

For Immediate Release



BBC Radio to broadcast AUB Professor Myers play

Beirut, Lebanon- 13/09/2013 -“Drone Pilots,” a radio play penned by AUB English and Creative Writing Professor Robert Myers, will be presented by the [BBC Radio 4 on Monday, September 16 at 4:15pm](#). The drama is produced by Judith Kampfner and will be available free online for one week after Monday’s broadcast.

“Drone Pilots” began as a staged play, called “Unmanned,” produced in the United States. It is about the horrors of what Myers calls, “contemporary antiseptic warfare at a distance.” The play is intended to make one think about the transitory nature of certain kinds of jobs, but more seriously about alienation and technology.

Its two principal characters, an aging war veteran and a young woman steeped in video games, find themselves involved with the remote warfare that is part of the current time.

This play is a recent work, one of over 15 plays Myers has written since he became interested in drama as a medium for research and teaching. Reading over a list of his plays and projects, it’s obvious that Myers is devoted to social justice. “I’m a product of American apartheid,” he said. “I grew up under Jim Crow (the racial segregation system of the U.S. that ended in 1965). It woke me up.”

Myers first play, “The Lynching of Leo Frank,” examines a real trial that took place in his native state of Georgia, where a jury had to choose between the evidence of an African American and a Jew.

Myers is passionate about the power of drama, “Unlike a film, you experience it in the flesh. It actually takes place.” Each time is a unique experience shared between performers and audience. Myers does not tire of guiding students and colleagues to discover the opportunities and range of communication drama offers.

Myers does not limit his work to English. Although his PhD is in Spanish and Portuguese languages and literatures from Yale, he reads Arabic as well. Later this fall, the well-known play, *Tuqus al-Isharat wa-l-Tahawulat* (Rituals of Signs and Transformations), by Sa’dallah Wannous, will be presented here in Beirut at the Babel Theatre. [Already known in French, this event will be the world premier of an English translation of the play, which was done by Nada Saab, of Lebanese American University, and Myers, the recipients of a \\$50,000 grant from the MacArthur Foundation.](#) Working together, each with the specialized skill of native speakers, they have made this tale of 19th century Damascus ready for an English speaking audience. The production will be directed by the renowned Lebanese theatre artist and Fine Arts and Art History instructor Sahar Assaf and produced by Myers, who is especially keen about this play

as it will give fresh opportunities for scholars and artists to learn from each other. The production will combine the talent of AUB students and Lebanese professionals.

When asked why a theater artist and scholar of Spanish and Portuguese lives in Lebanon he smiles wryly. Some of his closest friends from childhood were Lebanese, he explains. There's also the fact that his wife, whom me met in graduate school and who teaches Spanish and Portuguese at NYU in New York, where he often works as a playwright, is of Lebanese descent.

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Note to Editors

About AUB

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has more than 700 full-time faculty members and a student body of about 8,000 students. AUB currently offers more than 100 programs leading to the bachelor's, master's, MD, and PhD degrees. It provides medical education and training to students from throughout the region at its Medical Center that includes a full service 420-bed hospital.

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