

M MOSAIC THEATER COMPANY

UNSEEN

by Mona Mansour
directed by Johanna Gruenhut



**MAR 30-
APR 23**
2023

NEW WORK

Murdered Men Do Bleed and Drip

by Jennifer Barclay and Hannah Khalil

May 6 & 7



JENNIFER
BARCLAY



HANNAH
KHALIL

Written by Irish-American and Irish-Palestinian playwrights living half a world apart, this imaginative new play spans continents and mediums. Taking place simultaneously in two countries, this in-process sharing will be a global live performance-meets-digital theater event.

Developed in partnership with DC's Solas Nua New Irish Arts and Dublin's Fishamble Theatre Company

Generously supported by the Trish Vradenburg New Play Commission Program and underwritten by Venturous Theater Fund.

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A series of conversations, panels, and special events inspired by *one in two* and highlighting the resilience of DC's LGBTQ+ community. Featuring a display of the AIDS Memorial Quilt.



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WELCOME FROM OUR ARTISTIC DIRECTOR



Reg

I am so honored and humbled to welcome the remarkable Mona Mansour back to Mosaic Theater with her thought-provoking, moving new play *Unseen*. I first met Mona over 10 years ago when we both worked on new plays at the Lark Play Development Center in New York. I was in awe of her craft, collaborative nature, warm sense of humor, and the palpable politics inherent in her work. She brings all of these skills to *Unseen*, crafting a harrowingly honest and hope-filled reflection on the human costs of war.

Our production stars an extraordinary group of actors—Maryland native Katie Kleiger, who I had the pleasure of directing in Studio Theatre's *White Noise* in 2022, Helen Hayes Award nominee and Woolly Mammoth Company Member Emily Townley finally making her Mosaic debut, and Mosaic's own Dina Soltan, who starred in the premiere of Mona's *The Vagrant Trilogy* at Mosaic in 2018 (which went on to an acclaimed run at New York's Public Theater just last year). This dynamite ensemble of DMV talent works under the direction of Theater J Associate Artistic Director Johanna Gruenhut. I first encountered Johanna's work when we were directing plays at Weston Theater Company in Vermont—*I & You* for her; *Oklahoma!* for me—and was blown away by the fierce blend of muscularity, tension, and wonderfully approachable joy in her production. I am thrilled to welcome this talented team to Mosaic.

This season has been a wonderful celebration of Mosaic's core ideals—curiosity, collaboration, and connection—and *Unseen* continues that work. Join us this May for a cross-continental workshop of *Murdered Men do Bleed and Drip* by Jennifer Barclay and Hannah Khalil and this June for the DC premiere of Donja R. Love's *one in two*, a bold new play that showcases the rich diversity of our DC community.

We dedicate this production of *Unseen* to the victims of the recent earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, where our play takes place. *Unseen* is a call to witness and remember, and we do so in honor of the lives lost in, and impacted by, that tragedy.

—Reginald L. Douglas



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MOSAIC THEATER COMPANY OF DC PRESENTS

Unseen

By **Mona Mansour**
Directed by **Johanna Gruenhut**

Scenic Designer
Emily Lotz

Costume Designer
Sarah Cabbage**

Lighting Designer
Jesse Belsky**

Sound Designer
Matthew M. Nielson**

Projections Designer
Mona Kasra

Props Designer
Deb Thomas

Fight and Intimacy Director
Sierra Young

Stage Manager
Claire Fogle*

Casting Director
Chelsea Radigan

Unseen is generously underwritten by Deborah Carliner & Robert Remes, Ed Grossman & Rochelle Stanfield, Joan P. & David O. Maxwell, Elaine Reuben and The Timbrel Fund, and Stephen Stern & Margaret Hahn Stern.

Mosaic Theater's 2022-2023 Season is underwritten by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Revada Foundation, The Roy Cockrum Foundation, Share Fund, The Shubert Foundation, and the Steinglass Family Fund.



CAST

Katie Kleiger*	Mia
Dina Soltan	Derya and others
Emily Townley*	Jane and others

Unseen runs approximately 90 minutes with no intermission.

* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

++Member of United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of the IATSE.



Unseen is a professional production employing members of Actors' Equity Association and United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829 of IATSE. The video and/or audio recording of these performances by any means whatsoever is strictly prohibited. Please turn off all electronic devices.

ARTISTS IN CONVERSATION

Mosaic last produced **Mona Mansour's** work five years ago with *The Vagrant Trilogy*, a hit with both critics and audiences. She returns to Washington, DC with *Unseen*. While on site for rehearsals, Mona sat down with Mosaic Artistic Producer **Chelsea Radigan** to discuss *Unseen* and having her play produced in the nation's capital.

Playwright
Mona Mansour
with Mosaic
Artistic Producer
Chelsea Radigan
and actor Katie
Kleiger. Photo
by Chris Banks.



Mosaic: For those unfamiliar with your work, tell us a bit about *Unseen*.

Mona Mansour: *Unseen* is set in Istanbul. It is set in an old apartment that has been the home of one of the characters, Derya, who is a gay woman. And near the beginning of the play you see her on-again, off-again girlfriend who is in her apartment, not knowing how she got there. Something has happened to her, and the play unfolds that mystery.

Much of your work centers the stories of Middle Eastern characters. Does that come from personal experience?

MM: My father is from Lebanon and growing up my cousins all came to live with us during the civil war. I saw the moments of difficulty and darkness, and the moments of ridiculous humor, the bitching and complaining about what was done or not being done. There wasn't this kind of a straightforward shape to what that experience was like, so that...has always affected me in terms of my own curiosity about people in those places.

In *Unseen*, Mia is a conflict photographer. Did creating the play change your perspective on how news is reported from conflict zones?

MM: I spent a lot of time on Twitter at that point. Maybe they had just started the thing where you didn't have to click to see an image, or maybe you did have to click, and it would be like "Ooph, I wish I wouldn't have done that." All I know is that I became aware, and it seemed like there was a real cultural conversation around,

should we be seeing these or are we oversaturated? What does it do to me to see [a particular image]? What does it do to me to decide I won't see it? What does it do to me to see it and then put it away? Those are the things I try to explore in this play.

How does it feel to be staging *Unseen* in DC?

MM: DC is filled with people who do the work that Mia does, or they edit the work that Mia does [conflict photography], or they deal with these parts of the world, whether they are human rights lawyers or work for NGOs. That's very exciting to me, to have an audience that is already up to speed with these regions of the world.

The play centers a queer relationship. Was that the case from the beginning?

MM: I think sometimes I'm very connected to my Arab-American identity and sort of less front-and-center about being a gay woman. It's fun to see the dynamics between Mia, her mother, and her girlfriend...that triangulation. Seeing [the character Jane] with her daughter, and seeing her daughter's Turkish girlfriend, Derya, a character who is a Muslim woman who's gay and is pretty okay with that, has been really nice.



Nora Achrati, Dina Soltan, and Hadi Tabbal in Mosaic's 2018 production of *The Vagrant Trilogy*. Dina returns as Derya in Mosaic's *Unseen*. Photo by Stan Barouh.

***The Vagrant Trilogy* was a hit with Mosaic audiences. Will patrons returning for *Unseen* see any commonality?**

MM: What is quite different is that in *The Trilogy* there's a lot of men. And this play, because it's set in 2015 and it's all women, that vibe is very different. **Part of what I do is to explore how what's going on out there, 5 kilometers away, 5,000 kilometers away, plays out between you and me right now.** And this play is like, "Guess what, it's here. You just think you left it, [but]..." And that's true of *The Trilogy* as well. Adham, the central character [in *The Trilogy*], thinks "I'm in London, I'm a professor now, all this shit's going on at home that I'm not a part of," and it all comes back to him in the same way it does for Mia in *Unseen*. So, that's a similar kind of dynamic.

Conversation edited for length and clarity.

PLAYWRIGHT & DIRECTOR



Mona Mansour (Playwright) is a Lebanese-American playwright and TV writer. Her credits include: *Unseen* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *The Vagrant Trilogy* (The Public Theater, Mosaic Theater Company), *The Way West* (Steppenwolf Theatre, Labyrinth Theater), and *We Swim, We Talk, We Go to War* (Golden Thread). She conceived of the play *Beginning Days of True Jubilation*, about a start-up gone bust, with her theater company SOCIETY. With Tala Manassah, she has written *Falling Down the Stairs*. Their play *Dressing* is part of *Facing Our Truths: Short Plays about Trayvon, Race and Privilege*.

She started as an actor, performing in the famed Groundlings Sunday Company in Los Angeles. As a writer, she got her start when she was chosen to be part of The Public Theater's Emerging Writers Group in 2009. Awards and fellowships include the Kesselring Prize, The Helen Merrill Award for Playwriting, the Whiting Award, Middle East America, MacDowell, and New Dramatists.

Mona was a writer for NBC's long-running series *New Amsterdam* and is currently creating a series set in the Middle East for Waleed and Joana Zuaiteer's FlipNarrative.



Johanna Gruenhut (Director; she/her) is the Associate Artistic Director of Theater J in Washington, DC. Her work has been seen at The Public, The Kennedy Center, Studio Theatre, Everyman Theatre, Weston Theater Company (formerly Weston Playhouse), Long Wharf Theatre, Portland Center Stage, Theater J, and Baltimore Center Stage. She has taught at Georgetown University, University of Maryland, College Park, The Johns Hopkins University, and University of California, San Diego. Originally from New York, she currently lives in Baltimore, MD with her husband and their three kids.

CAST



Katie Kleiger's (Mia; she/her) Off-Broadway credits include *Ring Twice for Miranda* (New York City Center) and *The Fall* (SoHo Playhouse). Regional credits include *White Noise*, *The Wolves*, and *The Effect* at Studio Theatre; *The Book of Will* and *Miss Bennet: Christmas at Pemberley* at Round House Theatre; *Everything is Wonderful* at Philadelphia Theatre Company; *Pride and Prejudice* at Repertory Theatre of St. Louis; *Juno and The Paycock*, *A Christmas Carol*, and *Blue Stockings* at the Guthrie Theatre; and *Sense and Sensibility*, *Steel Magnolias*, *Proof*, *The Importance of Being Earnest*, and *Dancing at Lughnasa* at Everyman Theatre, where she is a Company Member. Awards include Best Actress in a Comedy (St. Louis Theater Circle Award) and Best Ensemble (Helen Hayes Award). Katie studied at the University of Minnesota/Guthrie Theatre BFA Actor Training Program. She is also a musician; her music is available on all streaming platforms. On social media @katiekleiger.



Dina Soltan (Derya and others; she/her) is thrilled to be back on stage with Mosaic Theater Company, where she also performed in *The Vagrant Trilogy* and *Keffiyeh/Made in China*. Prior credits include *Ada and The Engine* (Ada) with Avant Bard Theatre, *Dhana*, and *The Rosebuds* (Dhana) with Ally Theatre Company, *Or*, (Aphra) and *Soldier Poet* with Theatre Prometheus, *Reykjavik* and *Neverwhere* with Rorschach Theatre, *A Woman of No Importance* with Scena Theater, and *The Blind* at The Wheel Theatre Company.



Emily Townley (Jane and others; she/her) is a Company Member at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, where previous credits include *Teenage Dick*, Taylor Mac's *HIR*, *The Arsonists*, *The Totalitarians* (Helen Hayes Award nomination, Outstanding Lead Actress), *Detroit*, *A Bright New Boise*, *Maria/Stuart*, *House of Gold*, *Spain*, *Fuddy Meers*, *Wonder of the World*, and *Watbanaland*. Other select DC credits include: *The Amateurs*, *Comedy of Tenors*, and *Bad Dog* for Olney Theatre Center; *How I Learned to Drive* and *The Sisterhood* for Round House Theatre; *Twelfth Night* (Helen Hayes Award, Outstanding Play) and *Romeo and Juliet* for Shakespeare Theatre Company; *The Mystery of Love and Sex* at Signature Theatre; and *Between Riverside and Crazy*, *Laugh*, *Skin Tight*, *Rock N' Roll*, and *The Bright and Bold Design* for Studio Theatre. Select regional credits include *The Game's Afoot* and *All My Sons* for Gulfshore Playhouse, and *Teenage Dick* for the Huntington Theatre Company and Pasadena Playhouse.

CREATIVE TEAM

Emily Lotz (Scenic Designer) is a freelance designer and artist based in Washington, DC. She won a Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Scenic Design for *The Princess & the Pauper - A Bollywood Tale* at Imagination Stage. Recent credits include *Marys Seacole* and *Inherit the Windbag* at Mosaic Theater Company, *Crowns* and *Dreamgirls* at Baltimore Center Stage, *The Wiz* and *Little Shop of Horrors* at ArtsCentric, *The War Boys* for Ally Theatre Company, and *Always...Patsy Cline* at Milwaukee Rep. emilylotzdesign.com.

Sarah Cubbage's (Costume Designer) favorite designs include *Crazy for You*, directed by Susan Stroman at David Geffen Hall; *Triumph of Love* and *Hippolyte et Aricie*, directed by Stephen Wadsworth at The Juilliard School; and *Beauty & The Beast* for Disney Creative Entertainment. Regional credits include the Round House Theatre productions of *The Tempest*, co-directed by Aaron Posner and Teller, *Spring Awakening*, and *The Heal*, co-produced with The Getty Villa; *A Chorus Line* at Signature Theatre; *That Face* at Baltimore Center Stage; *The Lily's Revenge* at American Repertory Theatre; *Disgraced* and *In The Next Room* for Syracuse Stage; *King John* for Folger Theatre; *Kings, The Wolves*, and *The Hard Problem* for Studio Theatre; *The Crucible* and *Labour of Love* for Olney Theatre Center; and *Compulsion* and *Actually* at Theater J. Member USA 829. sarahcubbage.com.

Jesse Belsky's (Lighting Designer) previous DC-area designs include *John Proctor is the Villain*, *Pipeline*, *P.Y.C.*, *The Effect*, and *Three Sisters* at Studio Theatre; *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* at Ford's Theatre; *JQA* and *The Year of Magical Thinking* at Arena Stage; *Oslo*, *Handbagged*, and *The Book of Will* at Round House Theatre; *Which Way to the Stage* and *The Mystery of Love & Sex* at Signature Theatre; *Henry IV, Part 1*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Sense and Sensibility*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Folger Theatre; *The Music Man*, *Labour of Love*, and *The Magic Play* at Olney Theatre Center; and *Compulsion of the House Behind*, *Actually*, and *Everything Is Illuminated* at Theater J. Jesse holds a BA from Duke University and an MFA from the Yale School of Drama. He has taught lighting design at Connecticut College and UNC Greensboro. jessebelsky.com.

Matthew M. Nielson (Sound Designer; he/him) is grateful to be designing with Mosaic Theater Company for the first time since *Draw the Circle*. Off-Broadway credits include The Public Theater/ New York Stage and Film, Lincoln Center Theater, and 59E59. Regional credits include the Guthrie Theater, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Portland Center Stage, Milwaukee Rep, the Repertory Theatre of St. Louis, Actors Theatre of Louisville, Arena Stage, Philadelphia Theatre Company, Ford's Theatre, The Kennedy Center, Signature Theatre, Barrington Stage, Round House Theatre, Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company, Studio Theatre, Theater

Alliance, Olney Theatre Center, and the Contemporary American Theater Festival. Film and television credits include *Death in Time*, *Elbow Grease*, *Blue*, *Epix Drive-In*, *From Hell to Here*, and *Too Like the Lightning*. Matthew is the creator of audio drama series *Troublesome Gap*. He is currently enrolled in the Songwriting and Music Production program with the Berklee College of Music Online. curiousmusic.com.

Mona Kasra (Projections Designer) is an Iranian-American new media artist and interdisciplinary scholar. Her practice-based research questions, critiques, and experiments with the affordances of media technologies within artistic forms and in a variety of improvisational framings. Mona's work has been exhibited in numerous art galleries and film festivals in the US and worldwide. Select design credits include *The Till Trilogy* (Helen Hayes Award nomination, Outstanding Projections Design), *Marys Seacole*, and *Keffiyeh/Made in China* at Mosaic Theater Company; *We Swim, We Talk, We Go to War* for Golden Thread (San Francisco); *When the Rain Stops Falling*, *Seven Guitars*, and *Arctic Circle* for the University of Virginia Department of Drama; and *Holy Bone*, *Flesh World*, *(w)hole*, *T.N.B.*, and *blahblah* for DWZ Collective (Dallas). She holds a PhD in Arts & Technology and is currently Associate Professor of Digital Media Design at the University of Virginia. On social media @monaism.

Deb Thomas's (Props Designer) work for Mosaic Theater Company includes *The Till Trilogy*, *Marys Seacole*, *Birds of North America*, *Eureka Day*, and *Milk Like Sugar*. She was the Props Director at Studio Theatre from 2009 to 2019, where she did set design for *Terminus*, assistant set design for *Bloody Bloody Andrew Jackson*, and props design for *Clyde's*, *Heroes of the Fourth Turning*, *John Proctor is the Villain*, *Pass Over*, *Fun Home*, *Love! Valor! Compassion!*, *Sylvia*, *Suburbia*, and *Slavs!* Her work for Theater J includes *The Tale of The Allergist's Wife* and *Freud's Last Session*. She was the Production Designer for the historical documentary *AD-X2*; sculptor and sculpture consultant for TLC's *DC Cupcakes*; and did original set design for Discovery Channel's *Puppy Bowl*; Washington Bureau set design for TV Tokyo; and the *Natty G* pilot for National Geographic. In addition to working for all national networks, her work includes production design for PBS American Experience *Dolley Madison*, art direction for *Alexander Hamilton*, and set and props design for Discovery Channel's *Jamestown: Against All Odds*.

Sierra Young (Fight and Intimacy Director; she/her) is a multi-hyphenate artist in the DC/Baltimore area. She is an active member of the Society of American Fight Directors, Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. Recent DC choreography credits include *Bars and Measures*, *The Till Trilogy*, *Marys Seacole*, and *Birds of*

CREATIVE TEAM *cont'd*

North America at Mosaic Theater Company; *Shout Sister Shout!* at Ford's Theatre; *King Lear* and *Red Velvet* at Shakespeare Theatre Company; *Playboy of the Western World* for Solas Nua; *The Cake* and *World Builders* for Prologue Theatre; and *Ain't No Mo'* at Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company. Recent regional choreography credits include *Ain't No Mo'* at Baltimore Center Stage; *Fences* for National Players; and *The Joy That Carries You* and *A.D. 16* at Olney Theatre Center. Upcoming projects include *one in two* at Mosaic and *Spring Awakening* at Monumental Theatre Company. sierrayoung.org.

Claire Fogle (Stage Manager; she/her) is thrilled to be returning to Mosaic Theater Company, where she previously worked on *Marys Seacole*, *The Till Trilogy*, and *Bars and Measures*. Claire was born and raised a military brat, and has enjoyed traveling and working all over the globe, including credits as a stage and events manager in LA, Orlando, Chicago, and the Berkshires. Previous credits in the DC area include the 2022 Voices of Now Festival and Devex World at Arena Stage, *Celtic Crossings* with the Washington Revels, *Flight* at Studio Theatre, the 2022 DC Dance Festival with Dance Place, and *Cinderella* and *Shhhakespeare Revue* at Syntetic Theater. Claire holds a BFA in Stage Management from the University of Central Florida.

Special Thanks

Patch Canada, Rick Cowan, Jeremy Hunter, Jonathan Landay, Evren Odcikin, and Onur Ozlu. Atlas Performing Arts Center production team, Baltimore Center Stage, Imagination Stage, Round House Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, and Signature Theatre.

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Assistant Sound
Designer & Sound
Engineer
Ian Vespermann

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Nitsan Scharf

Lead Electrician
Cassandra Saulski

Electricians
Sam Biuk
Zavar Blackledge
Asia Christian

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MOSAIC LEADERSHIP



Artistic Director **Reginald L. Douglas** is dedicated to creating new work and supporting new voices. He has directed at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center, TheaterWorks Hartford, Contemporary American Theater Festival, Everyman Theatre, Weston Theater Company, La Jolla Playhouse, Audible, Bard at the Gate, Profile Theatre, Playwrights Realm, The Kennedy Center, Pittsburgh CLO, Arizona Theatre Company, Barrington Stage, Cape Cod Theatre Project, Negro Ensemble Company, TheatreSquared, Playwrights' Center, McCarter Theatre Center, Florida Rep, The Lark, New York Theatre Workshop, City Theatre (where he served as Artistic Producer), Studio Theatre (where he served as Associate Artistic Director), and many other national companies. Reginald has developed and directed work by nationally-recognized writers including Dominique Morisseau, Suzan-Lori Parks, Cori Thomas, Angelica Chéri, Lynn Nottage, Nikkole Salter, Dael Orlandersmith, Kemp Powers, Jen Silverman, Ngozi Anyanwu, R. Eric Thomas, Brian Quijada, Matt Schatz, Amy Evans, Zakiyyah Alexander, Imani Uzuri, Dave Harris, Francisca Da Silveira, Khalil Kain, Chisa Hutchinson, Tarrance Chisholm, Josh Wilder, Larry Powell, Kareem Fahmy, Harrison David Rivers, Idris Goodwin, and Donja R. Love. A member of the Board of Directors of Theatre Washington and of the National New Play Network, Reginald received the National Theatre Conference's Emerging Professional Award in 2020.



Managing Director **Serge Seiden** helped found Mosaic Theater Company in 2015 and has held leadership positions with the Company since then. From 1990 to 2015, Serge held many positions at Studio Theatre, including Stage Manager, Literary Manager, and Producing Director. Seiden was a key player in Studio's 1996 and 2004 expansions—developments crucial to the reemergence of 14th Street NW as a DC cultural hub. He is also an acting teacher and director. For Mosaic, he most recently directed *Birds of North America*. Other Mosaic credits include *Eureka Day*, *Ulysses on Bottles*, and *Hooded, or Being Black for Dummies*, which received the Charles MacArthur Award for Outstanding Original New Play. In 2013, Serge received the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding Director/Resident Musical for *Jacques Brel is Alive and Well and Living in Paris...* at MetroStage. His production of *Bad Jews* at Studio Theatre was nominated for four 2015 Helen Hayes Awards, including Outstanding Director. Serge also directed Studio's acclaimed *The Apple Family Cycle*. More directing credits include Everett Quinton's *A Tale of Two Cities* at Syntetic Theater, *Freud's Last Session* at Theater J, and Clifford Odets' *Awake and Sing!* at Olney Theatre Center. Serge has been a member of the faculty at Studio Acting Conservatory for 25 years.

MEET MOSAIC

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PRIDE PLAY

JUN 1-25

one in two

by Donja R. Love
directed by Raymond O. Caldwell

A theatrical experiment that is equal parts harrowing, hilarious, and hopeful. Inspired by the playwright's own HIV diagnosis, *one in two* is "extraordinary" and "defiantly life-embracing" (*New York Times*, Critic's Pick).

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Justin Weaks



Ryan Jamaal Swain of
FX's *Pose*



Michael Kevin Darnall

one in two is generously underwritten by
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