

## **GALita presents Rigoberta, ¿Dónde Estás?**

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**Washington, D.C.** – GALita a program of GALA for the entire family, is proud to present ***Rigoberta, ¿Dónde Estás?*** by **Cornelia Cody**. Commissioned by GALA and directed by Ms. Cody, this bilingual production will be presented at GALA Theatre, 3333 14<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington, DC 20010 from **March 14 through March 28, 2020**. The theater is located one block north of the Columbia Heights Metro station on the Green and Yellow lines. Parking is available at the Giant Food garage on Park Road NW.

Through the story of 10-year old Pilar, GALita's production of *Rigoberta* introduces young audiences to Rigoberta Menchú, the Guatemalan Nobel Peace Prize winner and indigenous activist. As she journeys from Piedras Negras to Guatemala City to meet her idol Rigoberta and ask her a question, she meets her countrymen and learns about their cultures, history, and traditions. More importantly, Pilar discovers that the questions she asks of herself are more important than those she asks of others.

Playwright Cornelia Cody states, "Ultimately, my play is about the questions we ask ourselves---the questions we need to ask ourselves---as we journey through life. I hope audiences will learn something about Rigoberta Menchú and about the incredible country of Guatemala. And I hope they too will begin to formulate and ask their own questions."

Student matinees for *Rigoberta* are scheduled weekdays from **March 16 – 20 and March 23 - 27, 2020 at 10:30 am**. Performances for the general public are on **Saturday, March 14; Saturday, March 21; and Saturday, March 28 at 3 pm**. The duration of this family show is approximately 55 minutes and is suitable for ages 5 through 105!

### **ABOUT RIGOBERTA MENCHÚ**

**Rigoberta Menchú** was born on January 9, 1959 to a family of peasants. Raised in the Quiche branch of Mayan culture, she worked with her family on farms on the Pacific coast of Guatemala, where the largest coffee plantations are located. These plantations were, and still are, owned by Guatemala's wealthiest families who had a close relationship with the United Fruit Company. Because Inequality in Guatemala was heavily racialized, it served as an impetus for Rigoberta's father to organize with the Committee of the Peasant Union (CUC), a labor rights organization primarily for Indigenous farmers. His work with the CUC was deemed "subversive" and he was arrested, tortured, and murdered by government forces. Committed to the movement, Rigoberta joined the CUC in 1979 and quickly became one of the few women in the political movement.

In addition to her father, her mother and brother were also murdered by government forces during the Guatemalan Civil War, which claimed hundreds of thousands of lives. The majority of those killed were ethnic Mayas. In 1981, Rigoberta fled her country, and with the publication of her memoir, *I, Rigoberta Menchú*, she became an international icon for peace and equality. She was awarded the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize for her advocacy of Indigenous rights. Since then, Rigoberta founded Guatemala's first political party for Indigenous people, Winaq, and ran for president in 2007 and 2011.

## ABOUT PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR, AND PRODUCTION

**Cornelia Cody**, born in El Salvador, is a poet, playwright, and the author of children's books, textbooks, and academic papers on humor. She has written and/or adapted bilingual scripts for GALA, Discovery Theatre at the Smithsonian, Theatre Hopkins, and Children's Theatre Association. For GALA, she has written *Picasso* and *VolcanO*, and adapted *Bodas de sangre*, *Platero y yo* (named one of the best D.C children's play in 2014) and *Las aventuras de Don Quijote*. As an actress, Cody has performed at The Shakespeare Theatre, Center Stage, Arena Stage, The Kennedy Center, and in numerous television commercials. At GALA, she had lead roles in *La zapatera prodigiosa*, *Doña Rosita la soltera*, *Don Perlimplín*, *Eloisa está debajo de un almendro*, and *Entre mujeres*.

Cody taught theatre studies at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts for over 20 years. Her one-woman show, *Mongrel: The Life and Words of Dorothy Parker*, was performed off-Broadway at the York Theatre and at Goucher College where she has directed, taught, and led workshops on bilingual theater. She earned a Master of Arts from The Johns Hopkins University (Writing), New York University (Performance Studies), and University of Maryland (American Studies), where she pursued her Ph.D. She now lives in the Netherlands.

**Rigoberta** features GALA company members **Karen Morales**, **Delbis Cardona**, and **Camilo Linares**, who have appeared together in several GALita productions, including *Picasso*, *Between Earth and Sky*, and *VolcanO*; Also appearing are **Melissa Strova Valencia**, who was seen in *VolcanO*, and **Tsaitami Duchicela**, who is making her GALita debut.

Scenic Design is by **Jessica Cancino**, who designed for *La Foto* at GALA and was recently nominated for a 2020 Helen Hayes Award in Outstanding Set Design for her work at Monumental Theatre Company. Lighting Design and Projections are by **Niomi Collard**, who designed *Dancing in My Cockroach Killers* and *Como agua para chocolate*; Costume Design and Properties are by **Alicia Tessari**, who designed for *Picasso*, *Between Earth and Sky*, and *VolcanO*, among others. **Kiera Robbins** is Stage Manager; **Tony Koehler** is Production Manager; and **Devin Mahoney** is Technical Director.

## IN THE LOBBY

Acrylics by Mexican artist Byron Gálvez are in exhibition in the GALA lobby. Gálvez's work began with oil paintings, explored various mediums in his life, but identified most with sculpture. Gálvez was heavily influenced by the Cubism of Picasso and Braque.

The limited edition acrylics will be auctioned at the Noche de Estrellas on April 6 to benefit GALA's youth education and artistic programs. For more information visit [www.galatheatre.org](http://www.galatheatre.org).

## ABOUT GALita

Since 1980, GALita has produced children's theater by Hispanic playwrights in both Spanish and English that inspire a sense of joy, discovery, pride and identity in our community's children. GALita also has commissioned new works and adaptations based on classic Hispanic literature, presented international

theater companies such as Teatro Gayumba from the Dominican Republic, produced several children's film festivals, and collaborated with Kids Euro Festival on children's programming.

## **TICKET INFORMATION**

Tickets are \$10 each (children), Adults \$12 (general public performances). For more information call 202-234-7174 or visit [www.galatheatre.org](http://www.galatheatre.org).

This production is supported by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, the Harman Family Foundation, and the Mayor's Office on Latino Affairs.

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**WHEN :** 2020-03-10 21:03:39  
**WHERE :**

## **CONTACT:**

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