

AYAD AKHTAR

“Ayad Akhtar offers up his heart and life with an honesty that astonishes. Never have I experienced such a reading thrill.” —Maria Semple

Ayad Akhtar is an award-winning novelist and Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright. In his work, he deftly weaves politics, family, friendship, capitalism, and the eternal existential crisis of being “American” into confessional observations that are emotionally moving and culturally essential.

Ayad is the author of *American Dervish*, published in over 20 languages and named a *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of 2012, as well as the forthcoming novel, *Homeland Elegies*, in September 2020. *Homeland Elegies* has been called a “Tour de force” by the *Washington Post* and a “revelation” by *Publishers Weekly*.

As a playwright, Ayad has written *Junk*, *The Who & The What*, *The Invisible Hand*, and *Disgraced*, a sobering take on race, class, and religion in the United States, which won a Pulitzer Prize for Drama. As a screenwriter, he was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award for Best Screenplay for *The War Within*, which he also starred in.

Among other honors, Ayad is the recipient of the Steinberg Playwriting Award, the Nestroy Award, the Erwin Piscator Award, as well as fellowships from the American Academy in Rome, MacDowell, the Sundance Institute, and Yaddo, where he serves as a Board Director. This winter, Ayad will take over as the next president of PEN America. He lives in New York City.