



The University of Texas at Austin
Theatre and Dance
College of Fine Arts

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE

PRESENTS

LA RUTA

BY ISAAC GÓMEZ

OCTOBER 23-24, 2020

PRESENTED VIRTUALLY AS PART OF THE 2020/2021 SEASON

Texas Theatre and Dance is pleased to present Isaac Gómez's *La Ruta*, a heartbreaking story of a border town, a bus route and the women of Ciudad Juárez who are disappearing. Inspired by real testimonies from women affected by the ongoing femicides along the border, *La Ruta* will be presented virtually October 23-24, 2020 under the direction of Anna Skidis Vargas.

“La Ruta is a celebration of the resilience of Mexican women in the face of unbelievable pain and loss,” shares director and current M.F.A. candidate Anna Skidis Vargas. “The dialogue is gripping; the music is gorgeous and the play has a lot of heart.” For at least two decades, the women of Juárez, known as “the capital of murdered women,” have been disappearing along the bus route to and from the U.S.-owned maquiladoras where they work. Despite the dangers, the promise of opportunity and paid jobs forces them to make the trip along la ruta as they struggle to support their families. The play shifts back and forth through time following the story of two mothers, Yolanda and Marisela, as they fight to uncover the truth about their missing daughters.

"[This piece] will be presented as a livestreamed, digital performance. It has all of the elements you might find in a theatre, but they have been custom fit to be seen in your home," continues Vargas. "The sound design is robust enough that it could be enjoyed as a radio play, but the visual world we are building is so exciting!"

Anna Skidis Vargas is a M.F.A. in Directing candidate who works primarily on musicals, devised theatre and the stories of underrepresented groups. She is the founder of Theatre Nuevo in Saint Louis, where she produced and directed *This is Not Funny*, *Orgullo*, *Acronyms*, *Hell* and *Luchadora!*, for which she was nominated for Outstanding Director and Outstanding Production of a Comedy by the Saint Louis Theater Circle. Skidis Vargas has received two Circle Awards for her performances in *Lizze*, *the Musical* and *Spring Awakening* and has been named a "Rising Leader of Color" by *Theatre Communications Group* (TCG). She holds a B.A. in Performance from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. skidisvargas.com

Playwright Isaac Gómez is an award-winning Chicago-based playwright and alumnus of The University of Texas at Austin Department of Theatre and Dance. Originally from El Paso, Texas/Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, his play *La Ruta* received its world premiere at Steppenwolf Theater Company in December 2018. His plays have been supported by Steppenwolf Theater Company, Denver Center, Primary Stages, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and Goodman Theatre, among others. He is a professional lecturer at The Theatre School at DePaul University and is represented by The Gersh Agency and Circle of Confusion.

La Ruta features a powerful cast, including Deja Criston (Woman of Juárez), Emily Garcia (Yolanda), Vivian Gonzalez (Ivonne), Guinevere Govea (Desamaya), Anapaula Guajardo (Woman of Juárez), Manuela Guerra (Zaide), Kathleen M. Guerrero (Marisela), Cielo Ortiz (Brenda) and Emily Yaneth Perez (Woman of Juárez).

The production team for *La Ruta* include Lowell Bartholomee (Sound Designer), John Erickson (Projection Designer), Harold Horsley (Costume Designer), Tara A. Houston (Scenic Designer), Jesse J. Sanchez (Composer), Anna Skidis Vargas (Director), Skyler Taten (Stage Manager), Amber Whatley (Lighting Designer), Yasmin Zacaria Mikhael (Dramaturg).

For more information about *La Ruta*, please visit JoinTheDrama.org

CALENDAR LISTING

October 23-24, 2020 – The University of Texas at Austin Department of Theatre and Dance presents *La Ruta* by Isaac Gómez – details available at JoinTheDrama.org.

Performance times are October 23-24 at 7:30 p.m. All ticketing for the 2020/2021 Season will be available at pay-what-you-can pricing. Details about how to stream performances will be made available at: theatredance.utexas.edu/season-tickets/subscription-series. More information about ticketing is available at: theatredance.utexas.edu/ticketing

Texas Theatre and Dance is committed to the health and safety of our students, faculty, staff and audiences. Due to the uncertain nature of our current times, all titles, dates, times and presentation details may be subject to change.

ABOUT TEXAS THEATRE AND DANCE

The University of Texas at Austin Department of Theatre and Dance is a world-class educational environment that serves as the ultimate creative incubator for the next generation of artists, thinkers and leaders in theatre and performance.

Texas Theatre and Dance is a proud participant of The JUBILEE, a year-long, nationwide theatre festival featuring work generated by those who have traditionally been excluded – including, but not limited to artists of color, Native American and Indigenous and First Nations artists, women, non-binary and gender non-conforming artists, LGBTQIA2+ artists, Deaf artists and artists with disabilities.

ALSO THIS SEASON

(Re)current Unrest

Presented in partnership with Texas Performing Arts and Fusebox Festival

October 2020

UTNT (UT New Theatre), part one

Producing Artistic Director, KJ Sanchez

Associate Producing Artistic Director, Alexandra Bassiakou Shaw

October 29-November 8, 2020

In the Ether

By Erica Gionfriddo

November 18-22, 2020

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