

IAMA THEATRE COMPANY
PRESENTS THE WORKSHOP PRESENTATION OF

ROTANA- ALIEN OF EXTRAORDINARY ABILITY

Starring Rotana Tarabzouni

Book by Rotana Tarabzouni, Banna Desta, and Hayley Gene Penner

Music by Rotana Tarabzouni and Hayley Gene Penner

Directed by Zhailon Levingston

Music Director: Ames Bessada

Stage Manager: Kimberly Sanchez Garrido



ROTANA TARABZOUNI

Performer / Book / Music

Rotana Tarabzouni is a Saudi singer, actor, writer, and activist. She is also an erotic aliveness educator and sexological bodyworker in training. She is the writer and host of F*D & Blessed, an educational comedy series on sexuality and body liberation. Named one of BBC's 100 most powerful women, Rotana describes herself as an initiator, an erotic being, and a liberator. Born and raised in Saudi Arabia, Rotana's work explores the uses of erotic energy in the liberation of SWANA women and queer identifying beings, as well the themes of truth, home and belonging. Rotana's one woman show and musical album, Alien of Extraordinary Ability (AOEA) first showcased at FORM festival in Arcosanti. "Rotana delivered one of the most spine-fingling performances of the entire FORM festival." -GQ Magazine



ZHAILON LEVINGSTON

Director

Zhailon Levingston is a Louisiana-raised storyteller, director, and activist. He is a Board Member for the Broadway Advocacy Coalition, where he co-created, and taught the Theatre of Change course at Columbia University, which is going into its third year. He is a Music Mentor Fellow and has done work with Idina Menzel's A Broader Way Foundation. His directing credits include: "Neptune" (Dixon Place, Brooklyn Museum), "The Years That Went Wrong" (Lark, MCC), "The Exonerated" (Columbia Law School), "Chariot Part 2" (Soho Rep., for The Movement Theatre Company), "Mother of Pearl" (LaGuardia Performing Arts Center). He is the associate director of "Primer for a Failed Superpower" with Tony Award-winner Rachel Chavkin, and "Runaways" at The Public Theater with Sam Pinkleton. Most recently, he directed "Chicken and Biscuits" which premiered on Broadway last fall. Zhailon is also the original resident director at "Tina: The Tina Turner Musical" on Broadway and the associate director of "Hadestown" in South Korea. He will be directing the world premier of the play PATIENCE by Johnny G Llyod for Second Stage Uptown.



BANNA DESTA

Book

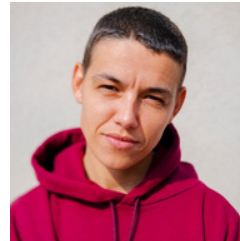
Banna Desta is an Eritrean and Ethiopian-American playwright and screenwriter who crafts stories about and for the African diaspora. Her work for the stage has been supported and developed by SPACE on Ryder Farm, Audible Theater, Rattlestick Theater, Atlantic Theater Company, National Black Theater, Samuel French and the Dramatists Guild Foundation. She is based in New York City.



HAYLEY GENE PENNER

Book / Music

Hayley Gene Penner is a Canadian singer, songwriter and author based in LA. She has written for artists including The Chicks, Sabrina Claudio, Lennon Stella, Charlotte Lawrence, The Chainsmokers and Alina Baraz. Her debut album, and her memoir's namesake, People You Follow, were released in September 2020 in concert with the book. She has been working with Rotana on AOEA since its conception in 2018. Penner is in the process of completing two upcoming books and her next full length album.



AMES BESSADA

Music Director

Ames Bessada is a multi-instrumentalist and songwriter whose debut album was produced with Linda Perry. After completing the Slight Music Residency at the Canadian Film Centre, they worked alongside composer Lesley Barber on the series Four Weddings and a Funeral, and feature films including Late Night, Nappily Ever After and American Woman. They also joined Rob Simonsen and his team on Ghostbusters: Afterlife. Ames' TV credits include five seasons of Holly Hobbie and the first season of Syfy's one-hour high school monster series, Astrid & Lilly Save The World. Most recently they have finished their first feature I Used To Be Funny as well as an upcoming Netflix project also directed by Alyssa Pankiw.



KIMBERLY SANCHEZ GARRIDO

Stage Manager

Kimberly Sanchez Garrido is the Stage Manager of Rotana - An Alien of Extraordinary Ability, previous shows she has worked with IAMA on are Smile, Cult of Love, Mama Metal, and IAMA's New Works Festival 2022. She is really grateful to be able to work with such amazing people in this show and process.