

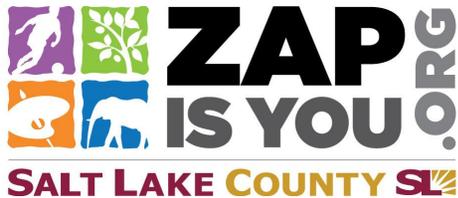
Prayer for the French Republic

by Joshua Harmon

Directed by Karen Azenberg

October 25 - November 9, 2024

SPOTLIGHT STUDY GUIDE
For Teachers and Students



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PRAYER *for the*
FRENCH
REPUBLIC



SETTING: Both 2016-2017 & 1944-1946, Paris.

SYNOPSIS: Set in 2016, against the terrorist attacks at Charlie Hebdo and the Bataclan—and the growing threat of political extremism in France, a curious American student, Molly, seeks to connect with her French family, the Benhamous. When her cousin Daniel becomes the victim of an anti-Semitic attack, the family decides to move to Israel. This earns the dismay of Marcelle Benhamou's anti-Zionist brother, Patrick, as Marine Le Pen's rise in mainstream French politics continues. The play's second story explores how Marcelle and Patrick's great-grandparents suffered loss during the Holocaust in the 1940s.

CHARACTERS

(2016–2017)

MARCELLE SALOMON BENHAMOU – 50's

CHARLES BENHAMOU – 50's, Marcelle's husband

ELODIE BENHAMOU – 28, their daughter

DANIEL BENHAMOU – 26, their son

PATRICK SALOMON – 50's, Marcelle's brother

MOLLY – 20, a distant American cousin

PIERRE SALOMON – 80's, Marcelle and Patrick's father

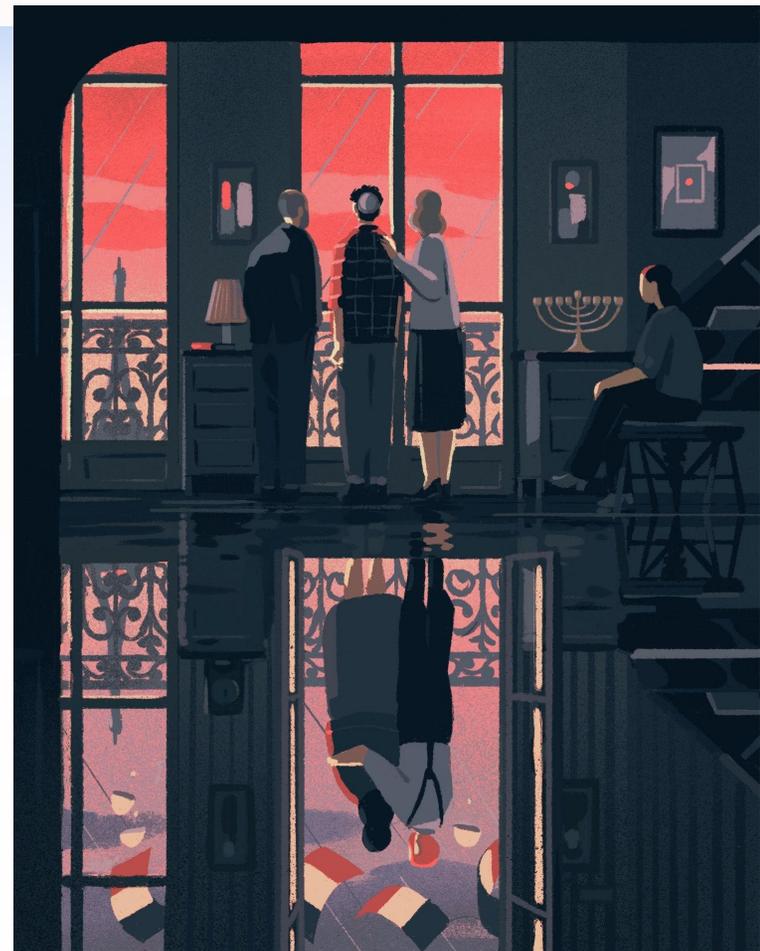
(1944–1946)

IRMA SALOMON – 70's, Pierre's grandmother

ADOLPHE SALOMON – 70's, Pierre's grandfather

LUCIEN SALOMON – 40's, Pierre's father

YOUNG PIERRE SALOMON – at age 15



*In 2016 Paris, a French Jewish family considers moving to Israel;
in 1946 Paris, their ancestors contemplate what they've lost by staying.
Illustration by Tom Haugomat, The New Yorker*

The Play and Its Beginning

“In 2015, I went to London for a production of my play BAD JEWS. It had first been produced in New York in 2012. I’d seen it so many times. I knew how audiences responded to each moment. So I was caught off guard when their reaction to one line was different: toward the end of the play, the character of Daphna Feygenbaum delivers a monologue in which she asks, “so now, when it’s easier to be Jewish than it has ever been in the history of the world, now when it’s safest, now we should all stop?” In 2012, audiences contemplated that question in silence. In 2015, they laughed.

How could they not? Previews in London began days after a gunman murdered four Jews in a kosher supermarket in Paris. It was only the latest in a series of increasingly violent attacks: the 2006 kidnapping and murder of Ilan Halimi; the 2012 shooting at a Jewish day school in Toulouse where four Jews were killed- three of whom were under the age of 8. Journalists everywhere began writing about the dangers facing French Jews. I read their articles with interest. But I also knew, just from having observed this one small changed response to my own play, something significant was unfolding.

In the months that followed, I began work on what you are now here to see. Much like Molly in the play, I descend from French Jews, minored in French and study abroad there, too, and like so many before me, I fell in love with the country. Yet once I graduated, I had no reason to speak French. Setting out to write this play meant my teenage interest in the language would actually prove useful all these years later. I packed my bags and went on the first of two research trips to France in the fall of 2016.

I interviewed writers and rabbis, actors and shopkeepers, strangers and distant cousins. I met Holocaust survivors and Jewish immigrants from North Africa now living in France, and French Jews now living in Israel, and American Jews now living in France. What became immediately



Playwright, Joshua Harmon (Credit: Courtesy of MacDowell)

clear is that despite sharing an identity, there was no consensus among these individuals about the state of things. Some felt perfectly safe. Some said things were fine- so long as you didn’t appear Jewish in the streets. Some thought in the next fifty years, there would be no Jews left in France. One man laughed at my idea for this play period. He found the entire premise false. I listened, crestfallen. When he told his friend about my absurd idea, his friend responded that he just put his apartment up for sale.

I returned home confused, unsure of how to tell a story with so many widely divergent points of view. I considered abandoning the whole thing. Then, just two days after my return, Trump was elected president. You don’t need me to tell you what happened next – the cities names speak for themselves: Charlottesville, Monsey, Pittsburgh. We even got our own Kosher supermarket massacre in New Jersey. What started as a theoretical inquiry into French Jews suddenly became much more personal. My play about those people over there, became a play about me, right here.

I am grateful to those who trusted me with their stories. Shards of them appear here, along with research and some family history. Ultimately though, this is a work of fiction. I set out to write about one family grappling with their future in their country, but

The Play and Its Beginning (cont.)

soon found that if I hoped to portray them honestly, I also had to write about Algeria, and Cuba, and Poland, and Mexico, and Israel, and America. Perhaps that was inevitable. Living in the diaspora means every Jewish family's passport has been stamped by many countries. Learning to live with fear, of varying degrees, comes with the territory.

But now, more than ever, it seems more of us, maybe all of us, are grappling with how to live in an ever more dangerous, ominous, confounding world. So whatever your background, I hope this factionalized story resonates with some true aspect of your own experience even as I write this, COVID infections are once again spiking and prognosticators are debating when, if, and how things might all shut down, again. We are all making impossible decisions as we navigate these days. But I am imagining that you are here. Masked, but still here, reading this in your program ready for a play to begin. That is enough to give me hope.”

- JOSHUA HARMON

Playwright

From the world premiere of *Prayer for the French Republic*, December, 2021

Antisemitism?

Antisemitism means prejudice against or hatred of Jews. Hatred of Jews can take many forms, including violent attacks. It also appears in daily life. Do you know how to recognize it online, in social media, or in conversation?

The Holocaust, during which Nazis and their collaborators murdered 6 million Jews, is the worst example of antisemitism in history. But it also exists in daily life:

- A popular meme depicts a man, meant to be Jewish, with exaggerated, grotesque features.
- A social media influencer makes a joke about the Holocaust, or does a Nazi salute in a video shared with millions of followers.
- Hateful hashtags trend on Instagram.
- School buildings are defaced with swastikas.
- Someone argues that Israel doesn't have the right to exist.

These are all expressions of antisemitism that can become dangerous if left unchallenged.

Sometimes, antisemitism doesn't sound like hatred — it might even sound complimentary. For example, believing that all Jews are good with money can open the door to more overtly antisemitic beliefs such as all Jews are greedy. When repeated over and over, and not questioned, stereotypes can be accepted as truth. And that can eventually lead to biases and hatred of an entire group.

The Holocaust began with words, not killing. And while there's no direct connection between sharing a meme and violent attacks, when left unchecked, antisemitism creeps into all aspects of society and starts chipping away at democratic values.

The more you hear or see antisemitism in your social media feed or in casual conversations, the more accustomed—or numb—you become to hateful and dangerous beliefs and behavior. Which is why it's important to never ignore it, overlook it, or accept it.

DISCUSSION: What recent antisemitic incidents are you aware of in America? How might these incidents impact the Jewish community here?

What action(s) could you take to contribute to making your community safer for people with a different identity?

Fascinating French Facts

Official Name: French Republic

Form of government: Republic

Capital: Paris

Population: 67, 092, 056

Official languages: French

Currency: Euro

Area: 543,965 square kilometres

Major mountain ranges: Alps, Pyrenees, Massif Central

Major rivers: Seine, Rhine and Rhône

Geography

The largest country in Western Europe, France has long been a gateway between the continent's northern and southern regions. France shares land borders with eight countries. The bordering countries of France are Belgium, Germany, Luxembourg, Switzerland, Italy, Monaco, Andorra and Spain. The longest border is shared with Spain and the shortest with Monaco. Continental France is slightly smaller than the state of Texas in the USA.

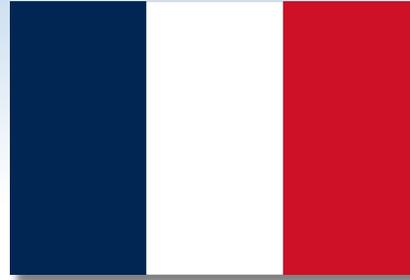
France has a very diverse landscape. There are beautiful beaches on the southeast coast, home to the French Riviera, and towering mountains in the south and east, where the snow-capped French Alps rise to the sky. Europe's tallest peak, Monte Blanc, is found in the French Alps, standing at a massive 4,810m tall!

People and Culture

France is one of the oldest nations on Earth and the most ethnically diverse country in Europe. These deep and broad influences have made France a world leader throughout history in different aspects of culture, including cuisine, philosophy, music, art, film, fashion, literature and sport.

Government and Economy

Over the years, France has been through many political crises. Its current government is a combination of presidential and parliamentary systems. The president is elected by the people and is head of state. A prime minister, chosen by the president, works with the elected parliament to pass laws.



France is among the world's largest economies. The country produces many items that other countries buy, including its most famous products – wine and cheese. Other exports include automobiles, electronics and clothing. Tourism is also a huge industry in France. More than 80 million people visit the country every year, more than any other country on Earth!

Fascinating French Facts - Paris, the Capital

Also known as the City of Light, Paris is one of the most fascinating European capitals, not just because of its art, culture, architecture, or history. Paris has many quirky secrets that only add to its appeal. Here are some interesting facts about Paris that you (probably) didn't know.

The Louvre is big...very big.

With over nine million visitors annually, the Louvre Museum is the most famous museum on the planet. It's famously home to the Mona Lisa, but over 35,000 art pieces are on display. But in the museum's entire collection, there are over 460,000. Reserve just 30 seconds of viewing time to each, and you'd still need 35 days to see them all.



The Eiffel Tower shouldn't be there.

Believe it or not, Paris's most iconic building was only meant to be a temporary monument. It was France's way of demonstrating its superior technology and construction skills. When it was constructed for the 1889 World Fair, it was extremely unpopular. Residents and senior figures protested against it, and the media called it a 'useless monstrosity.'



There's is NO 'STOP' sign in the entire city.

Yes, you read this right. Despite being one of the most populous European capitals, Paris streets have no stop sign. The one and only stop used to be located at the end of a construction company's drive in the 16th arrondissement but was removed in 2016 (when our play occurs). Throughout the rest of the city—and we mean all of it—the right gets priority. Simple as that.

You can visit an old guillotine spot.

Before we get you overexcited, you won't find a guillotine in the streets of Paris. But at the corner of Roquette and La Croix-Faubin Street, you will find five concrete spots where a former guillotine was located. They're in front of what was once a prison. The old guillotine was concreted there in 1851 for public executions. Visit this unique spot to glimpse into Europe's relatively recent eerie past.

There's a huge sundial in the city.

The 23-metre-high Obelisk in the Place de la Concorde square is not just a visual marvel. It's a functioning sundial complete with Roman numerals on the surrounding pavements. Most Parisians ignore this gift from Egypt during the 19th century.

Pont Neuf is...the oldest bridge.

Pont Neuf (literally *New Bridge*) is now the oldest standing bridge in the French capital. However, at the time of its construction, it was one of the first stone bridges with pedestrian sidewalks, so it was named "Pont Neuf", *New Bridge*. All other bridges from its era are no longer standing.



There are beaches.

The beaches that line the banks of a small section of the River Seine prove that Paris is a city that really has it all. Head over for a spot of volleyball and sunbathing. There are swimming pools for those who'd rather not dive into the river.

Paris has its own Statue of Liberty.

You might already know that New York's Lady Liberty was a gift from the French. What you might not have known is that there's a miniature version in the middle of the Seine River facing her sister statue in New York, symbolising the friendship between France and the US. There are actually at least three replicas of the Statue of Liberty in Paris.



It's full of ghostly metro stations.

With around 400 stations, it's no surprise that Paris's metro network has a few secrets. One of those is that at least 14 of them are either 'never used', 'abandoned' or 'no longer in use'. The Porte des Lilas station is rented out as a film set by production companies.

The Jewish History in France

By 2015, thousands of Jews had departed for Israel in the wake of a 2012 attack at a Jewish day school and on the Jewish museum in Belgium in 2014.

The history of the Jewish community in France has, in some ways, been shaped by anti-Semitism—but it is also shaped by the type of support that formed around the Jewish community against the attacks. Prime Minister Manuel Valls declared that “France without Jews is not France” and an estimated 3.7 million people took to the streets in solidarity with the victims of the 2014 violence. The Jewish community in France “is not as isolated as we thought,” said French Chief Rabbi Haim Korsia after the march. “For months we have been asking where is France? Today we saw France, and the France we saw was a spitting image of biblical descriptions of Jerusalem, where brothers unite.”

Here’s a look at some of the key periods that have shaped the history of French Jews provided by Maud S. Mandel, Dean of the College at Brown University and author of *Muslims and Jews in France: History of a Conflict*:

1788-1799: The French Revolution

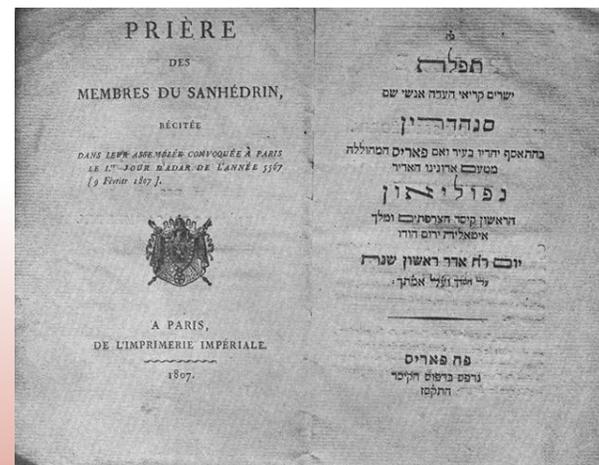
Within two years of the Revolution, France became the first country in modern Europe to grant Jews equal rights under the law, setting a precedent for France and a new standard for Europe as a whole. At the time, there were only about 40,000 Jews in France, living primarily in the country’s eastern Alsace-Lorraine region, but the process of Jewish emancipation that largely began with the Revolution would have a lasting impact.

1807: Napoleon and the Great Sanhedrin

Still, the question of if and how to integrate the Jewish community into French society—a problem known at the time as “the Jewish question”—persisted after the Revolution and the rise of Napoleon

Bonaparte, who was named French Emperor in 1804. “The hope by enlightenment *philosophes* and revolutionaries that supported Jewish emancipation was that that Jews would integrate into the state like everybody else and that their differences would diminish,” says Mandel. “Napoleon believed that such change wasn’t happening quickly enough, that Jews weren’t fully blending into the surrounding populations.”

Proposing to put the question to the Jewish people, in 1806 Napoleon convened an assembly of important leaders in the Jewish community to clarify their political and religious loyalties. A year later, religious leaders gathered for what was called the Great Sanhedrin, named after the Jewish high court in ancient Israel, to ratify the declarations of the assembly. Through this process, Napoleon effectively asked whether the allegiances of French Jews lay in the Jewish community or in the larger society, says Mandel. “That was a big moment, the Sanhedrin, because it was during this moment of political theater when Jews declared themselves first and foremost French citizens, and that’s where their primary political allegiances were,” she says. “And after that, over a period that took decades, successive generations of Jews integrated more fully because now they were citizens.”



Cover page to a siddur (Jewish prayer book) used at the Grand Sanhedrin of Napoleon, 1807
Credit: Jewish Theological Seminary

The Jewish History in France (cont.)

1894-1904: The Dreyfus Affair

The assumption that Jews had become an integral part of French society was rocked in the late 19th century. In 1894, Captain Alfred Dreyfus, who was Jewish, was convicted of spying for Germany, spawning a decade-long scandal. Dreyfus was eventually exonerated, but the period was marked by anti-Semitic riots and a vocal anti-Semitic press—as well as by equally vocal non-Jewish defenders of Dreyfus.

Jews in France interpreted the Dreyfus Affair in different ways, according to Mandel. For some, Dreyfus's exoneration represented the triumph of French republican values over discrimination and xenophobia. "For many French Jews it was actually a sign that eventually the state would in fact side with justice and inclusion," says Mandel. But for others, the scandal was proof that anti-Semitism was endemic to Europe. One of the people who felt that way was an Austro-Hungarian journalist reporting from Paris, Theodor Herzl—the man who would found the modern Zionist movement.

1939-1945: The Holocaust

The Second World War had a devastating impact on Jews in France, as it did on Jewish communities across Europe. Even before the war, the influx of Jewish refugees and immigrants from Germany and Eastern Europe had sparked an anti-Semitic backlash. (At the turn of the century, there were about 80,000 Jews in France; by 1939, there were about 300,000.) In the wake of the German invasion, the newly installed Vichy government willingly helped the Nazis round up Jews in France, particularly from recent immigrant communities. It was a stain on French history with tragic repercussions: by the end of the war, more than 70,000 Jews were deported from France, of whom only about 2,500 would survive.



Identification card of Ida Salomon stamped "Juive" (Jew) under Vichy Law, 1940.
Courtesy of Holocaust Museum of L.A. & Kim Chesbrough

On the other hand, the high number of Jews in France who *did* survive the war spoke to the public's reluctance to participate in the Nazi deportation. "Of the Jews who survived, many, many of them owed their lives to French citizens who hid them, to officials who dragged their feet, to the very fact that they were French and they had all kinds of connections in French society that allowed them to avoid the worst outcome," Mandel says. "That didn't mean they didn't lose property and suffer great losses and hardship over the period of World War II. I think that's where you see the tension in the French story."

1960s: Jewish Migration from North Africa

In the decades following the war, as France pulled out of Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco, large populations of Jews in those countries along with it. Many left for the newly established state of Israel, but others went to France. The migration north was most pronounced in Algeria, where the people already had French citizenship because of the special status of Algeria as a French colony; 90% of Jews in that country headed for France.

The Jewish History in France (cont.)

The influx from North Africa doubled the Jewish population in France and introduced new customs to the increasingly diverse Jewish community. The North African Jews were also more willing than their predecessors in France to engage in politics along ethnic lines, coming out in force, for example, in support of Israel during the 1967 Six-Day War.

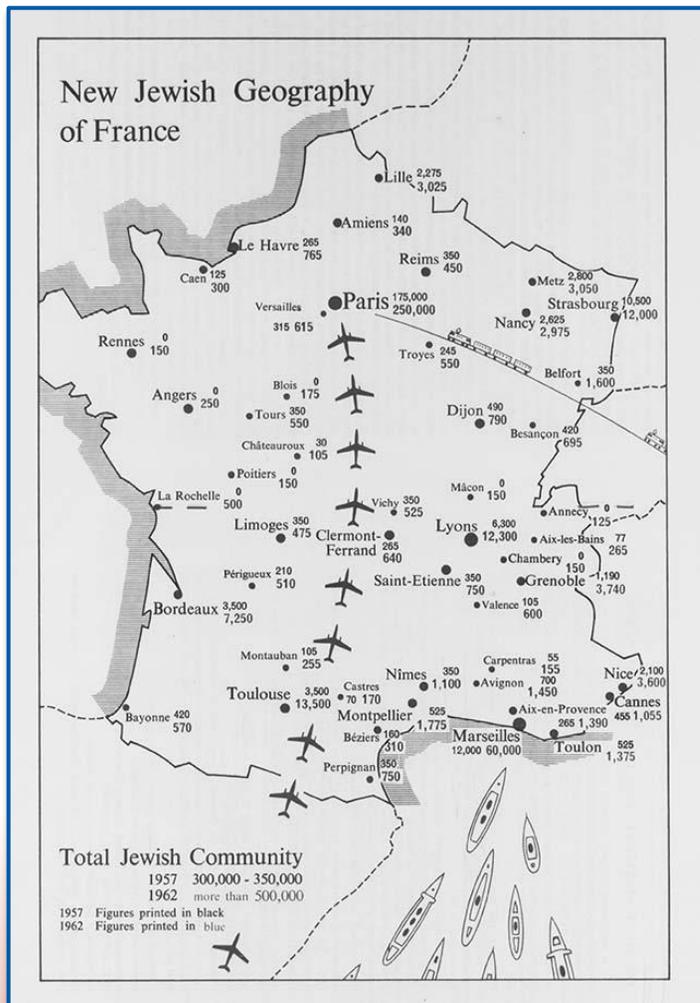
“Since that time, the Jewish community has been much more visible in support of Israel,” says Mandel. “It’s also been much more comfortable with expressing an ethnic politics within mainstream French political discourse.”

1980s-Today: Jewish-Muslim Tensions

The arrival of Jews from North Africa coincided with a massive influx of Muslim migrant laborers, also largely from North Africa. While there were occasional clashes between these two immigrant populations, Jewish and Muslim immigrants often lived side-by-side in the early years, says Mandel. Beginning in the 1980s, however, tensions began to emerge, especially as the state failed to fully integrate the Muslim community into French society. “The difference was visible, and it caused resentment and interfered with their ability to work together because the needs of the two communities were so different,” says Mandel. Those tensions were only heightened by the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Still, Mandel distinguishes between those lingering tensions and the high profile attacks against Jews that have fueled fears of escalating anti-Semitism since the 2000s. Those, says Mandel, are linked to global Islamic terrorism. “I want to be really clear, that phenomenon does not run through and through France’s very diverse and large Muslim population,” she says. “It is one fringe element.”

Meanwhile, French Jews—the third largest Jewish population in the world after America and Israel—are more integrated into French society than ever before, says Mandel. “The tragic irony is that at the very moment at which we’re talking about the greatest spike in anti-Semitism in Europe since World War II,” she says, “is also a moment where we can underscore the ways in which prior former forms of anti-Semitism have significantly diminished.”



Map showing change in French Jewish demography after Algerian conflict and other North African emigration, 1955-1964 (JDC Archives, Geneva Office Records)

The 2017 French Presidential Election



Emmanuel Macron and Marine Le Pen. Composite: Agency

Who are Macron and Le Pen and what did they want?

Emmanuel Macron of *En Marche!* (a political party established in 2016 by Macron that united both conservative and liberal believers) had never held elected office and said he wanted to break the “complacency” of French politics. He was an energetic optimist who claimed to be neither left nor right but “pragmatic and fair.” He campaigned as economically liberal and pro-business but a progressive on social issues.

Marine Le Pen of the *National Front* (a far-right or conservative party which has been accused of promoting antisemitism and hate speech) is the third daughter of the FN party founder, Jean-Marie Le Pen, who made the run-off in 2002. A lawyer who was in the middle of a fake jobs scandal, she both detoxified the party and distanced herself from it. Her “France-first” position included wanting to end immigration, slash crime, end Islamism, pull France out of Europe and save it from globalization.

The President of the French Republic is elected to a five-year term in a two-round election under Article 7 of the Constitution: if no candidate secures an absolute majority of votes in the first round, a second round is held two weeks later between the two candidates who received the most votes.

The Paris and other terror attacks in 2015 and 2016 weighed heavily on the election and helped Le Pen highlight her agenda on security, immigration, Islam, and national identity.

She said after the attack on and death of a police officer on the Champs Élysées in the days before the vote that the time had come for France to be “less naive” and called for all foreigners identified as Islamist radicals to be deported.

The Presidential election was held in France on April 23. The first round was held under a state of emergency that was declared following the November 2015 Paris attacks. As no candidate won a majority in the first round, a runoff, or a re-vote, was held between the top two candidates,

After the runoff vote, Emmanuel Macron won with a difference of more than 30% of the vote. Marine Le Pen immediately conceded defeat.

About Playwright Joshua Harmon

An interview with Huntington Artistic Director, Loretta Greco



Joshua Harmon (Credit: Courtesy of Boneau/Bryan-Brown)

Loretta Greco: You are one of the most passionate theater lovers I know. How did that come to be and why do you still have faith in the power of gathering in the dark to tell each other stories?

Joshua Harmon: Every week, it seems, someone writes another article about the dire state of American theatre, and I know the challenges are daunting. But I also feel certain that audiences will always crave the experience of a good play, now more than ever. After the pandemic, we all recognize that our ability to gather side by side and listen to a story is precious. As we spend more of our lives connected to devices and looking at screens, the theatre is nearly the last place where you have to put down your phone, a respite my brain is always grateful for. There is something primal about our need to see our greatest fears acted out onstage, a safe space to ask the impossible and unanswerable questions we are afraid to face in life, to see how things resolve, and to leave somehow changed from when we walked in.

LG: What scared you most in the writing of this play?

JH: A lot! There was a lot to get wrong, and I really wanted to get it right: the experience of French Jews returning home post-Holocaust; the

experience of North African Jews in France; the politics of France in that moment. But beyond that, it's the biggest play I've ever attempted, and I wanted it to make sure it didn't collapse under its own weight.

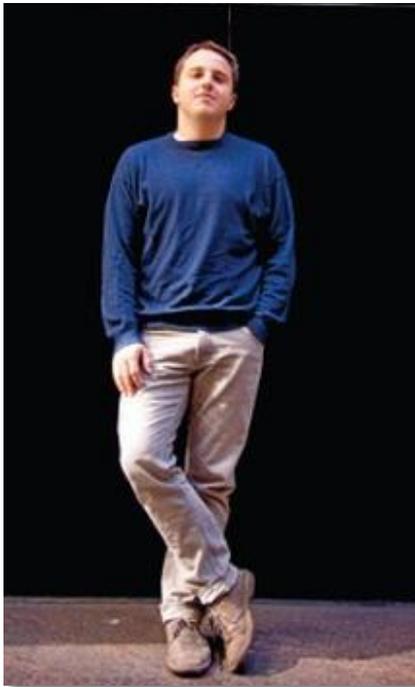
LG: The play reveals so many *opposing* truths which coexist in beautiful complexity across generations. Can you talk more about the this inside your work?

JH: I love the way you put this! I think there's something about looking at a question from as many points of view as possible that is inherently Jewish. Judaism is a religion that encourages debate... Everyone in my family pretty much shares the same political views, but over dinner, we would debate a question, and someone would inevitably pick up an opposing viewpoint, if only to keep conversation more lively: if I didn't believe *this*, maybe I would believe *that*, and maybe this is how I would rationalize it. That kind of thinking made a deep impression on me. There is real value in grappling with how someone thinks, even if you disagree with them. I get bored with good guy/bad guy stories, where the moral questions are clear. I'm much more interested in the complexities of a single side. In *Prayer*, this is a family that's all on the same side, and yet even when we agree on the basic tenets of something, it's almost impossible to reach consensus. Everyone is right, everyone makes valid points, you can't dismiss any of them, and that's always more exciting to me.

LG: I wonder how you see the trajectory between *Bad Jews* and *Prayer* and how those plays which bookend about a decade of writing for you — speak to one another... *Prayer* feels like a major rite of passage—but I wonder how cognizant you are of this accomplishment. Since completing *Prayer*, you've been in the midst of writing several plays and collaborating on musicals. Can you share how the writing of *Prayer* altered you or your process?

JH: *Prayer* was originally a commission for Broadway— it premiered off-Broadway, a decision I fully supported— but being commissioned to write for Broadway was an invitation to think bigger than I would have allowed myself otherwise. It was a gift, and also a huge

About Playwright Joshua Harmon (cont.)



Joshua Harmon (Credit: Nina Robinson)

challenge. *Bad Jews* was the most difficult play I'd written at that point, in large part because it takes place in unit time— a single scene— which is so hard to do, I've never attempted it again! I remember when I was working on it, my brain physically hurt.

Prayer challenged me in its reach, and scope: 10 characters played by 11 actors, five generations across 70 years— figuring out how to tell so many stories, how to make everyone essential, how to build tension and drama around this single question of safety.

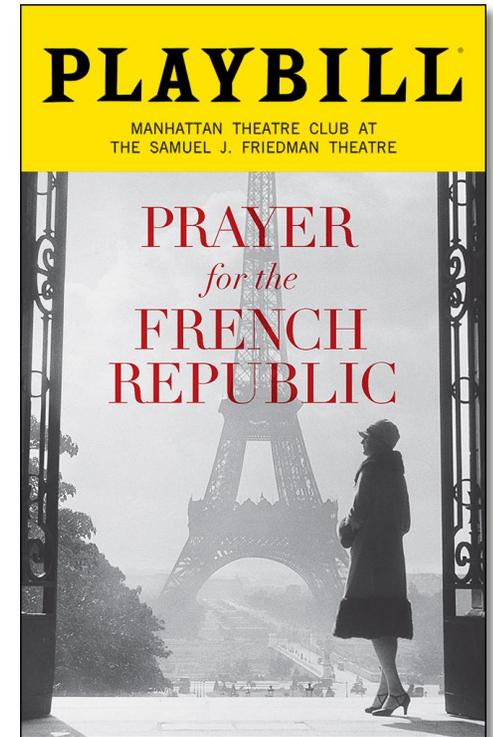
With each new play, I always want to feel like it is the hardest thing I've ever done. You never want to feel like you're repeating yourself. So on

the one hand, I can look at *Bad Jews* and *Prayer*, a decade apart, and recognize that there are questions I was asking about identity and family and heritage, that continue to compel me now. And yet the plays are wildly different. I think the experience of *Prayer* left me with two seemingly opposing impulses: I want to write something much smaller and more intimate next, but it also whet my appetite to attempt something even more expansive and unruly. A cast of 30? A two part play? I don't know. *Prayer* taught me not to put limits on my own imagination.

LG: The character of Patrick has a couple of lines at the top of Act II that really resonate: *That's the thing about Jews, we write it all down. Look, if we didn't keep track of it, you think they'd keep track of it for us?* There's been a stunning amount of work on our stages that deal with anti-semitism in the past couple of

seasons. Do you feel this is part and parcel of feeling the call to join the conversation in this moment in time, to tell and retell these stories?

JH: I started writing this play in 2015, when Obama was President— remember those days? Theatre is slow, plays take forever to go from incubation to production, so it's hard to say that writers are somehow meeting this moment. I think the work has always been out there, but it's resonating more loudly right now, which, frankly, does not necessarily speak well of our times. But I do believe one of the roles of a writer is to put down what it feels like to be alive right now: the questions we're asking, our fears, anxieties, desires. The tragedy of history— but the beauty of a great drama— is that the questions people face at any given moment are likely the questions they will continue to face in the future. So in writing a play, you're trying to capture something true about the moment you're in, while also reaching for something deeper, that transcends time and circumstance.



Broadway Playbill for *Prayer for the French Republic*

DISCUSSION: Consider your family culture, religion, and/or traditions. What is expected of your generation? How might your actions break with, or live up to, those expectations?

What aspects of your identity, if any, protect you from experiencing discrimination?

Meet the AEA Cast

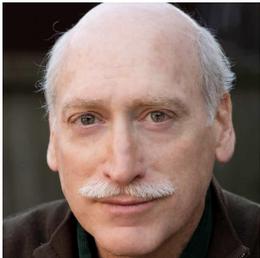
*Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States



JAPHET BALABAN* (Daniel) (he/him). Pioneer debut. Broadway: *Leopoldstadt*. Regional: *John Proctor is the Villain* (The Huntington), *Graveyard Shift* (Goodman Theatre New Stages), *Women Laughing Alone with Salad* (Theatre Wit), *Ideation* (Jackalope Theatre), *You on the Moors Now* (the Hypocrites), *Posh* (Steep Theatre), *Never the Sinner* (Victory Gardens), *Balm in Gilead* (Griffin Theatre). Film: *The Thing about Harry*, *Bitter Melons*. TV: *Fargo*, *Empire*, *The Chi*, *Hot Date*, *Chicago Med* and *Chicago PD*.



JUDITH LIGHTFOOT CLARKE* (Marcelle) Broadway: *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*; *Summer: 1976*; *Casa Valentina* (Manhattan Theatre Club). Off Broadway: *Linda* (MTC), *Eve-olution* (Cherry Lane), *Three Travelers* (St. Clement's), *The Normal Heart* (Public Theatre), *Communicating Doors* (Variety Arts), *Hamlet* (Kaufman). Regional: *Romeo & Juliet* (The Shakespeare Theatre); *Macbeth* (Arden), *The Graduate* (Ivoryton) and theatres including The Alley, Cincinnati Playhouse, Old Globe, People's Light, Merrimack Rep, Syracuse Rep, Capital Rep, Indiana Rep, Wilma and the Philadelphia Orchestra. Film includes *How to Be Single*, and *Killer*. Television includes: *New Amsterdam*, *Unforgettable*, *Forever*, *Outlaw*, *Law & Order*, *Law & Order: SVU*, and *Madame Secretary*. Graduate of The College of William & Mary. Proud mother of Owen and Beckett.



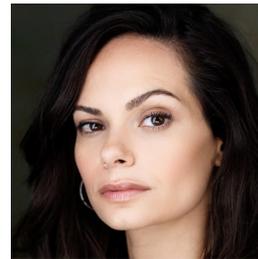
JOEL LEFFERT* (Adolphe/Pierre) most recently appeared with his wife, Nancy Nichols, in *The Sweet Spot*, by Alice Jankell, at 59East59 in NY. Before that, he spent three years with *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* in San Francisco, using the long, lonely pandemic break to develop his one-man *A Christmas Carol* at Portland Stage in Maine. Life in the theatre has given him the joy of being Albert Einstein, Sherlock Holmes, John Barrymore, Sigmund Freud, Otto Frank, Dracula, Shylock, Salieri, Richard III, King Lear, and many more. Broadway credits: world premiere of Tennessee Williams' *Not About Nightingales* (also London's Royal National Theatre) and understudying Patrick Stewart and Ian McKellen in *Waiting for Godot/No Man's Land*. Recent TV/Film: *Jessica Jones*, *The Enemy Within*, *Russian Doll*, and *Paint*. JoelLeffert.com



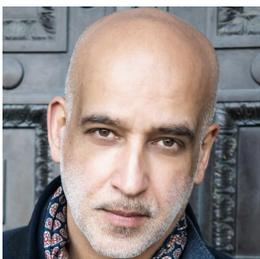
ROBERT MAMMANA* (Patrick) BROADWAY: *Les Miserables*, NATIONAL TOURS: *Show Boat*, *Les Miserables*, *The Sound of Music*; OFF-BROADWAY: *The Twentieth-Century Way*; REGIONAL: Pioneer Theatre Company (*Mary Stuart*), Denver Center (*The Constant Wife*), South Coast Repertory (*Sweeney Todd*, *Cloudlands*), Geffen Playhouse (*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*), Portland Center Stage (*Fun Home*, *Ragtime*, *Guys and Dolls*), Pasadena Playhouse (*The Father*, *Casa Valentina*, *Sleepless in Seattle*), Alliance (*Beast on the Moon*). TV: *The Office* (as Sweeney Todd), *Frasier*, *NCIS*, *CSI*, *The Good Wife*, *How To Get Away With Murder*, *CSI:NY*, *Elementary*. FILM: *Baby Money*, *Just Say Love*, *Flightplan*. AWARDS: 2-LA Drama



MATTHEW MCGLOIN* (Lucien) Matthew firmly believes in the power of live theatre to connect & heal. He is honored to return to PTC after appearing in *Murder on the Orient Express* last season. TV: *Law & Order* (NBC), *Investigation Discovery*, *History Channel*. NY/Off-Broadway: *The Hello Girls* (Prospect Theater Company/59E59), *Bastard Jones* (The Cell), *CasablancaBox* (HERE Arts), *Tectonic Theater Project*, *Abingdon Theatre Company*, *Dixon Place*, *The Lark*. Select regional: *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* (American Stage), *2 Pianos, 4 Hands* (Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park, North Coast Rep, Laguna Playhouse, Northlight Theatre), *Cabaret* (Peterborough Players), *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Repertory Theatre St. Louis), *Murder for Two* (WHAT), *Beautiful Star* (Triad Stage), *The Lieutenant of Inishmore* (Signature Theatre), *Misalliance*, *Cinderella* (Olney Theatre Center), *As You Like It* (Folger Theatre), various shows at The Kennedy Center. BFA Acting, UMBC. www.matthewmcgloin.com // @jackie_of_all_traits



KIM TAFF* (Elodie) Pioneer Theatre Company debut! THEATER: Austin Pendleton's *Orson's Shadow* (Theatre for The New City), *Boeing Boeing* (New London Barn Playhouse), *The Wolves* (Dallas Theatre Center), *You Can't Take It With You* and *Miracle on South Division Street* (Saint Michael's Playhouse), *Much Ado About Nothing* with Smith Street Stage – NYIT Award for Outstanding Ensemble and Best Revival of a Play. FILM: Upcoming - Hal Hartley's *Where To Land* - opposite Bill Sage and Edie Falco, *Asking For It* - opposite Janeane Garofalo and Stephanie Hsu, *Leo And The Shark*. TELEVISION: *The Blacklist*, *Food That Built America*. BFA: NYU TISCH. Thank you to Karen and everyone at PTC! Much love to Momma and Dougie! www.kimtaff.com / @iamkimtaff



ALOK TEWARI* (Charlie) Broadway: *The Band's Visit*. Other Theatre: *Monsoon Wedding: The Musical* (St. Ann's/Berkeley Rep); *Dom Juan* (Bard); *India Pale Ale* (MTC); *The Band's Visit* (Atlantic); *Awake and Sing!* (Public / NAATCO); *A Fable*, *Through the Yellow Hour*, *War* (Rattlestick); *Bunty Berman Presents, Rafta, Rafta...* (New Group). Television: *Kaleidoscope*, *The Good Fight*, *Ramy*, *FBI*, *Iron Fist*, *House of Cards*, *Madam Secretary*, *Homeland*, and *Fringe*. Film: *Bad Shabbos*, *The Pirates of Somalia*, and *Shelter*.