

Hispanic Heritage Month

Celebrating in the Theatre Community

¡Detras de la Cortina!

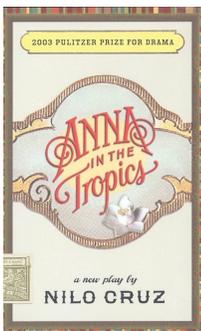
Sept 15th-Oct 15th

National Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to honor the rich cultural contributions of Hispanic and Latinx communities. In the theater industry, this observance provides a unique opportunity to spotlight and celebrate the outstanding talent, creativity, and storytelling prowess of Hispanic artists and playwrights. From groundbreaking productions to influential actors and directors, Hispanic excellence continues to shape and enrich the world of theater, making Hispanic Heritage Month a perfect occasion to acknowledge and appreciate their invaluable contributions. For federal initiatives regarding National Hispanic Heritage Month, see <https://www.hispanicheritagemonth.gov/about.html>.

While we are used to celebrating the onstage work of individuals like Lin-Manuel Miranda, EGOT winner Rita Moreno, Chita Rivera, Raul Esparza, John Leguizamo, and Ariana DeBose, we know that the theatre industry is filled with talented directors, designers, producers, managers, front of house, and crew members of Hispanic heritage that contribute immensely to the beautiful work we do. For this newsletter, we will be sharing iconic work by Hispanic authors, as well as the Latinx theatre companies around the city that produce Spanish-language theatre.

Works:

- **"Anna in the Tropics" by Nilo Cruz:** 2002, New Theatre (Coral Gables, Florida)



Set in a Florida cigar factory, this Pulitzer Prize-winning play explores themes of love, literature, and the immigrant experience among Cuban-Americans.

- **"Death and the Maiden" by Ariel Dorfman:** 1990, Royal Court Theatre (London)

A former political prisoner confronts her haunting past when a chance encounter with a stranger triggers a gripping exploration of justice, revenge, and the complexities of healing in post-dictatorship Chile.

- **"The House of Bernarda Alba" by Federico Garcia Lorca:** 1945 (written in 1936 but not produced until 1945), Teatro María Guerrero (Madrid)

Within the confines of a wealthy widow's home, societal constraints and desires collide among her five daughters, leading to a tragic climax of repression and rebellion.

- **"Life is a Dream" by Pedro Calderon:** 1635, Royal Palace of La Plazuela (Madrid)

A prince imprisoned from birth is set free, only to grapple with the blurred lines between reality and illusion, fate and free will, in a philosophical exploration of human existence.

- **"Electricidad" by Luis Alfaro:** 2003, Goodman Theatre (Chicago)

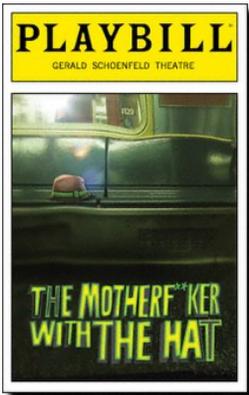
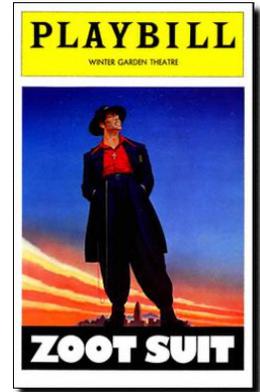
A modern adaptation of the Greek tragedy "Electra," set in a contemporary Latino neighborhood.

- **"In the Heights" by Lin-Manuel Miranda:** 2005, 37 Arts Theatre (Off-Broadway); 2008, Richard Rodgers Theatre (Broadway)

Set in the predominantly Hispanic-American neighborhood of Washington Heights in New York City, this Tony Award-winning musical celebrates the lives of its residents.



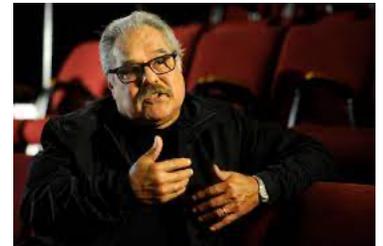
- **"Cuba Libre" by Desmond Child:** 2016, The Stratford Festival (Canada)
This musical combines rock and Latin music to tell the story of the Cuban revolution and the life of José Martí.
- **"Zoot Suit" by Luis Valdez:** 1978, Mark Taper Forum (Los Angeles), Revived at the Mark Taper Forum in 2017.
A landmark in Chicano theater, it tells the story of the Zoot Suit Riots in Los Angeles during World War II.
- **"Real Women Have Curves" by Josefina López:** 1990, Josefina López's garage (Los Angeles)
The play focuses on the struggles and aspirations of a group of Latina women working in a sewing factory.



- **"The Motherf**ker with the Hat" by Stephen Adly Guirgis:** 2011, Gerald Schoenfeld Theatre (Broadway)
This play explores addiction, love, and relationships in a Puerto Rican neighborhood
- **"The Mambo Kings" Based on the novel "The Mambo Kings Play Songs of Love" by Oscar Hijuelos:** 2005, Broadway production at the Golden Gate Theatre (San Francisco)
This musical explores the journey of two Cuban brothers who achieve fame as mambo musicians in 1950s New York City.

Writers:

- **Luis Valdez:** A pioneering figure in Chicano theater, Luis Valdez is known for works like "Zoot Suit" and "La Bamba." With "Zoot Suit," he made history with the first Chicano play to hit Broadway. He is acclaimed for his exploration of Mexican American culture and history.
- **Quiara Alegría Hudes:** Hudes is known for her work on the musical "In the Heights" with Lin-Manuel Miranda and her Pulitzer Prize-winning drama "Water by the Spoonful."
- **Jose Rivera:** Rivera's play "Marisol" gained critical acclaim for its surreal and thought-provoking storytelling. He has contributed significantly to Latino theater in the United States.
- **Tanya Saracho:** Mexican-American playwright Tanya Saracho is recognized for works like "Mala Hierba" and "Fade." She often explores themes of identity, culture, and immigration in her plays.
- **Octavio Solis:** A prominent Mexican-American playwright, Solis is known for his plays such as "Lydia" and "El Paso Blue," which delve into complex family dynamics and cultural issues.
- **Carmen Rivera:** Rivera is celebrated for her work "La Gringa," which explores the experience of a young Puerto Rican woman visiting her family's homeland. Her plays often tackle themes of identity and belonging.
- **Josefina López:** Best known for "Real Women Have Curves," Josefina López's work highlights the struggles and triumphs of Latina women in America.
- **Nilo Cruz:** Cuban-American playwright Nilo Cruz is famous for his Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Anna in the Tropics," which beautifully blends themes of literature and love.



Theaters

All over New York, there is a rich culture of Spanish-language theaters and production companies. Once a year, “The Alliance of Teatro Latinos NY” comes together to produce “TeatroFest NYC,” a celebration of “exciting, original new works and classic Spanish dramas by Latin performing arts professionals, seen by tens of thousands of New York City general audiences and schoolchildren.” More information can be found at <https://latinotheatersny.com/>.

The Alliance of Teatro Latinos NY is made up of the following theatre companies who produce Spanish language theatre year-round.

- **Repertorio Español** has Been New York’s Leading Spanish-Language Repertory Theatre for Over 50 Years! It is one of New York City’s most successful Off-Broadway theaters. Founded by New York Cubans in 1968, it produces Spanish-language theatre from literary classics and some new stories, with occasional comedy and flamenco. Much of the theatre is presented with subtitle translations, so you English speakers can enjoy the productions too. <https://repertorio.nyc/#/>
- **IATI Theater:** Instituto Arte Teatral Internacional (IATI) was founded in 1968 by Venezuelan director Abdón Villamizar and a group of Latinx writers and actors. <https://www.iatitheater.org/>
- **INTAR Theatre:** INTAR is an organization committed since 1966 to the development of “theater arts without borders.” For decades INTAR has commissioned, developed and produced live theater works generated by Latin playwrights, composers, directors, choreographers and visual artists. INTAR assists early career U.S. Latin artists and producers in obtaining their first professional theater credits, union memberships and reviews in English language media. <https://www.intartheatre.org/>
- **Pregones/PRTT :** Pregones was founded in 1979 when a group of artists led by Rosalba Rolón set out to create new works in the style of Caribbean and Latin American “colectivos” or performing ensembles. Pregones/Puerto Rican Traveling Theater (aka Pregones/PRTT) is a multigenerational performing ensemble, multidiscipline arts presenter, and owner/steward of bilingual arts facilities in The Bronx and Manhattan. <https://pregonesprtt.org/>
- **Teatro Círculo:** Teatro Círculo was launched in 1994 by Founding Artistic Director José Cheo Oliveras to revive Spanish Golden Age Theatre. <https://teatrocirculo.org/>
- **Teatro LATEA:** LATEA (Latin American Theater Experiment Associates) is a performing arts theater company that has been a Latino cultural staple for over 30 years. Through multicultural and multidisciplinary initiatives at The Clemente, which it helped establish, LATEA assiduously promotes and produces Latino performing arts to and for Latinos and multicultural audiences. <https://teatrolatea.org/>
- **Teatro SEA:** Established in 1985, SEA (Society of the Educational Arts, Inc.) , is the premiere Bilingual Arts-in-Education Organization and Latino Children’s Theater in the United States. <https://teatrosea.org/>
- **Thalia Spanish Theatre:** the first and only bilingual Hispanic theatre in Queens serving one of the most diverse communities in the United States, including more than one million Hispanics from every Spanish-speaking nation in the world. Every month is Hispanic Heritage Month at Thalia Spanish Theatre. <https://thaliatheatre.org/>