



LA Escena 2020



LA Escena is Los Angeles' first festival of Hispanic classical theater, featuring staged readings, experimental re-imaginings, and adaptations of works from Golden Age playwrights on both sides of the Atlantic.

LA Escena celebrates the comedia —witty seventeenth-century dramas that deal with issues of class, gender, sexuality, and urban life— in many forms and seeks to showcase their continuing relevance to today's audiences. The festival promotes an expanded vision of the classics onstage and Hispanic culture in the theatrical canon.

LA Escena 2020 will include innovative digital performances by performers around the world, site-specific experiences that explore Los Angeles' vibrant and diverse culture/history, and the fifth edition of the *Golden Tongues* adaptation series—new explorations of Hispanic classical plays. This special-edition, largely virtual festival includes artists from Mexico City, Madrid and Málaga in Spain, as well as New York and Los Angeles in the U.S., all exploring new directions in theater practice across a number of platforms.

FINJAMOS QUE SOY FELIZ

- **On November 12 at 5 pm (PST).**
- Presented by Teatro Clásico MX & Caracoles Teatro, Mexico City (Mexico).
- In Spanish with English subtitles.

In this piece, a group of artists strive to give the classics contemporary meaning. The work of putting them on stage sheds light on possible answers, on a path that includes everything from reviving the *ñaque*, those 17th-century companies made up of just two actors, to dystopian fantasies of a not-so-future time, full of challenges for a society that seeks to be free. Tania and Oscar, the main characters

PERFORMING ARTS ONLINE

Thu, November 12–
Mon, November 16, 2020

Admission

Free, [RSVP required](#)

More information

[LA Escena 2020](#)

Credits

Presented by Diversifying the Classics in collaboration with Playwrights' Arena and Acción Cultural Española AC/E. Photo courtesy of Festival Internacional de Teatro Clásico de Almagro



on this voyage, must adapt their acting style to explore this complex text, which takes the powerful figure of sor Juana Inés de la Cruz as its starting point as it considers feminism, inclusivity, and the impediments to free thought, which the Mexican nun defended so passionately in her own time.

DON CARLOS: PRINCE OF ASTURIAS

- **On November 13 at 4 pm (PST).**
- Presented by Oscar Emmanuel Fabela, Los Angeles.
- In English.

Set at the peak of the Spanish Inquisition, *Don Carlos: Prince of Asturias* takes us to 16th-century Madrid: a world led by misogynistic patriarchy in which the one-sided view of religion and state ruled the world with fear tactics in attempts to cleanse the population. Don Carlos was heir to the Spanish throne after the most powerful king in Spain, King Phillip II, but Carlos' unusual physique and personality, as well as his ostensible sexual deviance, made him unfit to rule in the eyes of an intolerant Spain. Don Carlos was seen as different and therefore immoral, thus the Royal Court would stop at nothing to ensure that Don Carlos never ruled the mighty, pure, and golden kingdom of Spain. Even his father, King Phillip II, would go to extremes in attempts to erase Don Carlos from history. Will Don Carlos fight for what is right, or succumb to his own eradication?

GOLDEN TONGUES I: THE KING OF MARICOPA COUNTY

- **On November 13 at 6 pm (PST).**
- Presented by Playwrights' Arena, Los Angeles.
- In English.

The King of Maricopa County, by Mary Lyon Kamitaki, is an adaptation of Lope de Vega's *El castigo sin venganza* (*Punishment without Revenge*). In present-day Arizona, near the border with Mexico, the politically conservative sheriff is up for reelection. His daughter from a previous marriage and his new wife are brought together by destiny: a car collision far out in the Arizona desert, in the middle of a thunderstorm. Their forbidden love, discovered by the vengeful sheriff, sets in motion a tragic series of events that shows the horrific consequences of power run mad.

QUIJOTES Y SANCHOS

- **On November 14 & 15 at 10 am (PST).**
- Presented by [los números imaginarios] & Bella Betalla, Madrid (Spain).
- Choice of Spanish or English audio experience.

Quijotes y Sanchos is a self-guided tour of Los Angeles. The experience begins at home, as participants receive their instructions through the free online messaging application Telegram. Participants are invited to see their own space through the eyes of Don Quijote and Sancho, to relive the events of the novel, and to cross the city as though it were the Spain of 1604... or the Tokyo of the late 20th century; they will decide on your own route, their own personal and intimate wandering through Los Angeles. Cervantes' *Don Quijote* is the most important novel in



Spanish literature, and the text most often translated and published, after the Bible. The focus here is on Part I, published in 1605, emphasizing the questions Cervantes asks, which are now our own: What does it mean to be Quijote or Sancho today? What is my actual identity, and who else could I be? What does it mean to walk alongside someone, and how do I do that? What is this world we traverse, and how can our gaze change it, as change feels ever more urgent?

QUIJÓTERES PUPPET SHOW

- **On November 14 at 1 pm (PST).**
- Presented by Dragoncillo Puppet Troupe, United States.
- Bilingual.

¡Quijóteres! is a bilingual puppet theatre adaptation of Cervantes' classic novel that aims to introduce young audiences, regardless of their familiarity with Spanish or the Golden Age, to the comic adventures and themes of *Don Quijote*. Featuring "muppet-style" puppets on a unique, multi-functional traveling puppet stage, the show takes advantage of its imaginative puppet setting to emphasize the novel's intensely comical depictions of the ridiculous, with all of the clashes and crashes, valor and vomit, that have distinguished *Don Quijote* as the quintessential funny book for more than four centuries.

Y ES MAYOR DOLOR LA AUSENCIA QUE LA MUERTE

- **On November 14 at 3 pm (PST).**
- Presented by grumelot, Madrid (Spain).
- In Spanish with English subtitles.

Grumelot presents a virtual experience that reflects on what it means to be free while in seclusion, and to achieve our most intimate connections at a distance. This piece, designed for digital platforms, starts from the texts of Sor Juana, that "Tenth Muse" of Mexico, who sought out seclusion for the sake of intellectual freedom, and places them in conversation with 12 female artists as they experience their own isolation during the Great Lockdown of 2020 in Spain.

GOLDEN TONGUES II: THE WOODINGLE PUPPET SHOW

- **On November 14 at 6 pm (PST).**
- Presented by Playwrights' Arena, Los Angeles.
- In English.

Julie Taiwo Oni's riff on Miguel de Cervantes' *Retablo de las maravillas* (The Marvelous Puppet Show) reimagines the anxieties around social and cultural belonging in the space of a rapidly gentrifying South LA. In *The Woodingle Puppet Show with Host Mr. C, as Constructed by Mr. Asinine with Calculations and Articulations of the Genius Sort*, Oni explores questions of Blackness, and the hoops people are willing to jump through to prove that they are "black enough."

CANCIONES DE OLMEDO

- **On November 15 at 3 pm (PST).**



- Presented by Jóvenes Clásicos & Teatro del Soho Caixa Bank, Málaga (Spain).
- In Spanish with English subtitles.

Canciones de Olmedo is a musical adaptation into concert form of Lope de Vega's famous play *The Knight of Olmedo*. The company Jóvenes Clásicos paints with language, starting with the musicality of the verse, inherited from the epic verse and troubadour poetry of the Middle Ages. *The Knight of Olmedo*, composed in the 1620s and widely regarded as Lope's masterpiece, was actually inspired by a popular song, which describes the death of a knight: "They killed him by night, the pride of Medina, the flower of Olmedo." *Canciones de Olmedo* aims to be a reminiscence of the flavor of Lope's poetry—a melancholy, nostalgic song to love and the end of love.

GOLDEN TONGUES III: WHAT WE PAY FOR LIKES

- **On November 15 at 6 pm (PST).**
- Presented by Playwrights' Arena, Los Angeles.
- In English.

Inda Craig-Galván's *What We Pay For Likes* transports the squabbling, reputation-obsessed aristocrats of Madrid from Juan Ruiz de Alarcón's *Los empeños de un engaño* (translated by Diversifying the Classics as *What We Owe Our Lies*) to a Calabasas populated by influencers whose lives revolve around their brands and social media views. When a handsome stranger comes to town, their relationships IRL turn out to be much more complicated than their polished profiles.

THE COURAGE TO RIGHT A WOMAN'S WRONGS

- **On November 16 at 4:30 pm (PST).**
- Presented by Red Bull Theater, New York.
- In English.

One of the Spanish Golden Age's most accomplished female playwrights, Ana Caro presents a witty critique of society through the story of Leonor, a woman who sets out to find her one-time lover (Don Juan, naturally) and bring him to justice. *The Courage to Right a Woman's Wrongs* is a comedy of wild intrigue and lively ingenuity in which Leonor crosses geographical boundaries and defies social expectations of gender in order to bring her fickle lover to justice and restore her lost honor. Dressed as the dashing Leonardo, Leonor travels from Seville to Brussels, where she finds Juan and initiates her shrewd plan for revenge. What follows is a hilarious feat of masterful maneuvering, replete with cross-dressing and unexpected twists, in which she repeatedly outwits the men around her. And while the thrill of Leonor's efforts to seek redress culminates with the expected restoration of her honor and marriage to Juan, the questions raised by her demands for justice make the play anything but conventional. Through this stirring tale of a woman's courage to right the wrongs she has suffered, the play holds up to scrutiny contemporary notions of masculine honor and offers in their place a vision that opens up space for women and their agency.