

**4615**  
THEATRE COMPANY

tickets at  
[www.4615theatre.com](http://www.4615theatre.com)

# EXIT → THE KING

*by Eugène Ionesco*

**PLEASE NOTE:  
THE KING WILL DIE  
AT THE END OF THE PLAY**

## CAST

**King Berenger I.....Ahmad Kamal**  
**Queen Marguerite.....Kate Owens**  
**Queen Marie.....Caroline McQuaig**  
**Juliette.....Morgan Sendek**  
**Doctor.....Nick Byron**  
**Guard.....Curt Gavin**

**The show runs approximately 100 minutes.**

**There will be no intermission.**

## **WELCOME TO 4615 THEATRE COMPANY**

Thank you for joining us for the first show of 4615's third season. Our company began in the summer of 2013, when a group of ambitious young actors and designers created a unique and inventive staging of John Webster's *The Duchess of Malfi*, set in multiple rooms and outdoor areas of a suburban home. The show was wildly successful, even earning a story in the Washington Post. After such a fulfilling experience, we decided to officially establish the group as a "nomadic" theater company, dedicated to producing site-specific shows. We've taken on the name 4615 Theatre Company, after the address of the house where it all began. 4615's mission is to reinvigorate classic pieces with innovative staging, showcase exciting new material, and give young artists a space to collaborate and push the boundaries of conventional theatre.

Since that first summer, our company has grown into an extensive network of young actors, directors and designers in the DC/MD/VA area. We have tackled a wide variety of projects, ranging from premiers of new works to 400 year-old tragedies. This year is shaping up to be our most exciting and challenging yet, and we can't wait to tell you what else we have in store.

Many thanks for your continued support, and we hope to see you again this summer!

-Jordan, Anne, Susannah, Clare and Alexander

## **4615 Theatre Company 2016 PRODUCTION TEAM**

**ARTISTIC DIRECTOR/FOUNDER: Jordan Friend**

**MANAGING DIRECTOR: Anne Donnelly**

**DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: Alexander Burnett**

**COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: Clare Lockhart**

**LITERARY DIRECTOR: Susannah Clark**

**RESIDENT DESIGNERS:**

**Paul Alan Hogan**

**Nathaniel Sharer**

**Erik Fredriksen**

**SPECIAL THANKS TO:**

**Gary Friend and Tara Sonenshine**

**Stacey Sulko**

**Louis Davis**

**Howard Shalwitz**

**Woolly Mammoth Theatre Co.**

**Laura Rosberg**

**Will Ley**

**4615 Theatre Company Presents**

# **EXIT THE KING**

By

**Eugène Ionesco**

Directed by

**Jordan Friend**

Scenic Design

**Aria Nawab**

**Anne Donnelly**

**Jordan Friend**

Costume/Makeup Design

**Paul Alan Hogan**

Dramaturg

**Susannah Clark**

Assistant Director

**Patrick Derrickson**

Stage Manager

**Maya Barkey**

*Exit the King* is presented by special arrangement with  
Samuel French, Inc., New York.

## **Director's Notes**

This beast of a play seemed very straightforward to me before rehearsals started: funny farce in the first half, followed by a slow move towards a more serious and somber tone as the king inches closer to his death: typical dramatic progression, just add six actors, three weeks of rehearsals and some water, then stir gently and voilà.

I could not be happier to have been so wrong.

As we soon learned during rehearsal, this is both somber and completely wacky in equal measure throughout, with farcical chaos being the only constant. As Berenger marches towards death, time becomes anything but constant, seeming to turn both forward and backward at once. Even the king's physicality is inconsistent. Although on the surface he seems to slowly wither throughout the play, the exact rules of his dilapidation are quite inconsistent. At one moment he fails to even stand up, only to start frantically leaping across the stage a few moments later, then plummeting back to the ground right after that. Ionesco wrote *Exit the King* when he was quite ill and it serves as his self-created guide to dying. It is only fitting that the journey is filled with equal doses of uproarious laughter and crushing tragedy. We may think of death as a long march straight to the grave, but Ionesco puts the end of life at the center of a hedge maze.

At first, this little play's bottomless complexity had me terrified that we only had three weeks to put it up. How could we possibly find the center of the maze by opening? Fortunately, I came across an absurdly gifted team of explorers to navigate the hedges with me. To capture a kingdom that is both legendary and completely flimsy, we designed a set that feels like a pop-up book, with detailed stone patterns and portraits set against a completely two dimensional facade, tenuously held together by fabric. The actors had similarly contradictory work to do, and they brilliantly created characters that are both inherently farcical, stock types, as well as deeply heartfelt and three-dimensional. It takes a very brave team of actors, designers, and production staff to approach material this tempestuous, and I am incredibly proud and lucky to work with a company that managed to look death in the face and find all that is truly hysterical about it. -Jordan Friend

