

INSIDE OUT

A STUDY GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS



**HOTTER
THAN EGYPT**

INSIDE OUT

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Leean Kim TorskeContributing Write

David Saphier Education Contributor

DENVERCENTER.ORG

Administration 303.893.4000

Box Office 303.893.4100

Hotter Than Egypt

By **Yussef El Guindi**

Directed by **Chris Coleman**

FEB 10 – MAR 12

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PLAY SYNOPSIS

No matter where you live, the ups and downs of married life are universal. A middle-aged American couple, Paul and Jean, travel to Egypt on a business trip-slash-vacation and strive to connect both with each other and Egyptian culture in an authentic way. As long-dormant troubles within the marriage start to percolate, their two Egyptian tour guides, newly engaged Maha and Seif, become drawn into the crisis. Drawing from the political, cultural, and religious realities of living in the region, and exploring the uneven power dynamics between these Western tourists and the locals, this quick-witted dramedy set in the heat of Cairo pits loyalty against attraction as its characters grapple with the ever-changing struggle of staying committed to their partners.

CHARACTERS

PAUL.....American from the U.S., age range: mid 50s to early 60s, business man
SEIF.....Egyptian, late 20s to mid 30s, tour guide
MAHA.....Egyptian, late 20s to mid 30s, former tour guide, aspiring fashion designer
JEAN.....American from the U.S., late 40s to early 60s, formerly a stay-at-home mother
BOATMAN/MUSEUM GUARD/DOORMAN..... Egyptians, any ages between 30s and 60s

PLAYWRIGHT YUSSEF EL GUINDI



Born in Egypt, raised in London and now based in Seattle, Yussef El Guindi's work frequently examines the collision of ethnicities, cultures and politics that face immigrants, Arab-Americans and Muslim Americans in particular. El Guindi holds an MFA in playwriting from Carnegie-Mellon University. He is the recipient of many honors, including the Steinberg/ATCA New Play Award, Stranger's Genius Award, and the 2010 Middle East America Distinguished Playwright Award.

El Guindi's past productions include *Hotter Than Egypt* (Marin Theatre Company/ACT/developed at the DCPA); *People of the Book* (ACT); *Language Rooms* (Pony World Theatre/Broken Nose Theatre); *Hostage* (Radial Theater Project); *The Talented Ones* (UCSB's LAUNCH PAD/Artists Repertory Theatre/Santa Barbara Independent Indy Awards); *Threesome* (Portland Center Stage/ACT/59E59/winner of a Portland Drammy for Best Original

Script); *Pilgrims Musa and Sheri in the New World* (ACT/Center Repertory Company/Mosaic Theater Company/2011 Gregory Award).

Our Enemies: Lively Scenes of Love and Combat was produced by Silk Road Rising and won the M. Elizabeth Osborn award. His plays *Back of the Throat* (winner of L.A. Weekly's Excellence in Playwriting Award), *Pilgrims Musa and Sheri in the New World*, *Jihad Jones and the Kalashnikov Babes*, *Such a Beautiful Voice is Sayeda and Karima's City* have been published by Dramatists Play Service.

Ten Acrobats in an Amazing Leap of Faith, *Collaborator*, *Threesome*, *The Talented Ones*, *Hostages* and *In a Clear Concise Arabic Tongue* have been published by Broadway Play Publishing Inc. Bloomsbury/ Methuen Drama published "Selected Works of Yussef El Guindi."

Currently a Core Company member at ACT in Seattle, a Resident Artist at Golden Thread Productions, and a member of the Lit Council Cohort.

TOURISM IN EGYPT

The tourism industry in Egypt is one of the most important sources of its national income, providing revenue, employment for a wide segment of the workforce, and incoming foreign currency. Egypt has developed a strong infrastructure based on serving the tourism sector, including various forms of transportation, hotels and resorts, and tourism companies.

In recent years, Egypt's tourism industry has faced a variety of challenges. Political unrest during the 2011 Egyptian revolution, the coronavirus pandemic, and occasional terrorist actions (including a bombing that damaged museums and attacks on tourists) have negatively impacted tourism. Many people still travel to Egypt without any issues, but it's always best to do research prior to traveling anywhere internationally and to be respectful of local customs and laws. Both U.S. and Foreign Embassies post public safety conditions and travel advisories for all countries so that tourists are informed when and where travel is unsafe, and it's advised that tourists check these sites prior booking trips.

Aside from these recent factors, Egypt has historically been considered a safe place to travel for tourists because of its relatively low crime rate. Visitors will notice that Egypt has a very visible police presence throughout the country, which is not a reflection of recent events but a normal part of their society. In addition, there are special Tourism Police patrolling tourist sites to ensure visitor safety. As a convenience to foreign tourists, they are more likely to speak English and can easily be identified by a badge on their shoulder.

Work is being done in many areas to rebuild Egypt's robust tourism industry. The Egyptian government has created new measures to aid tourist-dependent businesses struggling because of pandemic era hardships. The Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities has upgraded websites showcasing Egypt's rich and unique cultural offerings and newly opened and renovated museums. The recent discovery of a buried Pharaonic city near Luxor and a new Netflix documentary about the findings, *Secrets of the Saqqara Tomb*, could potentially renew the public's interest in the field of Egyptology. Egypt hopes to remain one of the most prominent tourist countries in the world, attracting people from across the globe with its abundance and variety of attractions.

Cultural Tourism is one of the most important sectors of Egypt's tourist industry. Egypt's rich ancient cultural heritage, archeology, history, and art, along with Greek and Roman antiquities in Egypt, have drawn tourists from around the world for centuries. Museums, libraries, palaces, temples and cultural landmarks such as the Sphinx, Pyramids at Giza, Valley of the Kings, and many more attractions provide fascinating glimpses into Egypt's past and present.

Conference Tourism has developed as a result of Egypt's geographical location and availability of convention centers equipped with modern technology. Technical capabilities (such as audio devices providing translation in several languages simultaneously) make Egypt an ideal location for many international and continental conferences and exhibitions in culture, economics, politics, medicine, and more.

Festival Tourism encourages the celebration and appreciation of a variety of interests, while creating opportunities for sponsorships and supporting various areas of the tourism sector such as transportation, hotels, and retail. Participants and audiences come to Egypt to partake in international film festivals, experimental theatre festivals, celebrations of folk music and art, equestrian and fishing events, and more.

Medical Tourism brings people seeking Egypt's dry climate, thought to be an ideal environment for people with specific conditions, while hot springs and other natural water sources have mineral content and salinity levels are believed to have healing properties.

Recreational Tourism includes its mountains, beaches, and clear coastal waters providing colorful aquatic life and coral reefs to explore.

Religious Tourism has long attracted a diverse array of visitors to Egypt since it's the site of so many places considered sacred to Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and ancient faiths. These historic places of importance along with modern religious sanctuaries have made Egypt a destination for people of a variety of religions.

Sports Tourism provides travelers with opportunities as both participants and spectators. Tourists looking for fun activities can play sports such as golf, volleyball, squash, equestrian sports, marine sports, and more, while Egypt's many international and continental sports championships and events bring spectators to the country.

USEFUL TRAVEL WORDS & PHRASES

In *Hotter Than Egypt*, we hear a few Egyptian Arabic phrases that people often use such as **Alhamdulillah**, meaning *praise be God* or *thank God*. We also hear one of the most common Egyptian Arabic expressions, **inshallah** (literally *if God wills it* or *God willing*), which is used to express hope, blessings, and good will in general.

If you don't speak the language of a country that you're visiting, it's always good to learn a few common words and phrases that are helpful when navigating casual situations and conversations. The following are a few that might come in handy on your next trip to Egypt.

The most popular greeting is **is'sallam aleykum** (*peace be upon you*).

The normal response is **we aleykum es'sallam** (*and upon you, peace*).

You might also hear **ahlan we sahlan** (*hello and welcome*), to which males reply **ahlan beek** (*hello to you*) and females, **ahlan beeki**.

A normal phrase heard before noon is **sabah el kheir** (*good morning*), and later in the day, **miss a el kheir** (*good afternoon/evening*).

You might ask **izzayack?** (*how are you?*) to a male, or **izzayick?** to a female. You'll likely hear **ana qwayees** (*I am well*) from a male or **ana qwayeesa** from a female.

If meeting a new friend, you might ask **ismack eh?** (*what is your name?*) to a male or to a female, **ismick eh?** When your new friend asks your name, you would reply **ismi...** (*my name is...*)

You might understand enough of Egyptian Arabic to respond to simple questions with **aywa** - yes or **la** - no. However, unless you're fluent, when someone tries to have a more complex conversation, you'll likely need to say **ana mish fahim arabee** (*I don't understand Arabic*) if you're male, or **ana mish fahma arabee** if you're female.

It's important to use polite language when you're a guest in another country, so you'll always want to end requests with **min fadlack** (*please*) if you are male, or **min fadlick** if you are female; and remember to say **shukran** (*thank you*), or even **shukran jaziilan** (*thank you very much*). You just say hear **afwan** (*welcome*) in return. Just as useful is **la' shukran** (*no thank you*) said with a smile when you'd like to politely decline.

To get someone's attention, males can say **lough samaht** (*excuse me*), and, for females, **lough samahti**. To apologize, males say **asif** (*sorry*), and females use **asfa**.

When trying to find a certain item or location ask **ayna...** - *where is...* For example, **ayna al-Hammaam?** - *where is the restroom?* In a store or the marketplace you might ask **kam?** - *how much?*

It's important to stay hydrated in Egypt's desert climate, so you'll want to know the word **maya** - *water*.

When it's time to say farewell to your new friends, you'll say **ma'asallama** (*goodbye*).

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

2011 EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

- The 2011 Egyptian Revolution was part of the Arab Spring, a series of anti-government protests, uprisings, and rebellions spread through much of the Arab world. Beginning in Tunisia, protests against corruption and poor economic conditions spread through Libya, Yemen, Syria, Bahrain, and Egypt. In Egypt, protests began with groups of youth activists in Tahrir Square in Cairo but spread throughout the country and included millions of people from different socio-economic and religious backgrounds. What started as demonstrations in plazas, marches, and strikes, eventually escalated to hundreds of people being killed and thousands injured in violent clashes between security forces and protesters. The Egyptian protesters called for the end of Hosni Mubarak's presidency, which had lasted almost 30 years. Their grievances were focused on police brutality, corruption, a lack of political and personal freedoms and liberty, low-wages, and high rates of unemployment and inflation.

When Mubarak resigned on February 11, power was handed over to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces. The Egyptian military's control of the political landscape prevented any of the revolutionary change that the protestors had hoped for. Despite Mubarak stepping down, resentments have grown between Islamist and secularist protesters, as they blamed each other for the lack of change they were hoping to create and a new era of military rule. In 2014, Egypt elected Abdul Fattah al-Sisi as the new president, who is also considered another military strongman. Many critique the ongoing protests and violence since they have not resulted in any major changes to the government or improve the social and economic condition for Egyptian citizens.

ANKH

- The ankh is an ancient Egyptian symbol for life or immortality. It is also known as the key of life or key of the Nile. Its symbolism has come to have several different meanings, but in ancient Egyptian art and hieroglyphs it represented the word "life" or "living".



EGYPTIAN MUSEUM

- The Egyptian Museum in Cairo is centrally located near Tahrir Square. This museum contains the largest Pharaonic antiquities collection in the world and is the oldest archeological museum in the Middle East. Established in 1902, the museum was designed by the French architect Marcel Dourgnon and built by the Italian company owned by Giuseppe Garozzo and Francesco Zaffrani.

The museum was broken into during the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, resulting in two mummies being destroyed, several damaged artifacts, and many objects being lost or stolen. Since then, only about half the missing items have been recovered. In 2013, an exhibit opened called Damaged and Restored, displaying the artifacts that had been repaired.



Source: <https://www.egypttoday.com/Article/4/100589/Egyptian-Museum-in-Tahrir-is-able-to-thrive-as-new>

KHAN EL-KHALILI

Egypt's most famous marketplace, Khan El-Khalili is located in Cairo's historic center and dates back to the 14th century. Historically, the marketplace was a place of economic significance for trade but has become much more geared towards tourists. Artisans, traders, and merchants sell souvenirs, antiques, jewelry, colorful Egyptian lamps and rugs, perfumes, spices, incense, and traditional crafts. Coffeeshops, cafes, and street food vendors can be found throughout the market.



Source: <https://www.memphistours.com/Egypt/Egypt-Wikis/Cairo-Attractions/wiki/Khan-El-Khalili>

FELUCCA

- Egyptian open-deck sailboats designed for traveling shallow waters, traditionally made of wood with canvas sails and sunshades. They often have colorful blankets or cushions on bench seating or the deck for passenger comfort. Today tourists can choose from dozens of different felucca tours. Feluccas are as iconic to the Nile as gondolas are to canals in Venice.



Source: <https://www.journeytoegypt.com/en/blog/felucca>

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

GALLEBEYA

- traditional Egyptian ankle-length, loose-fitting garment worn by both men and women

LUXOR

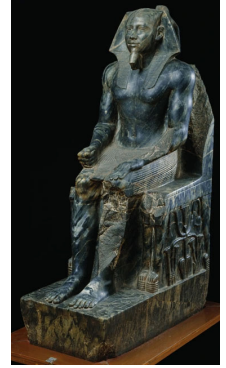
- The city of Luxor and its surrounding area is often referred to as an “open-air museum” because of the numerous historic and cultural sites such as the Valley of the Kings, Valley of the Queens, Luxor Temple, Colossi of Menmon, and more. Luxor was once called Thebes and was capital of the ancient Egyptian Empire. It was referred to as Waset in ancient texts, meaning “city of the sceptre”; Ta ipet, meaning “the shrine”; the “city of 100 gates” and many other names. The name Luxor comes from the Arabic word for “palaces”.



Source: en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jellabiya

PHARAOH KHAFRE STATUE

- Sometimes referred to as “Khafre Enthroned,” this funerary statue of the Pharaoh Khafre is part of the collection in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. Kahfre reigned during the Fourth Dynasty of ancient Egypt (c. 2570 BCE), and the statue signifies his importance and power through its imagery. Kahfre is depicted sitting on a lion-armed throne with the wings of the god Horus, depicted as a falcon wrapped in protection around his head. The plants that grow at the base of the throne represent the regions of Egypt he unified during his rule.



Source: <https://worldhistoryarchive.wordpress.com/2018/11/07/king-khafre-statue-2530-b-c-e/>

CORNICHE

- a winding road cut into the side of a steep hill or along the face of a coastal cliff.

SPHINX

- The exact origins and meaning of the Great Sphinx of Giza are still debated, but it's undoubtedly one of Egypt's most famous (and largest) statues. Carved from limestone, it's one of the most easily identifiable statues in the world with its distinct body of a lion and head of an Egyptian Pharaoh. “Sphinx” is a Greek word that has been given to this statue over time, but ancient Egyptians would have referred to it by a different name. The sphinx of ancient Greek mythology has the body of a lion, wings of a falcon, and head of a woman, so it's thought that either the figures depicted in this style of Egyptian statue were mistaken as Greek sphinxes, or that the nemes (the striped headcloth worn by Egyptian kings) resembled a Greek sphinx's long hair.



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Great_Sphinx_of_Giza

NILE RIVER

- The Nile River flows from south to north through eastern Africa, flowing more than 4,100 miles, making it one of the longest rivers in the world. It has two tributaries, the White Nile beginning in the rivers that flow into Lake Victoria flowing into Uganda, and the Blue Nile, beginning in Lake Tana in Ethiopia, eventually emptying into the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile River was critical to the development of ancient Egypt. The Nile was a vital resource in Egypt's ancient history, providing a water for drinking, bathing, and irrigation systems; fertile soil for agriculture; and a route for travel and trade; and it continues to do so. However, large dams build in modern times to generate hydroelectricity have disrupted the natural cycle of flooding that used to enrich and build its delta region where it empties into the Mediterranean Sea. The once fertile delta is now shrinking due to erosion. Additionally, the natural flooding cycle used to flush the river of human and agricultural waste, so the Nile's waters are now becoming polluted.



Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nile>

HOTTER THAN EGYPT QUESTIONS

PRE-PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

1. What is the difference between a tourist and a traveler? How do their original societal norms shift when visiting a new society? How do they stay true to their authentic self in a new place?
2. What is needed to sustain a positive relationship between two people over five years? Ten years? Twenty-five years?

POST-PERFORMANCE QUESTIONS

1. How do the technical aspects of scenic design, lighting design and costume design of the production enhance the story?
2. How does the composed music set the tone and illuminate a sense of place?
3. How do the views of Paul and Jean differ with their interpretations of the Egyptian culture and their interaction with the Egyptian people?
4. Explain the views of Paul and Seif on religion, history and politics.
5. How would you describe the relationship between Paul and Jean? What changes occur during the play?
6. Compare the similarities and differences of the relationships of Paul and Jean and Seif and Maha.
7. How do gender roles shift in the different cultures? How do the interactions between the two couples reinforce or detract from their cultural norms?
8. In the play, how are personal and societal revolution revealed?
9. How do Jean and Paul react to the revolutionary protests that surround them? How do the Egyptians react to what is happening around them?
10. Explain how Jean finds her voice and sense of identity in the play.
11. What do you think happens to the characters after the play concludes?

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