt To Be A Guitar Player

LINES is produced by Remote Theater Project and Roots Mbili Theatre. LINES was first presented and premiered at Sheffield Theatres (UK) February 2024.

## **Timeline**



Fidaa Zidan (Playing Fidaa, Co-writer and Creator) is a Palestinian actress and writer from the Galilee region of Palestine. She received a B.A. in Social Theater from Haifa University, and an MFA from Tel-Aviv University. She began her journey in The Freedom Theatre, Jenin, in a play directed by Diane Traivs *The Stone Is Our Sign*; later, she participated in several works in Palestine and around the world. 2018, She wrote and performed in her own production, *The Last Day Of Spring*, a monodrama that explores the theme of personal loss in front of the government rituals about loss, and the identity crisis between them. Recently she directed several student works and plays for children, trained at the University of Haifa, University of Tel Aviv and The Freedom Theater. She wrote and organized spoken word poetry events and went on to participate in several short films. Recent performances: *The Walk With Amal, Good Chance* (puppeteer, Turkey, Europe, UK, and New York), Amir Nizar Zuabi's *Grey Rock* (New York, US, and Australia) produced by Remote Theater Project, *The Mountain*, musical tragedy by Seraj band and Sard Theatre, *Galilei, Last Ward* (Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre).

John Rwothomack (Playing John, Co-writer and Creator) is a Ugandan-born, London trained, and Sheffield-bred and based writer, actor and director. John trained as an actor at Rose Bruford School of Dramatic Arts and sits on the board of governors for Migration Matters Festival. John is also part of Sheffield Theatres Bank Cohort and was nominated by Sheffield Theatres to English Touring Theatre's Nationwide Voices scheme. Theatre credits include Far Gone (Theatre Deli, Sheffield Theatres), assistant director on The Last King of Scotland (Sheffield Theatres), as assistant director for Sheffield Theatres' resident company. Utopia Theatre, credits include I Am David Oluwale and Shadows in Different Shades. As an actor, theatre credits include Taxi (Red Ladder Theatre, 2023), I Wonder If... (Young Vic, 2022) Far Gone (Sheffield Theatres 2020-2022 & Theatre Deli Sheffield 2019), On Missing, (The Cockpit Theatre, London 2019), Tales From The Playground, (Paper Finch Theatre, Sheffield 2018), The Emperor Jones, (The Lost Theatre, London 2016), The Low Road, (Stratford Circus, London 2015). As director credits include Bad Blood Blues (Theatre Deli) and assistant director of White Noise (Bridge Theatre). As playwright, credits include Far Gone.

Junaid Sarieddeen (Director & Dramaturge, Co-writer, Creator) is a theatre actor, director, dramaturge, founding member of Beirut-based Zoukak Theatre Company (2006) and member of the Sundance board of trustees (2019-2022). He has directed several theatre plays with Zoukak and other artists and performed in more than 30 productions in the past 22 years, touring in multiple cities and festivals around the world. He holds a BA in Theatre, a BA in Philosophy, and a Masters in Research in Theatre.

Alexandra Aron (Co-writer and Creator) is a NY based director and producer. Most recently she directed *King of the Jews* by Leslie Epstein starring Richard Topol at HERE Arts (NYC). Directing favorites: A *Night in the Old Marketplace*, music by Frank London, lyrics by Glen Berger in São Paulo, Copenhagen, Warsaw, Toronto, Milan, MASS MoCA, NYTF and Bard SummerScape), *Naked Old Man* by

Murray Schisgal (Ensemble Studio Theatre); *Imagining Madoff* by Deb Margolin (Theater J, DC), and *Salomé*: *Woman of Valor* by Adeena Karasick/F.London (Vancouver, Toronto, ART's Oberon Theater). She also directed a short film, *Two Altars and a Cave* (2013) starring Lois Smith and will direct *The Mulberry Tree* by Hanna Eady and Ed Mast at La MaMa Theater later this year. A life-long arts educator, she was the recipient of a Fulbright Grant to Argentina in 2005-2006, where she taught theater practitioners in Buenos Aires. She is passionate about using theater for social activism and founded Remote Theater Project for this reason. Alex is an affiliated artist of New Georges Theater, and an alumna of the Lincoln Center Directing Lab, and Women's Project Directors Forum. Alex is a graduate of Wesleyan University. www.alexandraaron.com

Asiimwe Deborah Kawe (Additional Writing) is an award-winning playwright, producer, and performer. She is the founding Producing Artistic Director of Tebere Arts Foundation and the Artistic Director of the Kampala International Theatre Festival. Ms. Kawe worked with the Sundance Theatre Program, leading the East Africa initiative for six years, dividing her time between New York and Kampala. She received a B. A. in Theatre from Makerere University, in Kampala-Uganda, and an M.F.A. in Writing for Performance from the California Institute of the Arts. She's currently one of the playwrights in residency at The Residenz Theater in Munich.

Callie Stribling (Stage Manager) (she/they) is a New York based stage manager and reviewer. Previous credits include Maiden Voyage (The Flea), Friendly's Fire, Untitled Calamity Jane Project (Rising Sun Performance Company), The Dog Show (Player's Theatre), Piedmont Point, Abnormal (Theatre Row), and her first international production, a presentation of It's Not So Bad In My Brain (New Perspectives Theater Company) at an alternative theater festival, Festa, hosted by the Coporación Colombiana de Teatro in Bogotá. On Instagram @cstribl.

KJ (Lighting Designer) is a lighting designer for Theatre, Dance and Opera. They are a graduate of the ALPD 20:20 scheme. Recent credits include: *Jockstrap* (Barbican); *Traces Through Time* (Linbury, Royal Opera House); *FLIP!* (Fuel Theatre, Soho Theatre); *Black Sabbath*: *The Ballet & Hotel* (Birmingham Royal Ballet); *On The Nature of Rabbits* (Venice Biennale & Joyce Theater, NYC); *My Brother's Keeper* (Theatre503); *Who's Holiday* (HOME, Southwark Playhouse); *SHED* (Northern Rascals, UK Tour); *DOGS* (Liverpool Playhouse); *Illegal Dance* (Avant Garde Dance, UK Tour); *Happy Meal* (Edinburgh Fringe & Brixton House Theatre); *Celebrated Virgins* (Theatr Clwyd); *Black Is...* (Fubunation); *As You Like It* (Northern Broadsides, UK Tour); *Decades* (Leeds Playhouse); *West Side Story: Symphonic Dances* (Opera North); *Black Waters* (Phoenix Dance Theatre). As Associate Lighting Designer: *The F\*\*\*\*\*s and Their Friends* (Manchester International Festival) & *Coming To England* (Birmingham Rep).

Tal Yarden (Video and Projection Designer) creates, designs, directs and shoots visual content for a variety of mediums. He specializes in work for live events including dance, theater, opera, special events and music performances. His work

has been seen throughout Europe and the USA. LONDON: Get Up, Stand Up, Anna X, My Brilliant Friend, Indecent, Network, Hamlet, Antigone, The Damned, Kings of War, The Fountainhead, Roman Tragedies, Lazarus. BROADWAY: The Waverly Gallery, Sunday in the Park with George, The Crucible; OFF-BROADWAY& REGIONAL: Becky Nurse of Salem, Grey Rock, King Lear, Distracted, Liberty City, The Misanthrope; A Walk on the Moon, Ocean Filibuster, Passing Strange, Frost/Nixon; OPERA: Exterminating Angel, Between Worlds, Mahagonny, Salome, Brokeback Mountain, Macbeth. VIDEO: Pat McGrath, Rick Owens, Alicia Keys, Snoop Dogg, James Brown, Patti Smith; AWARDS: Molière, Lucille Lortel, NOMINATIONS: Tony, Drama Desk, Hewes, Outer Critic.

Kevin Jenkins (Set and Costume Design) has been designing for theatre for 17 years after training on the Motley Theatre Design Course. He studied Engineering at the University of Durham and has been a secondary school teacher of Design and Technology. For Roots Mbili Theatre Company: Far Gone for Sheffield Theatres, credits include: How a City Can Save the World, Songs from the Seven Hills, What We Wished For, A Dream, Hospital Food, The Beauty Inspector, Confessions of a City, Warrior Square, Topdog/Underdog, Hearts. Other theatres credits include: Hearts (National Theatre); Constant Companions, Family Album, Seasons Greetings, A Brief History of Women, Taking Steps, The Girl Next Door, Birthdays Past Birthdays Present, No Knowing (Stephen Joseph Theatre); Cinderella, Home Girl (Derby Theatre); Anna Hibiscus' Song (Utopia Theatre Co); Are You As Nervous As I Am (Greenwich Theatre); Coram Boy (Nottingham Playhouse); The Frontline, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Shiv (Curve); The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland (Wise Owl Theatre Co, UK Tour); Jane Hair (Buglight); Beauty and the Beast, Private Lives (Torch Theatre).

Lee Affen (Sound Design) is a global majority artist, a multi-instrumentalist composer and sound designer working on an extensive catalogue of projects in theatre, dance and film. He finds inspiration in stories that need to be told and translated into impactful, challenging and accessible art. Lee's work includes *Imagine If's Jadek*, Fallen Angels' collaboration with Birmingham Royal Ballet's *The War Within*, John-Rwoth Omack's Far Gone in Assoc. with Utopia Theatre, and the BBC 3 Show *Amazing Humans*. He collaborates regularly with Sheffield Theatres, Theatr Clwyd and The Dukes Theatre. Lee is an associate artist with Imagine If Theatre and The Dukes Theatre and he also leads workshops.

Robia Milliner (Movement Director) has been performing, choreographing and teaching in London for over 10 years. She has worked with companies and choreographers such as Hofesh Schecter & ZooNation Kate Prince co, as well as creating much work as a solo artist. She has taught masterclasses globally from Poland to Japan. Over the past few years she has taken a big interest in Movement Directing, where she is now rehearsal director for FUBU Nation and assisting more in the commercial dance scene with the likes of Beyonce, Raye and Royksopp. Having trained at the Brit School, Robia's choreography is a blend of Hip-Hop, Contemporary and Jazz.

Remote Theater Project (RTP) develops international collaborations with artists whose voices are not often heard in the U.S. RTP commissioned, developed, and produced *Grey Rock* by Amir Nizar Zuabi with an all-Palestinian cast, which premiered at La MaMa Theatre in 2019. A subsequent US tour followed in 2020 (Public Theater, NY, Guthrie Theatre, the Kennedy Center, and the Kimmel Center in Philadelphia). *Grey Rock* has also been featured at the Melbourne International Arts Festival (2019) and at the Adelaide Festival (2023). RTP created US-based events for *Little Amal/The Walk* Productions in 2021 and 2022 in Portland, Maine, and NYC. RTP has developed community engagement projects in Chinatown/LES partnering with local organizations. In June RTP will present *Thank You For Listening* by Carmen Rivera based on workshops with migrant, homeless, and Chinese senior citizens in Sara Roosevelt Park in Chinatown, NY. RTP was founded by producing artistic director, Alexandra Aron.

Roots Mbili Theatre is a Dramatic Arts Production Company specialising in cross-cultural collaborative practice bringing artists together from across the world to create ground-breaking work. Much of Roots Mbili's focus is platforming stories from Africa and about African diaspora in the UK, merging culturally distinct storytelling styles to create unique and challenging theatre which will have an enduring impact on audiences everywhere and forge creative exchanges for artists and organizations. Roots Mbili Theater's past work includes *Far Gone* coproduced with Sheffield Theatres, which has been toured across the UK, Kampala International Theatre Festival and the Edinburgh Fringe. A work-in-progress of new project, *Never Look Back* was staged on the Crucible main stage in November 2023 and is undergoing development into a full production. Roots Mbili Theatre is led by Artistic Director John Rwothomack, Creative Producer Sam Holland and Digital Director Smart Banda.

Sam Holland/ Roots Mbili Theatre) is a Sheffield-based theatre producer and festival director. Since 2016, he has been Artistic Director of the award-winning Migration Matters Festival, a multi-arts festival of sanctuary, identity and cultural heritage and the UK's largest Refugee Week festival. He is voluntary director of Arts on the Run, a Sheffield-based charity supporting refugee and migrant artists. He project managed Utopia Theatre's Spirit of Africa Festival (So Africa Festival) in 2018. He is the executive producer of Roots Mbili Theatre and with them has produced Far Gone, Lines and Never Look Back (WIP). He has also worked with theatremaker Hassun El Zafar on My Name is Rachel Corrie, The Pianist of Sarajevo (R&D) and There is No Planet B. Other theatre credits include Bonfire with Simon Marshall and Benny and the Greycats with Maya Productions.

#### THE LINES TEAMS WISH TO GIVE SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Elizabeth Trippe, Constancia Dinky Romilly and Terry Weber, Tal Yarden, Alexandra Shapiro and Adam Aron, Shalva Wise, T Wise and Ora Wise, Dan Futterman, Julia Brock, Roberta Levitow, Ellen Beardmore, Tom Robbins, Jana Bou Matar, Ruby Clarke, Mohamad Hamdan, Gomolemo Nyakale, Andy Watson and Geese Theatre.

# A full program with information on this production can be found on the LINES

page of the La MaMa website.

In addition you can scan the QR code Poster located in the theatre lobby for access to the digital program.



# LA MAMA





La MaMa's historic, landmark building at 74 East 4th Street underwent an urgently needed complete renovation and restoration to preserve the historic façade, create building-wide ADA accessibility, and provide much needed performance, exhibition and community space for decades to come.

La MaMa, founded by Ellen Stewart in 1961, has been on east 4th Street since 1967. La MaMa embraces every person in its community and is legendary as the place where new artists of all nations, cultures, races, and identities are given opportunities. It is the place where art begins.

To learn more about the renovation, or to make a donation please visit www.lamama.org/remakeaworld

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#### Lines

April 25 - May 12, 2024 The Downstairs

#### Exagoge

April 26 - May 12, 2024 Ellen Stewart Theatre

La MaMa Moves! Dance Festival May 16 - June 2, 2024

> Listen to Your Mother May 16 - 19, 2024 The Downstairs

#### You

May 17 - 19, 2024 Ellen Stewart Theatre

La MaMa Kids: Creative Dance May 18, 2024

#### **COMING SOON**

Emerging Choreographers from Hunter College MFA Program May 16 - 19, 2024 The Club

Shared Program: Pioneers Go East Collective and Arthur Avilés May 23 - 25, 2024 Ellen Stewart Theatre

Shared Program: Nuu Knynez and Ilaria Passeri with Evelyna Dann May 23 - 26, 2024 The Downstairs

Shared Program: Chris Yon & Taryn Griggs and Yoshiko Chuma & the School of Hard Knocks May 23 - 26, 2024 The Club

> How to Eat an Orange May 30 - June 16, 2024 The Downstairs