

PRESS RELEASE For immediate release - 29 October 2023

أنا معاك / I'm Here With You: a new four episode theatrical drama podcast launching 1 November



Listen to the trailer now on [Youtube](#), [Soundcloud](#) or [Spotify](#)

أنا معاك / I'm Here With You is a four-episode theatrical podcast series launching on 1 November exploring the stories of four different characters as they call a mental health helpline looking for support. Produced in Arabic and English translation, each episode acts as a momentary portal into the inner world of a person in crisis seeking support from a stranger. All episodes in the series, in both Arabic and English, will be released together on 1 November and will be available on Spotify and other podcast platforms.

The show explores the personal stories and struggles of four people reaching out to others in moments of crisis. The characters call a mental health helpline and reveal the reasons that may lead to their collapse, opening up to strangers in moments of vulnerability. In doing so, they seek to bridge the societal, class and generational divides that have often cemented their sense of alienation. The series is a fictional drama rooted in real-life experiences, exploring common emotions that are often difficult to express due to fears and anxieties about societal, family, and interpersonal norms and pressures.



Above: Angham Mardi (left), writer and co-producer, and Lauren Pepperell, translator and co-producer

The podcast series is written by Angham Mardi, playwright, poet and writer based in Egypt. Angham co-founded el-Qaadah Theatre Collective and has written for *Splash and Ripple's* experimental podcast series *Play Inside*. The script was translated into English by Lauren Pepperell, translator and podcast producer from the UK. Lauren hosted ten *Stories in Translation* episodes for The Green Room Alexandria podcast, and founded Arabic language arts collective Komet Kashakeel. *انا معاك / I'm Here With You* has been produced as part of the New Conversations, UK-Egypt, creative partnerships programme, funded by caravan at Farnham Maltings and Orient Productions, with support from the British Council Egypt, Arts Council England, and the Fonds de Soutien aux Arts Arabes (FSAA).

Starring UK-based actors:

Lisa Maeda as Layla

Waleed Hammad as Joe

Sara El Sheekh as Sara

Tahir Shah as Noah

Sound Engineer, Sound Design and Music: Mahmoud El Saghir, Egypt.

Sound Engineer: Mo at AB Studio London, UK.

Intro/outro VO: Mahasen Sobhi, Egypt.

Marketing: Susannah O'Sullivan, UK.

Podcast Artwork: Mohaned Khater, Egypt

Angham Mardi, writer and co-producer of أنا معاك / *I'm Here With You*, Egypt, said “For me, this project represents a point of contact between me and everyone who listens; a way to make my message clear, or at least my point of view, that we all should carefully look inside ourselves. All of us carry part of the truth, and part of the mirage, and it’s up to us to distinguish between them.”

Lauren Pepperell, translator and co-producer of أنا معاك / *I'm Here With You*, UK, said “We wanted to create an original piece of audio theatre that was sonically immersive and raised difficult issues around mental health. We wanted to speak about everyday issues that are complicated and conflicting, strange and familiar, and create characters that you empathise with and recognise their faults: real characters struggling in everyday situations for different reasons. It’s an experimental project and I’m really happy with how it came together, big thanks to all the team for their contribution and support!”

Eslam Mohamed Mikhemar, Theatre Actor & Director, el-Qaadah Theatre Collective, Egypt, “Although I have a lot of experience working in theatre and short films, this was my first time voice acting and directing voice recordings. It was a great experience in every way, I learned a lot, and it’s left me feeling confident I could produce more podcasts in the future.”

Listen to أنا معاك / *I'm Here With You*:

[Spotify](#) and other podcast platforms

[Youtube](#)

[Soundcloud](#)

More information:

<https://kometkashakeel.com>

Press contact

Marketing and Communications: Susannah O'Sullivan - +44 (0)7852 153 707

komet.kashakeel@gmail.com

In collaboration with:

[Greenroom Podcast](#)

[Alleyway Radical Theatre](#)

[el-Qaadah Theatre Collective](#)

