

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Press Contact: Ami Bennitt  
Motor Media  
[ami@motormmm.com](mailto:ami@motormmm.com)  
617.797.8267

Press Contact: Abigail Vega  
LTC Producer  
[abigail@howlround.com](mailto:abigail@howlround.com)

---

**LATINA/O THEATRE COMMONS (LTC) ANNOUNCES  
INAUGURAL EL FUEGO WORLD PREMIERE PRODUCTIONS IN  
ALBUQUERQUE AND CHICAGO**

“FUELING THE AMERICAN THEATRE WITH LATINA/O PLAYS,” El FUEGO Launches to Support Latinx Theatremakers

**October 11, 2016 (BOSTON)**—The Latina/o Theatre Commons (LTC), in partnership with HowlRound, proudly announces two inaugural productions of EL FUEGO, a directive to help grow, support, and ignite the American theatre with new Latina/o theatre works by supporting the full productions of work by the 2015 Carnaval featured playwrights. Both productions are world premieres.

***Parachute Men*** by Mando Alvarado is currently being produced in Chicago, Illinois by Teatro Vista, from September 10 through October 16, 2016. Directed by Executive Artistic Director Ricardo Gutiérrez, the play centers on three brothers who admittedly “suck at being brothers, suck at love, and suck at being men.” On the anniversary of their mother’s death, the oldest brother returns after a long estrangement. After a few hours, it becomes clear that, in his absence, the pecking order of their relationship has changed. Thus the battle begins to restore or revolutionize their family. <http://www.teatrovista.org/parachute>

***Woman on Fire*** by Marisela Treviño Orta will be co-produced by Camino Real Productions and the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from September 29 through October 16, 2016 as the first production of the Center’s 2016-2017 Siembra: Latino Theatre Season. A reimagining of Sophocles’ *Antigone*, *Woman on Fire* will be directed by Valli Marie Rivera. Juanita, the unwilling heroine is haunted by the ghost of a woman who died while crossing the Arizona/Mexico border. Torn between the laws of man and the laws of spirit, Juanita must decide whether to risk losing her marriage in order to give the restless spirit the proper burial it demands.

<http://www.nhccnm.org/event/siembra-latino-theatre-season-woman-fire/>

EL FUEGO: Fueling the American Theatre with Latina/o Plays, was sparked by the game-changing 2015 LTC Carnaval of New Latina/o Work (Carnaval 2015), which took place on July 23-25, 2015 at The Theatre School at DePaul University in Chicago. This event brought together over 200 Latinx and allied theatremakers to celebrate and promote Latinx playwrights and encourage nationwide productions of these vibrant voices.

The desire to showcase new Latina/o plays to potential producing organizations was only a starting place for the LTC. To move the field forward and ignite American stages with Latina/o stories, the LTC Steering Committee released a bold and daring call to theatres across the US: “Will you commit to a full production of one of Carnaval 2015’s featured playwrights, sight unseen?” The energy created by this inspiring call was so great that in less than twenty-four hours, twelve partner theatres committed to producing at least one work by one of the featured

playwrights before they had even been selected. This monumental first for the American Theatre quickly became EL FUEGO, a historic initiative that expands the model of new play development and recalibrates the traditional, and often inequitable, theatrical pipeline. The number of committed theatres continued to grow to eighteen before Carnaval 2015 took place. This cohort is comprised of nationally recognized theatres from all over the country, all working towards a more inclusive and innovative field for artists and audiences. All twelve playwrights featured at Carnaval 2015 will be produced by eighteen different theater companies across the United States by 2020.

**In addition to the two productions in September, other EL FUEGO projects are slated for the 2016-17 season:**

***El Payaso*** by Emilio Rodriguez will premiere at Milagro in Portland, Oregon, from January 12 through the 21st, 2017, and tour nationally through November 2017. Directed by Georgina Escobar (another EL FUEGO playwright), this eco-drama follows the journey of a young Latino, fresh from college with an environmental science degree, heading to Nicaragua for a chance to make a difference in small rural villages. His journey honors the work of the late Ben Linder, whose memory lives on in the work of Clowns Without Borders and various environmental groups that are collaborating to bring this story to life. With red noses and humor, the performers will share the value of “thinking globally, while acting locally.”

<http://milagro.org/event/el-payaso/>

***Sweep*** by Georgina Escobar, will premiere at the Aurora Theatre in Lawrenceville, Georgia, from February 10 through March 5, 2017. Directed by Abigail Vega, *Sweep* is the story of Luna and Siri, two hit-women of the multiverse armed with deadly broomsticks bound to sweep mistakes into oblivion. But when they fail to clean up Adam and Eve’s apple situation they find themselves on a cosmic journey through time. With Dragon Con sensibilities this play is rife with the humor and adventure of a great graphic novel.

<http://www.auroratheatre.com/on-stage/2016-2017-ggc-harvel-lab-series/sweep/>

***Más*** by Milta Ortiz, will open at Su Teatro, in Denver, Colorado, from March 9 through March 25, 2017. Under the direction of Artistic Director Anthony J. Garcia, the docudrama is based on a true story that highlights the struggle between students, teachers, and Tucson Unified School District when Mexican-American Studies (MAS) was banned from curricula. The community struggles to hold onto their history, identity, and humanity as they fight to save Mexican American Studies in the Tucson Unified School District. <http://suteatro.org/>

“EL FUEGO is doing what the LTC does best—facilitating relationships and combining our collective resources to promote the field,” says Lisa Portes, Head of MFA Directing at The Theatre School at DePaul University and the LTC Steering Committee member and champion behind Carnaval 2015. “This initiative is the culmination of everything the LTC has been working towards over the past three years. We are igniting a spark, and we hope other companies follow suit.” EL FUEGO is an exciting step toward the inclusion and diversity of stories in the American theatre that came to fruition as a result of the LTC. The LTC will track the progress of every collaboration and project as they develop, and will work with the partner theatres to ensure the productions are supported at every step of the process by ensuring the playwright is present for the process and that a dedicated Latinx theatre scholar is documenting and writing about the process and production.

EL FUEGO producing partner theatres are:

- Aurora Theatre (Lawrenceville, GA)
- Borderlands Theater (Tucson, AZ)
- Camino Real Productions (Albuquerque, NM)
- Cara Mía Theatre Co. (Dallas, TX)
- Duende CalArts (Valencia, CA)
- El Teatro Campesino (San Juan Bautista, CA)
- GALA Hispanic Theatre (Washington, DC)
- Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center & San Antonio Latino Theatre Alliance (San Antonio, TX)
- INTAR Theatre (New York, NY)
- Latino Producers Action Network (San Diego, CA/Los Angeles, CA)
- Latino Theater Company (Los Angeles, CA)
- Milagro (Portland, OR)
- Su Teatro (Denver, CO)
- Teatro Avante (Miami, FL)
- Teatro Prometeo (Miami, FL)
- Teatro Luna (Chicago, IL/Los Angeles, CA)
- Teatro Vista (Chicago, IL)
- Teatro Vivo (Austin, TX)

Every Carnaval 2015 featured playwright will receive at least one production by 2020 at one of these theatres, with many receiving co-productions and commissions of new work.

Carnaval 2015 playwrights are:

- Mando Alvarado (Los Angeles, CA)
- Migdalia Cruz (New York, NY)
- Georgina Escobar (New York, NY)
- Amparo Garcia Crow (Austin TX)
- Magdalena Gómez (Springfield, MA)
- Virginia Grise (New York, NY)
- Matthew Paul Olmos (New York, NY)
- Milta Ortiz (Tucson, AZ)
- Diane Rodriguez (Los Angeles, CA)
- Emilio Rodriguez (Detroit, MI)
- Octavio Solis (San Francisco, CA)
- Marisela Treviño Orta (San Francisco, CA)

### **About the Latina/o Theatre Commons (LTC)**

The Latina/o Theatre Commons (LTC) in partnership with HowlRound is a national movement that uses a commons-based approach to transform the narrative of the American theatre, to amplify the visibility of Latina/o performance making, and to champion equity through advocacy, art making, convening, and scholarship.

In May 2012, HowlRound hosted eight Latinx theatre practitioners at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C. to discuss the state of the not for profit theatre field for Latinx theatremakers. Called together by playwright Karen Zacarías, this group of artists set about making a change, and their conversations sparked the inception of the LTC. In 2013, they partnered with Latina/o theatre communities from around the US to create a steering committee and produced the first large scale gathering of Latinx theatre practitioners since 1986, the 2013 LTC National

Convening, hosted by HowlRound at Emerson College, October 31–November 3, 2013. In Fall 2014, the LTC associate produced Encuentro 2014: A National Latina/o Theatre Festival with the Los Angeles Theatre Center and hosted the second LTC National Convening during the final weekend of the Festival. In July 2015, the LTC produced Carnaval 2015 in association with Teatro Vista and the Chicago Alliance of Latinx Theatre Artists (ALTA) and was hosted by at The Theatre School at DePaul University. From October 2015 through December 2016, the LTC has expanded its points of accessibility to Dallas, TX, Seattle, WA, and New York City, NY through physical convenings, and to countless others through their online conversation platform, Café Onda.

### **About HowlRound: A knowledge commons by and for the theatre community**

HowlRound, located in the Office of the Arts at Emerson College, designs and develops online communication platforms and in person gatherings that promote access, participation, organizational collaboration, field wide research, and new teaching practices to illuminate the breadth, diversity, and impact of a commons based approach to theatre practice. For more information, visit [www.HowlRound.com](http://www.HowlRound.com).

### **About the Carnaval 2015 Playwrights**

#### *Mando Alvarado*

Mando Alvarado is an award-winning playwright/screenwriter from South Texas. His play *Basilica* premiered Off-Broadway at Cherry Lane Theater in NYC. His play *Post No Bills* received its Off-Broadway premiere at Rattlestick Playwright's Theater. His play *Diablo Love* had its world premiere at Central Park's Summer Stages. They also produced *A King of Infinite Space*, a *Hamlet*/Pearl Jam mash-up and *Sangre*, an adaptation of *Blood Wedding*. He co-wrote the book for the bilingual musical *A Yellow Brick Road*, an adaptation of *The Wizard of Oz* for Theaterworks USA which received its critically acclaimed Off-Broadway premiere at The Lortel. His first feature film, *Cruzando*, which he co-wrote and co-directed with Michael Ray Escamilla is available on DVD and was distributed by Vanguard Cinema. He is a member of Rising Phoenix Rep, alum of INTAR's Hispanic Playwright-in-Residence Laboratory 2006–2008, and a graduate of The University of North Carolina School of the Arts. He's currently writing on *Greenleaf* for the OWN Network.

#### *Migdalia Cruz*

Migdalia Cruz was born and raised in the Bronx, where she wrote her first play at age six. Since then she has written more than fifty works, which have been produced across the United States, and in Puerto Rico, Mexico, Canada, Egypt, Australia, Greece, the UK and Turkey. She is thankful for being nurtured by New Dramatists, Sundance, the Lark's México/US Word Exchange, and by Maria Irene Fornés at INTAR. Current projects: a modern translation of *Macbeth* for OSF's *Play On*; an *After Orlando* play; a Kennedy Center commission; an opera about poverty and terrorism; and a play about TB and marriage and memory.

#### *Georgina Escobar*

Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua native Georgina Escobar is a Manhattan-based playwright, visual artist, and imagineer of the strange. Escobar's credits include: *El Muerto Vagabundo* (Milagro Theatre, Portland OR); *Matted* as part of No Passports response to Orlando (Finborough Theatre, London; Orlando Shakespeare), *Sweep* (Aurora Theatre 2017, GA; Lincoln Center Theatre's Directors Lab 2016; Brooklyn Generator 2014), *The Unbearable Likeness of JONES* (Dixon Place, NYC), *Wayfoot* (in development at INTAR; originated at the O'Neill National

Puppetry Conference, 2014), *The Ruin* (Words Afire, NM) *Firerock: Pass the Spark* (Z Space 2017, CA; Lensic, 2012, NM). She is the recipient of the Kennedy Center's National Theatre For Young Audiences Award for *Ash Tree* (Duke City Repertory, 2012, ASSITEJ Festival Denmark and Sweden 2011). She is the founder of Fourth Wall/One Blue Cat Productions and Steering Committee Member for the Latina/o Theatre Commons. [www.georginaescobar.com](http://www.georginaescobar.com)

### *Amparo Garcia Crow*

Amparo Garcia-Crow acts, sings, directs, and writes plays, screenplays, and songs. As a playwright, Garcia-Crow has been developed at South Coast Repertory Theatre and Mabou Mines, had world premieres Off-Broadway, at Actor's Theatre of Louisville and Latino Chicago. Her films have premiered at SXSW, the Los Angeles Latino International, Cine las Americas and PBS. A former TCG/NEA Director's fellow and James Michener fellow, her collection is *Between Misery and the Sun: The South Texas Plays*. As an Equity and SAG actor she (or her voice) appears in unexpected television, film, and video games.

### *Magdalena Gómez*

Magdalena Gómez is the author of *Shameless Woman*, a memoir in poems, published by Red Sugarcane Press, NYC. She is a cultural organizer, playwright, and performance poet since 1971. Her most recent residencies at a theatre include: The University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign); Djerassi; and Goddard and Springfield Colleges. This October, her performance poem *America, You are a Disappointing Lover* will be performed at the Brooklyn Academy of music by the sixteen-piece Eco-Music Big Band with actor Marina Celander and under the direction of Marie Incontrera. Magdalena is the co-founder and Artistic Director of Teatro V!da. [www.magdalenagomez.com](http://www.magdalenagomez.com)

### *Virginia Grise*

From panzas to prisons, from street theatre to large-scale multimedia performances, from princess to chafa, Virginia Grise writes plays that are set in bars without windows, barrio rooftops, and lesbian bedrooms. A recipient of the Whiting Writers' Award, Princess Grace Award in Theatre Directing, and the Yale Drama Series Award, her published work includes *blu* (Yale University Press), *The Panza Monologues* co-written with Irma Mayorga (University of Texas Press), and an edited volume of Zapatista communiqués titled *Conversations with Don Durito* (Autonomedia Press). She earned her MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. Grise is currently writing an adaptation of the novel *Their Dogs Came With Them* by Helena Maria Viramontes, commissioned by Borderlands Theater and the National New Play Network. [www.viriniagrise.com](http://www.viriniagrise.com)

### *Matthew Paul Olmos*

Matthew Paul Olmos is a three-time Sundance Institute Fellowship/Residency recipient, New Dramatists Resident Playwright, Princess Grace Award winner in Playwriting, Ensemble Studio Theatre lifetime member, National Latino Playwriting Award winner (Arizona Theatre Company), and was named by Sam Shepard as the inaugural recipient of the La MaMa e.t.c.'s Ellen Stewart Emerging Playwright Award. He is a Djerassi Playwright Initiative Fellow, Nautilus Composer-Librettist writer, Baryshnikov Arts Center Resident Artist, Dramatists Guild Fellow, two-time INTAR Theatre H.P.R.L. playwright, New York Theatre Workshop fellow, Primary Stages Dorothy Strelsin New American Writer, terraNOVA Collective playwright, Rising Circle Collective playwright, and a two-time Resident Artist at Mabou Mines/Suite, mentored by Ruth Maleczek. His work is produced nationally and in México; also in Spanish, as well

published by NoPassport Press and Samuel French. For more information:  
[www.matthewpaulolmos.com](http://www.matthewpaulolmos.com)

### *Marisela Treviño Orta*

Marisela Treviño Orta is a second year playwright in the Iowa Playwrights Workshop. Her plays include: *American Triage* (Repertorio Español 2012 Nuestras Voces Runner-Up); *Braided Sorrow* (2006 Chicano/Latino Literary Prize in Drama, 2008 Su Teatro world premiere, 2009 PEN Center USA Literary Award in Drama); and *Heart Shaped Nebula* (2015 Shotgun Players world premiere). Marisela is a founding member of the Bay Area Latino Theatre Artists Network and a member of the Latina/o Theatre Commons Steering Committee. Currently Marisela is working on cycle of Latino fairy tale plays which include *The River Bride* (2016 Oregon Shakespeare Festival world premiere), *Wolf at the Door*, and *Alcira*.

### *Milta Ortiz*

Milta Ortiz is a playwright from the Bay Area now in Tucson by way of Chicago. Currently working on *Solving for X* (playwright/director) for the Working Classroom, *20<sup>th</sup> Annual A Tucson Pastorela*, and *Sanctuary*. As an NNPN playwright in residence at Borderlands Theater, she wrote and developed *Más* which premiered at Borderlands Theater in fall 2015, nominated for an American Theatre Critics/Steinberg New Play Award and Citations, and a Tucson Mac award for best drama. *Más* was co-produced in the Bay Area by Laney College in March 2016 and Ubuntu Theater Project in May 2016 and will go on an Arizona University tour in the 2016/17 season. Other produced plays include *Sonoran Shadows* (a shadow play), *19th Annual A Tucson Pastorela*, *Disengaged*, *18<sup>th</sup> Annual A Tucson Pastorela*, *Fleeing Blue*, *Scatter My Red Underwear*. Milta worked extensively as a teaching artist and received individual artist grants to write, develop and produce her solo work in the Bay Area. As a founding member of the HyPE theater ensemble, she devised pieces to be performed site specifically and on stage. She teaches theater at Pima Community College. Milta earned an MFA from Northwestern University's Writing for the Screen and Stage program and a Creative Writing BA from San Francisco State University. Milta's is Marketing & Outreach Director at Borderlands Theater. She is proud to be mommy to a bubbly toddler.

### *Diane Rodriguez*

Diane Rodriguez is an Obie Award winning, multi-disciplinary theatre artist who writes, performs, directs, and produces. She is Associate Artistic Director at Center Theatre Group, Los Angeles. Her play *Living Large* was produced in 2012 by Teatro Luna (Jeff Awards Recommended). *Living Large* was produced again at 16th Street Theatre in the Spring of 2013 directed by Ann Filmer. Diane was a writer for Mattel, Inc from 2009-2014, where she wrote for the Barbie Live division, writing the book for Broadway scale Barbie musicals that toured internationally in Latin America, the Pacific Rim, and China. Currently, she is a cultural consultant for the Disney Family Network's animated series *Elena of Avalor*. Her two play anthology titled *Latins Anonymous* written collectively with Latin Anonymous is in its 23rd printing. Her most current play *The Sweetheart Deal* will premiere in 2017. She served eight years and three terms as president of the Theatre Communications Group board, and is a 2016 Obama appointee to the National Council on the Arts.

### *Emilio Rodriguez*

Emilio Rodriguez is a theatre artist nomad currently residing in Detroit. His theatre career began with improvised one kid adaptations of *The Wizard of Oz* in his parent's living room at

the age of two. Since then, his plays have been read at various festivals including Latina/o Theatre Commons' Carnaval of New Work, Teatro Vivo's Austin New Latino Play Fest, The Great Plains Theatre Conference and The Landing Theatre's Redemption Series. When not writing, Emilio is a teaching artist who enjoys watching marathons of *Law and Order SVU* in whatever hotel room he visits.

### *Octavio Solis*

Octavio's plays *Alicia's Miracle*, *Se Llama Cristina*, *Cloudlands* (co-written with Adam Gwon), *The Pastures of Heaven*, *Ghosts of the River*, *Lydia*, *Gibraltar*, *The Ballad of Pancho and Lucy*, *Dreamlandia*, *El Otro*, *Santos & Santos*, and many others have been mounted across the country. His drama, fiction, and poetry have been published in the *Arroyo Literary Review*, *The Louisville Review*, *Zyzzyyva*, *Catamaran Literary Reader*, and the *Chicago Quarterly Review*. His anthology *The River Plays* is published by NoPassport Press. He is a United States Artists Fellow, New Dramatists alum, member of the Dramatists Guild and has most recently been awarded the Pen Center USA Literary Award for Drama for *Se Llama Cristina*.

[www.octaviosolis.net](http://www.octaviosolis.net)

####

*Press photos can be found below. More images available upon request.*



(Above: a reading of *Parachute Men* by Mando Alvarado at Carnaval 2015. Photo: Michael Courier. From L to R: Eddie Martinez, Tommy Rivera-Vega, Carlo Garcia. Below: Teatro Vista's 2016 production of *Parachute Men*. Photo: Joel Maisonet Photography. From L to R: Eddie Martinez, Sal Martinez, Tommy Rivera-Vega)







*(Above: a reading of Parachute Men by Mando Alvarado at Carnaval 2015. Photo: Michael Courier. From L to R: Paloma Nozicka, Eddie Martinez. Below: Teatro Vista's 2016 production of Parachute Men. Photo: Joel Maisonet Photography. From L to R: Eddie Martinez, Maggie Scrantom)*





*(Above: a reading of Wolf at the Door by Marisela Treviño Orta at Carnaval 2015. Photo: Michael Courier. From L to R: Laura Crotte Occelli, Aysette Muñoz, Maya Malan-Gonzalez, Adam Poss. Below: Camino Real's 2016 production of Woman on Fire by Marisela Treviño Orta. Photo: Max Woltman. From L to R: Meggan Gomez, Alicia Lueras Maldonado.)*





*(Above: a reading of Wolf at the Door by Marisela Treviño Orta at Carnaval 2015. Photo: Michael Courier. From L to R: Laura Crotte Occelli, Aysette Muñoz. Below: Camino Real's 2016 production of Woman on Fire by Marisela Treviño Orta. Photo: Max Woltman. From L to R: Michael Ellis, Meggan Gomez.)*





*(Above: Participants gather for a biodegradable balloon release to celebrate the beginning of Carnaval 2015. Below: EL FUEGO launches at the closing ceremony of Carnaval 2015, with representatives of theatres from across the country “raising their hands” to commit to Latina/o plays. Photo: Michael Courier.*

