

**YOUR DIGITAL PROGRAM / TEXT ONLY VERSION**

# Grey Rock

Remote Theater Project

Written and directed by Amir Nizar Zuabi

**9-12 Mar / Space Theatre**

**Duration:** 1hr 40mins, no interval

**Warnings:** Contains depictions of violence. Recommended for audiences 12+

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## **THIS DIGITAL PROGRAM INCLUDES**

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# Credits

Written and Directed by **Amir Nizar Zuabi**

Performed by:

**Luca Kamleh Chapman** as Fadel

**Khalifa Natour** as Yusuf

**Motaz Malhees** as Sheik

**Alaa Shehada** as Jawad

**Fidaa Zaidan** as Lila

Producer **Alexandra Aron, Remote Theater Project**

Set and Projection Design **Tal Yarden**

Lighting Design **Muaz Jubeh**

Sound Design **Katie Down**

Associate Producer **Bonnie Sue Stein, GOH Productions**

*Grey Rock* was commissioned and produced by **Remote Theater Project** in association with **GOH Productions**.

Generously supported by **Charlie (Khalil) Shahin AO**.

## Director's Note

By **Amir Nizar Zuabi**

What are we willing to do for love? What are we willing to do to fulfill our curiosity and what happens when these two questions meet?

*Grey Rock* tells the story of a grief stricken man who is dedicating his one last big gesture to his dead beloved wife. Set in Palestine against a backdrop where everything is impossible, the elderly man is embarking on a journey towards space. It is this journey that becomes a way to challenge the perceptions of everyone around him; and it is also a celebration of the freedom we feel when we are in love. It is also a celebration of the human spirit thirsting for knowledge. He determines to build a rocket that will take him to the moon. This act, in a place like Palestine, is an almost impossible feat and carries the weight of a political act. It is defying the nature of oppression – to be able to break free from the historical past of this ancient land and at the same time to ignore the political present. It is a celebration of the human spirit. It is a celebration of freedom. It is, at its most pure form, a celebration of love.

## Biographies

**Amir Nizar Zuabi**

Writer and Director

Amir Nizar Zuabi is an award-winning playwright and director. He was the founding Artistic Director of ShiberHur Theater Company, an Associate Director of the Young Vic Theatre, a member of the United Theaters Europe for artistic achievement, and an alumni of The Sundance Institute Theatre Program. Following his work on *The Walk*, in January 2022 he took up the role of Artistic Director of The Walk Productions Limited. His writing and directing credits include *I am Yusuf and This is my Brother, In the Penal Colony, Oh My Sweet Land The Beloved* (ShiberHur/Young Vic); *Three Days of Grief, West of Us The Sea, Mid Spring Musical, Dry Mud, Against A Hard Surface* (ShiberHur); *Last Ward, Who Killed You Asmahan, The Huta* and *Grey Rock* (Remote Theater Project, La Mama, The Public Theater, NYC).

Directing credits include: *Samson and Delilah* (Flanders Opera, Antwerp); *Jidarraya* by Mahmoud Darwish (Edinburgh International Festival, Bouffes du Nord and world tour); *Forget Herostratus, Le Malade Imaginaire, War or More, Sneeze, Deep Sorrow, Fall Tale, When The World Was Green, Lanterns Of The King Of Galilee, Taha* and *The Comedy of Errors* (Royal Shakespeare Company).

## **LUCA KAMLEH CHAPMAN**

### **Performer (Fadel)**

Luca Kamleh Chapman was born in South West London to a Syrian/Palestinian mother and British father, and has been involved in acting since age 6. Having stuck with the craft since then, he trained at The Oxford School of Drama (2019-2022) before making his professional debut in *two Palestinians go dogging* at the Royal Court Theatre in London, May 2022. Besides acting, he spends time writing lyrics and producing music from his home, cooking and both playing and watching football.

## **KHALIFA NATOUR**

### **Performer (Yusuf)**

Khalifa Natour is a Palestinian actor who also works as a dramaturg and has appeared on stages around the world. He collaborated with director Peter Brook in Beckett's *Fragments* and *12&13* by Amadou Hampâté Bâ. His one-man show, *In Spitting Distance*, directed by Ofira Henig, was seen at the Theatre des Bouffes de Nord, the Barbican in London, Romaeurope Festival, the Sydney Opera House and in New York. Recently, he worked with Henig on *The Bees' Road* at the Schaubühne and *The Queen Commanded Him to Forget* at the Pierre Boulez in Berlin. He has collaborated with director Amir Nizar Zuabi on *Stories Under Occupation* which was seen at the Young Vic, Royal Court in London and on tour. At the Palestinian National Theatre in Jerusalem, he adapted and performed *Jedareya* by Mahmoud Darwish which played at the Bouffes du Nord, Edinburgh Festival, Geneva and other cities. He has also adapted and played in *Aza*, directed by Zuabi and seen in Berlin, the Adelaide Festival and other theaters around the world.

## **MOTAZ MALHEES**

### **Performer (Sheik)**

Motaz Malhees was born in Jenin, Palestine. He joined The Freedom Theatre Professional Acting School at 16. He was one of Juliano Mer Khamis' students, and graduated three years later, joining an elite group of Palestinian professional actors. Malhees has performed in theatre, film and TV all over the world: most recently in the Middle East, Europe, the USA, South East Asia, and Australia. Motaz continues to train with internationally renowned directors such as Nabil Al-Raei (The Freedom Theatre), Di Trevis (Royal Shakespeare Company), Thomas Ostermeier (Schaubühne Berlin), Katrien van Beurden (Theatre Hotel Courage) and Amir Nizar Zuabi.

## **ALAA SHEHADA**

### **Performer (Jawad)**

Alaa Shehada is a theatre-maker, educated with the Freedom Theatre Acting School in Jenin camp, Palestine, specialising in physical comedy, stand-up comedy. Alaa has worked with directors Amir Nizar Zuabi, Di Treves and Katrien Van Burgen and is a mask performer member with the international company Troupe Courage in Amsterdam. Alaa has performed at the Theatre Royal Stratford (London), LaMaMa Theatre, Guthrie Theatre (New York City), The Malthouse Theatre (Melbourne), at the Carthage Festival (Tunisia), John Kennedy Centre (Washington), The Kimmel Centre (Philadelphia). Shehada is a Clown with the Red Noses International in the West Bank and leads drama and comedy theatre workshops in Palestine. He received a Jury award at the International Festival of Liberal Theatre in Jordan and the Best Show Award at the Palestine National Theatre Festival 2018. He also won Best Script for the show *London Jenin*, which he co-wrote in 2019. In 2020, Alaa created a one-man show called *At The Roundabout*, funded by the Al Qattan Foundation, which he toured throughout the West Bank during 2022, plus another comedy show with Palestine comedy club called *Balad*.

## **FIDAA ZAIDAN**

### **Performer (Lila)**

Fidaa Zaidan is a Palestinian actress and writer from the Galilee region of Palestine. She received a BA in Social Theater from Haifa University, and a MFA from Tel-Aviv University. Recent performance credits include: *The Walk with Amal* (puppeteer, Turkey, Europe, UK, and New York) and Amir Nizar Zuabi's *Grey Rock* (Remote Theater Project, New York, US and Australia). Zaidan has collaborated with Zuabi on several projects including *Against a Hard Surface* (Yaa Samar! Dance Theatre) and *West of Us is the Sea* and more. She wrote and performed in her own production, *The Last Day of Spring*. Additional performances include: *The Stone is Our Sign* by Diane Travis, *The Freedom Bus* (The Freedom Theatre), *Mire*, a musical theatre show (Faraj Suliman, Amir Nizar Zuabi). Film credits include: *Polygraph* and *Another Point of View*. Currently, Zaidan is working on her next show with Remote Theater Project, *LINES*, and teaching Spoken Word at the Freedom Theatre Drama School.

## **About the Producers**

### **REMOTE THEATER PROJECT**

Remote Theater Project (RTP) creates work investigating how different cultures interact and view each other. In 2018, RTP commissioned *Grey Rock* by Amir Nizar Zuabi. This piece sought to give Palestinian theatre artists a direct voice and connection to audiences in New York City where Palestinian narratives had historically faced implicit and explicit censorship. *Grey Rock* performed to remarkable critical and popular response at the La Mama Theatre in January 2019, followed by a tour to the Melbourne Arts Festival and then a US tour which ended in Feb. 2020. We are thrilled to be sharing this production of *Grey Rock* for the first time since the pandemic. RTP produced several events for *Little Amal*, including a remote live-feed event in 2021 and live in-person events, in NYC, 2022. Our upcoming production, *LINES*, is being developed with artists from Uganda, Palestine, Lebanon and the U.K and will premiere in NYC in 2024. Check out more about us and the public art projects we are building in NYC.

### **ALEXANDRA ARON, PRODUCER**

Alexandra Aron is the Producing Artistic Director of the Remote Theater Project (RTP), which she founded to facilitate the work of international artists whose voices are not commonly heard in the U.S. A New York-based theatre director, producer and educator, her work has been seen on stages around the world. Alexandra is looking forward to directing *The Mulberry Tree* by Hanna Eady and Ed Mast produced by Loose Change Productions in NYC later this year.

### **BONNIE SUE STEIN, ASSOCIATE PRODUCER**

Bonnie Sue Stein is the Executive Director and founder of GOH Productions, an arts organisation based in New York City, focusing on the creation and development of global and local arts projects. Since 1988, she has produced projects in NYC, East/Central Europe, former Soviet Union, Asia and the Middle East. Stein has been a consultant to numerous arts organizations in production and international exchange in over 25 countries, including Palestine, Estonia, Jordan, New York, Japan, Macedonia, Albania, Czech Republic and more. As Associate Producer with Alexandra Aron, she worked on the creation, development and touring of *Grey Rock* in the USA and Australia. Stein produces the work of Czechoslovak-American Marionette Theatre in NYC and touring.

