

GALA Hispanic Theatre Presents Mariela en el Desierto, Mariela in the Desert

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Washington, D.C. - GALA proudly continues its 39th season with ***Mariela en el desierto/Mariela in the Desert***, a captivating and intriguing story by award-winning playwright, **Karen Zacarias**. Directed by GALA Associate Producing Director, Abel López, the production will run from April 16 through May 10, 2015. GALA is located at 3333 14th Street NW, Washington, DC 20010. Discounted parking is available at the Giant Food garage on Park Road, NW.

Mariela and José were once the golden couple of an elite social circle of artists in Mexico City. Together they built a family and an artist colony to host friends Diego Rivera, Frida Kahlo, and Rufino Tamayo. But now their daughter has left, and their friends are too famous to call. Set in the desert of Northern Mexico in the 1950s, José and Mariela live an isolated existence haunted by the ghost of their young son and the withering of their creativity and artistic inspiration. *Mariela en el desierto* is a gripping mystery that reveals what happens to a family when one's creativity is shut away.

Mariela en el desierto says Zacarías, "was inspired by my Mexican grandmother Herlinda, who suppressed her artistic talent and ambition while she raised her family and supported her husband's career. It is a universal story about many of our mothers and grandmothers and how daughters learn from watching them. I originally wrote the play in English to give an American audience access to a Latino family that isn't often seen on American stages. It is a pleasure to have this piece live now in Spanish...and come to life in one of my favorite theaters. GALA is a national theatrical treasure...and also only blocks from where I live. To have this play ...about the place where I was born--- bloom and reflect the community where I now live is wonderful to me."

Mariela in the Desert will be presented in Spanish with English surtitles on Thursday to Saturday evenings at 8 pm, and Sunday afternoons at 2 pm.

Student or Group Matinees for *Mariela in the Desert* will be held on April 23, April 24, April 30, and May 1 at 10:30 am. For more information on GALA's Student Matinee programs, please call [202-234-7174](tel:202-234-7174) or e-mail education@galatheatre.org.

Press Night will be Saturday, April 18, 2015 at 8 pm. There will be an **Artists' Reception** following the performance that night.

This production is made possible with the generous support of the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT AND DIRECTOR

Karen Zacarías' award-winning plays include *The Book Club Play*, *Legacy of the Light*, *Mariela in the Desert*, *The Sins of Sor Juana*, the adaptations of *Just Like Us*, and *How the García Girls Lost Their Accents*, among many more. She collaborated on the libretto for *Sleepy Hollow* and *Hemmingway: The Sun Also Rises* for the Washington Ballet. The 2016 season will see world premieres of her plays: *Destiny of Desire* at Arena Stage; *Native Gardens* at Cincinnati Playhouse in the Park; *OLIVERio: A Brazilian Twist* at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; *Ella*

Enchanted: The Musical at First Stage, and *Into the Beautiful North* at Milagro Theater. She is one of the inaugural Resident Playwrights at Arena Stage in Washington, DC, and is a core founder of the Latino Theatre Commons. She is also the founder of Young Playwrights' Theater, an award-winning theater company that teaches playwriting in local public schools in Washington, DC. Born in Mexico, Karen lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband and three children. For more information visit: www.karenzacarias.com.

Abel Lopez is GALA's Associate Producing Director. He has staged over 66 productions at GALA, including *Living Out*, *Divorciadas, evangélicas y vegetarianas*; *Beauty of the Father*, *El Canuto del Rock*; *Agustín Lara: Boleros & Bues*; *Elliott: A Soldier's Fugue*; *Los pecados de Sor Juana*; *Real Women Have Curves*; *Tu ternura Molotov*; *La casa de Bernarda Alba*; *Nunca dije que era una niña buena*; *Pavlov: dos segundos antes del crimen*; and *El beso de la mujer araña*. His productions have appeared at the In Series, the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Public Theatre in New York, the Arizona Theatre Company, Jomandi Productions in Atlanta, and Costa Rica, Venezuela, Cuba and El Salvador. He is chair of the board of directors of Americans for the Arts, and past president of the board of directors of the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures, Theatre Communications Group (TCG), Performing Arts Alliance, Alliance for Inclusion in the Arts, and the Helen Hayes Awards.

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Featured in the cast are GALA company member **Luz Nicolás** (Mariela), who appeared in *House of Desires* and *Cancun* earlier this season and *La señorita de Tacna* last season; **Roberto Colmenares** (José); who performed previously in *House of Desires* and *Tum Tica: una historica de música y familia*; **Alina Collins Maldonado** (Blanca), who appeared in *House of Desires* at GALA and *How We Get On* at Forum Theatre; **Miguel Amaguaña (Carlos)**, who appeared previously in *Fábulas Mayas*, *House of Desires* and *Tum Tica* at GALA; and **Peter Peryera (Adam)**, who appeared in GALA's *Living Out* and *Much Ado About Nothing* at Synetic Theater. Making her GALA debut is **Renate Wallenberg** (Oliva).

Scenic design is by **Ruthmarie Tenorio**, who has designed at Imagination Stage; **Christopher Annas-Lee**, who designed *House of Desires* at GALA and *How We Got On* at Forum Theatre, is Lighting Designer; **Brian J. Shaw**, who designed for the In Series is Costume Designer; **Brendon Vierra**, who designed *Living Out* is Sound Designer, and **Alicia Tessari**, who designed *House of Desires* and *Cancún* is Properties Designer. **Artemis López** is Stage Manager and **Rueben Rosenthal** is Technical Director. **Freddy Mancilla** is Production Manager and **Hugo Medrano** is Producer.

TICKET INFORMATION

Single tickets are \$42 on Thursday and Sunday, and \$38 on Friday and Saturday. Tickets for senior citizens (60+) and military are \$26, and \$20 for students. Additional discounts are available for groups of 10 or more. Tickets for **Artists' Reception** are \$50 per individual, \$90 per couple and \$15 per subscriber.

TO PURCHASE TICKETS

Call **(800) 494-8497**, **(202) 234-7174**, or visit www.galatheatre.org

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WHERE :

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