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1 Playwright

1.1 A Writer's Tight rope

Record: 1

Title: KAREN ZACARÍAS: A Writer's Tightrope.

Authors: Svich, Caridad

Source: American Theatre. Jan2006, Vol. 23 Issue 1, p54-59. 5p.

Document Type: Article

Subject Terms: *Women dramatists

*Dramatists

*Performing arts

*Playwriting

NAICS/Industry Codes: 711510 Independent Artists, Writers, and Performers

711513 Independent writers and authors

People: Zacarias, Karen -- Interviews

Abstract: This article presents an interview with Karen Zacarías, playwright and founder and artistic director of Young "Playwrights' Theater, an award-winning company that has worked with students in Washington, D.C.-area schools since 1995 to enhance literacy, spark creativity and resolve conflicts through playwriting. When asked about the lessons that can be learned from her play *The Sins of Sor Juana*, she says that she has a grandiose idea of introducing a noble character to the audience.

Full Text Word Count: 2244

ISSN: 8750-3255

Accession Number: 19365620

Database: Academic Search Premier

Section: PEOPLE

KAREN ZACARÍAS: A Writer's Tightrope

She's in the family business, but goes about it her own way

Karen Zacarías is the founder and artistic director of Young "Playwrights' Theater, an award-winning company that has worked with students in Washington, D.C.-area schools since 1995 to enhance literacy, spark creativity and resolve conflicts through playwriting. Zacarías's play *Mariela in the Desert*, a winner of the National Latino Playwrighting Award and a finalist for several other prizes, debuted at Chicago's Goodman Theatre this past February, and her new musical comedy for children, *Einstein Is a Dummy* (written with composer Deborah Wicks La Puma), just premiered in an extended run at Atlanta's Alliance Theatre. *The Sins of Sor Juana*, winner of the Charles MacArthur Award for outstanding new play at D.C.'s 2000 Helen Hayes Awards, has been widely produced, and Zacarías is translating it for a Spanish-language production in April at D.C.'s GALA Hispanic Theatre. Her other plays for young people include *Ferdinand the Bull* and *Cinderella Eats Rice and Beans: A Salsa Musical*. Zacarías earned her B.A. from Stanford University and a master's degree in playwriting from Boston University, studying with Nobel laureates Derek Walcott and Elie Wiesel. We conducted this conversation by e-mail.



Karen Zacarías, right, with a group of Washington, D.C.-area public school students.

CARIDAD SVICH: "Beware of the big idea" is something I often tell students when I teach playwriting, "because the burden of the big idea can stop you from writing the real play at hand." Many terrific plays come at their large questions through almost imperceptible means (Chekhov is exemplary at this). Your play *The Sins of Sor Juana* focuses on the personal and political trials of 17th-century Mexican nun, poet and pre-feminist icon Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz--it tackles the question of the necessity of artistic freedom sometimes head-on and sometimes more deceptively. It's a wonderfully sneaky play! How did you wrestle with bringing her to theatrical life? As artistic freedoms are curtailed in many countries around the world, what do you think Sor Juana's story can teach us?

KAREN ZACARÍAS: I started writing *Sor Juana* with the grandiose idea that I was introducing this noble character to a new audience that "needed" to know who she was. Two minutes later (and for the full next four months), I was completely blocked. Plays about icons are insufferable to write and even worse to sit through; plays about people, however--now those can be interesting.

I did a crazy amount of research on "Sister Jane" and then decided to throw away everything I knew about her--I had to figure out why I personally wanted to write about this woman who was doomed to be silenced. Then suddenly I realized that Sor Juana's story was very parallel to my grandmother's life story--she was the true brilliant writer in the family, difficult and charismatic and contradictory, who was silenced in so many ways, and died in her room alone, just like Sor Juana. But unlike Sor Juana, my grandmother was far from being a nun--she was an early feminist who fell madly in love with the wrong man. She struggled with her conflicting feelings for my traditional grandfather and her need for expression in a world that did not deem her worthy. And so my play strayed from being a biography into a creative study of Sor Juana's life through the angle of writing, love, compromise and betrayal. It became a play about societal obstacles to expression, but also a study of how all of us bargain and negotiate away certain freedoms and artistic choices for uncertain comforts and societal acceptance. I'm afraid these 17th-

century themes are still relevant today.



From left, Kylie Brown, Justin Tanner, Derek Manson and Jahi Kearse in Zacarías and Deborah Wicks La Puma's Einstein is a Dummy at Atlanta's Alliance Theatre this past month.

At "Shaping the Future of the American Voice" [a Latina/o playwrights' panel discussion held at New York's INTAR Theatre in 2003], you spoke about the importance of writing texts that are "fluid in their meaning and yet permanent in their existence." How do you keep yourself alert to unfixing meaning in your plays, and therefore allowing for multiple meanings to co-exist?

I have discovered that the best way to keep a text unfixed in its meaning is for the writer to be uneasily uncertain of exactly what she is trying to say. I always think of writing as an exploration, not a forgone conclusion--and it isn't until after the piece is "done" that I discover the various themes that have been nagging at my core. This means during the process, I have to learn to trust my characters--let them breathe, be vulnerable, funny, ruthless and contradictory. More often than not, my characters lead me to a plot or story, not the other way around. I have images of certain moments in the play, but I'm not always sure how to get there--I get lost, must retrace my steps, go back to the beginning. This dependency on complicated characters is what keeps a work from becoming fixed or dogmatic.

Your work has a sense of formality and a lively humor, even in Sor Juana. How did you develop your comedic voice?

Predictability is deadly in storytelling, and I find humor to be one of the most effective ways to create tension, surprise and connection between the audience, the characters and the story. Personally, I go to the theatre to be emotionally moved, and subtle humor is one of the best ways to disarm an audience and create an attachment that will allow them to follow the characters to darker, starker areas. Humor humanizes. If it is used organically, it is one of the most powerful tools a writer has to create gut-

wrenching drama.

You come from an artistic family in Mexico, so in a sense you're working in the family business. Have you been able to share your work with your family and seek their advice?

I grew up in an extended family where it was not uncommon for someone to stop eating to write a poem on a napkin. I always knew I wanted to be a writer. At six, I used all my allowance money to buy a plastic manual typewriter. Every Christmas, my cousins and I would put on shows, where we wrote scripts, created songs, invented poems. My grandfather Miguel Zacarías was a movie director and writer during the golden age of cinema in Mexico in the '30s and '40s. (He is still alive and well at 100.) Ours was a wonderful, lively, enchanting artistic house, but it also demystified "art" for me. I saw firsthand how "artistic expression" could be misused as a justification for self-indulgent, self-important and destructive behavior, and consequently I resisted being an artist for many years. It wasn't until I was out of college, had worked a couple of years at a Latin American policy nonprofit and knew I could support myself without betraying others that I finally let myself really become a writer.

A great deal of your writing has been focused on young audiences and using theatre as an educational tool. Where do you find continued inspiration for this work? And how do you balance running Young Playwrights' Theater and your own playwriting?

I love writing for young people. You can't find a more honest and challenging audience on the planet. My strongest playwriting lessons have come in trying to create stories that will resonate with young people--it is a rewarding, hilarious and heartbreaking endeavor to create plays in which kids really see themselves on stage. The same is true with my work as the founder of Young Playwrights'--I find it really inspiring to see young people take ownership of their story and voice by creating dialogue that is really about who they are. Their writing is fabulous: theatrical and raw, funny, sad and inspired. There is a lot of discussion, accusation and fist-waving by a lot of artists, including playwrights, on how the American theatre needs to change--how theatres need to embrace new plays by a new America. I agree with that argument 100 percent, but as we all learned in Playwriting 101, telling is not as dramatic as showing. When people come to YPT and see a professional production of a play written by a young urban writer, most find themselves shocked at how riveted they are by the language and the story.

At the same time, these students will hopefully grow to become future audiences of theatre, and demand work that is new and reflects the diverse and universal reality of living in the USA. As artists, especially artists of color, we can't just ask for change from others; we have the responsibility of making change happen ourselves.

Of course it's a struggle to raise the \$400,000 YPT needs each year to work with hundreds of kids, to produce the plays written by the students, to write my own work, and to be a mother (I have a three-year-old and a one-year-old, and I am expecting another baby in April). I write in spurts and fits, and inspiration can come at the oddest moment. I can go months without writing--and bang out a draft in two days. I know a professional writer is supposed to sit down every day and write something, anything, but that is not a reality for me. The truth is: I am an uncool artist hoping to buy a used mini-van; I have diapers to change, grants to write, classes to teach. So I spend months writing in my head until I can sit down and pour it out on paper.



Rosanne Couston, foreground, with, from left, Christina Walker, Hector Ayala and Camila Tessler in Borderlands Theater of Arizona's production of Zacarias's The Sins of Sor Juana.

Mariela in the Desert was originally commissioned by South Coast Repertory in California and has had the good fortune to be developed at various theatres across the U.S. Are there dramaturgical lessons you learned along the way as it developed?

What I have learned is that no matter how many plays one has written, it still takes a long time to write a good one. At least three years. I'm amazed every time I go through development how much I learn, and I'm shocked I didn't see it earlier. Plays are a process. They are like children--no matter how many you've had or known in the past, each play needs to gestate and grow and be nurtured and molded by time, attention, inspiration and humor.

How do you protect yourself from the "giving-up" demons?

Writing is a choice. Even when I feel I'm going to burst if I don't write, it is still a choice. Playwriting is the oddest of choices, because "success" is so ethereal and impossible. But as an extroverted writer, theatre was the one place where I could interact with the world and still write. So although a play may take forever (or never) to be produced, I get to interact and take pleasure in that world. I realize that the more I write, the less I live. But, oddly enough, the more I live, the more I can write. Since childhood, I have seen people become bitter because they have made big sacrifices and given everything to their art; and art (or any profession, no matter how passionate) will never give you everything back. I have tried to be really patient and realistic with our odd profession. I fight the "giving up" demons by putting creative emphasis in a lot of other facets in my life--my family, my students and teaching, my grant writing, my bad cooking. Consequently, I am embarrassingly un-prolific, but, strangely enough, I have had the satisfaction of seeing every one of my plays publicly staged in one way or another.

I think the intense geographic separation of Latina/o playwrights in this country, despite active

pockets in New York City and Los Angeles, makes these artists in unique need of finding bridges. You're based in D.C. What advantages and disadvantages are there to being a playwright in the country's capital? And how do you forge community?

Washington, D.C., is a secret haven for playwrights. We have 80 working theatres. The Playwright's Forum, run by Ernie Joselovitz, offers weekly roundtables for scores of playwrights. My peers at Young Playwrights' are all writers; the children I work with in the public schools are also playwrights. I have deep friendships with playwrights here and across the nation, and we traditionally support and encourage each other to write--or drink bad coffee and bemoan the state of an American theatre that refuses to recognize the genius of our work.

I realize that D.C. is still not New York or L.A. for a Latino writer, but there are many advantages here--the proximity of the irony of politics, the access to programs and museums and artists from all over the world. There is also a certain kind of novelty of being one of the few Latino playwrights in town. But in a city where things are still seen in terms of "white and black," Latinos of all colors have a challenge in establishing ourselves both politically and artistically as a viable entity in D.C.

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Interview by Caridad Svich

Caridad Svich is a resident playwright at New Dramatists. She is the editor of *Trans-Global Readings: Crossing Theatrical Boundaries*, a collection of conversations on media, language, culture and performance (Manchester University Press, 2004).

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## 1.2 Writing Two Roles for Herself

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/05/07/AR2009050701702.html>

Tonight's Premiere Is Latest Labor of Love For Dramatist-Mom Karen Zacarías

By Ellen McCarthy Washington Post Staff Writer Friday, May 8, 2009

*Welcome to the first in an occasional series of profiles about the people who bring Washington's weekends to life.*

Karen Zacarías, mother of three children younger than 8 years old, begins her day by serving breakfast. Then it's a book read, shoes on, car seats buckled, a song sung, kids dropped at appropriate locations, a kiss goodbye.

Once that routine is complete, she will shower -- finally -- and become her other self: the 39-year-old woman who has emerged as one of Washington's most successful and prolific playwrights.

The one who completed five full-length plays the year her youngest was born.

Who had four new plays staged within eight months last year.

Whose works have been seen at some of the nation's most renowned theaters, including the Kennedy Center and Chicago's famed Goodman Theatre.

Whom Variety called "a writer of comedic skill."

The one who'll watch anxiously tonight as the curtain at Arena Stage rises on the world premiere of what she believes to be her finest play yet, "Legacy of Light."

The one who knows what you're wondering: How does she do it?

"I haven't slept in a really long time," she jokes on a recent morning, having rushed into a cafe across from Arena's rehearsal space 10 minutes late and frazzled. Her voice is hoarse, as always, but her smile is unflagging.

The truth is, she didn't think she could do it.

Then she considered the alternative: "It was the difference between losing my creativity," she explains, "or kind of losing my mind."

Before we provoke the wrath of what she calls "the Mommy Mafia," let's make one thing clear:

Zacarías (pronounced Zak-a-REE-as) completely adores her children, Nicolai, 7, Kati, 4, and Maia, 3.

But there was a moment not long ago when she became sure that her blossoming playwriting career would be lost among sippy cups, baby dolls and field trip forms.

Maia, you see, was "a little bit of a surprise."

"I felt that when this third baby would come, my creative life would be done," she recalls, speaking with such characteristic speed that her ideas often interrupt one another. "There's no way you can write and have three kids, ya know?"

So for the nine months of her pregnancy, Zacarías, who has been writing plays on and off since college, buckled down with her laptop, trying to pound out what she thought would be her last work for a long while, "The Book Club Play."

That script completed, she began to make peace with the notion that her "career is waning and I'm going to be home with the kids, which is okay."

Then something strange happened: Three weeks before she was to give birth, the folks from Arena Stage called and commissioned her to write a new play.

"And that became like my anchor to the other side," she says. "I knew that I would still be a playwright after the baby came."

Zacarías, who presents an air of dishevelment but is rarely without a striking necklace or a funky belt, describes herself as a "good Girl Scout": Given an assignment, she always completes it. The question, this time, was how.

The impending baby and the opportunity with Arena prompted a series of soul-searching conversations with her "very supportive husband," Rett Snotherly, a lawyer with the International Trade Commission.

"We sat down and reevaluated what we needed in our life and what we didn't. And we didn't let the tail wag the dog," she recalls from a couch at Tryst coffeehouse, near their "crazy, messy" Adams Morgan home, having rushed in late this time after Maia "had an accident" at preschool and needed a change of clothes. "We restructured our whole life, and we let go of certain things."

She dropped any lingering desire to be a community activist, a classroom helper, a flawlessly coifed person in an impeccably kept home. And she gave up day-to-day involvement with the Young Playwrights' Theater (YPT), an organization she started in 1995 to help local youth write plays.

That one was the hardest. At 23, the Mexican-born daughter of a nurse and doctor and granddaughter of film director Miguel Zacarías, was accepted into a playwriting graduate program at Boston University but couldn't afford to go.

A woman in her playwriting group got wind of the quandary, spoke to her husband and made Zacarías an offer: They would pay for the program if, upon graduation, Zacarías would return and do something for the community.

"She was immensely talented, otherwise I never would've taken this step," recalls Zacarías's benefactor, Patricia Smith Melton, wife of William Melton, a Washington technology executive. "For me it was a no-brainer."

So YPT was born. It has grown from a one-woman show to a half-million-dollar organization that teaches 800 local students a year the art of playwriting. In the end, Zacarías says, it was the students who inspired her to hand the reins to a new executive director. "Meeting these kids and seeing how hard they work, I'm always like, 'I have to make sure I don't stop being an artist as well.' "

So Zacarías and her husband came to the conclusion that she need be only two things: a playwright and a mother. She would take herself seriously in those roles and leave everything else by the wayside. If they needed to go into a little bit of debt, so be it, but they would hire a babysitter three times a week so she could sit amid the calming chatter at Tryst and write without interruption.

The wager paid off. "I used to fight the chaos a little bit more, but what happened to me was finally with the third child, it was a great release. I just gave in to it," she says. "And when I gave in to it, five plays came out. It was very interesting."

Zacarías has been at this for almost 20 years now, and, as Arena Stage Artistic Director Molly Smith says, "she does the work."

When the Arena commission came in, Zacarías was fascinated with an 18th-century woman named Émilie du Châtelet. Du Châtelet was a mathematician and scientist, and lover of the great philosopher Voltaire. She became unexpectedly pregnant at age 42 and, sure of her impending death from childbirth, completed her greatest work, a translation into French of Newton's "Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy" during her final nine months.

In other words: Zacarías chose to write a story she knows well.

"Why did that story resonate with me 260 years later?" Zacarías remembers wondering. "All my friends are in some state of struggling to become mothers or whether they want to become mothers. . . . I was trying to figure out this idea of trying to have it all, which I think is impossible."

Zacarías spent six months finishing a rough version of "[Legacy of Light](#)," weaving Du Châtelet's story with that of a modern couple trying desperately to conceive a child. And she has since plowed through "15 or 16 serious drafts," ripping the play apart and reassembling it each time. In the same spate of time -- while Maia was still nursing and in diapers -- she also completed an adaptation of the Julia Alvarez novel "How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents" and the children's plays "Looking for Roberto Clemente" and "Chasing George Washington," which will go on tour later this year and was nominated for a Helen Hayes Award this year.

But she has been on both sides of the critics' sword. In 2000 she won a Helen Hayes award for "The Sins of Sor Juana." During its premier at Round House Theatre, however, "The Book Club Play" received decidedly tepid reviews.

Washington Post theater critic Peter Marks says Zacarías "is one of the most prominent Washington writers writing for Washington theater. And she's one of a very small group getting produced with any regularity."

"I do care about critics, unfortunately," she admits. To mitigate the potential psychic wounds, she no longer reads reviews; her husband summarizes what was written. "I don't want that person's judgment," she says. "I can know what they thought, but I don't need to know the wording."

Reviews aside, as her work has flourished, so has her satisfaction with her family and home life. "I think I'm a better mom being fulfilled with my creativity. I really enjoy being with the kids when I'm with them," she explains. Which is not to say it's never a struggle or that guilt has been banished.

"I've had my son proudly introduce me as a playwright to all of his friends," she says.

Zacarías, who occasionally has to travel to advise productions of her plays, has also had her son "call me . . . and say, 'Please don't ever write a play again, because you have to go away with that.' And they're both real."

Of her recent plays, "Legacy" has been the cherished and most intimate project. Like most of her works, it oscillates between comedy and drama and zeros in on this tricky business of being human.

The characters differ in time, attitude and circumstance but are all, she says, "trying to do the best they can."

"And I find that to be true in the world I live in. No one's given up. Everyone's trying," she continues. "We feel bad and guilty about not doing everything . . . but I really don't know very many people who aren't trying hard."

On a recent spring evening Zacarías rushed breathless into rehearsal. She is late, again, and

dressed in a silky coral top belted chicly over jeans. It's vintage from her mom's closet, she explains in response to a colleague's compliment, pulled out for the occasion "since I didn't do laundry."

Inside the rehearsal room actors are already at work, running scenes over and over again. They parse through their characters' motives and movements, wondering out loud about the feelings their faces are meant to portray.

Through it all, Zacarías smiles a lot and says very little.

Playwriting is a precarious, public endeavor. Stories birthed from a writer's imagination fall imprecisely to the page only to be passed on to the hands of a director and troupe actors before it's stood up for judgment by critics and audiences.

"Legacy of Light" isn't Karen Zacarías's play anymore; it belongs to all of them.

At this moment she's acutely aware that the response to "Legacy of Light," the play she has worked harder on than any, could be unfavorable. "It's ambitious," she says. "It might get slapped down. But I do feel exhausted in the best sense of the word. I've given it everything I've got."

Smith, who's directing "Legacy of Light" at Arena, is less equivocal. "This is a play that has a strong emotional journey. It's contemporary and universal," she says. "And it's her time. This is Karen's moment."

In her moment she is full of nerves, anticipation and not an ounce of regret.

"At least," she remarks of the play, "it says what I wanted it to say -- and now it's up to other people to decide."

### 1.3 Bio

Karen Zacarías award-winning plays include the sold-out/extended comedy *THE BOOK CLUB PLAY*, the sold-out world premiere drama *JUST LIKE US* (adapted from the book by Helen Thorpe) at Denver Theater Center, the Steinberg –citation award play *LEGACY OF LIGHT*, the Francesca Primus Award winning play *MARIELA IN THE DESERT*, the Helen Hayes Award winning play *THE SINS OF SOR JUANA*, the adaptation of Julia Alvarez’s *HOW THE GARCIA GIRLS LOST THEIR ACCENTS*. Karen also has a piece in the Arena Stage premiere of *OUR WAR*. Her TYA musicals with composer Debbie Wicks la Puma include *JANE OF THE JUNGLE*, *EINSTEIN IS A DUMMY*, *LOOKING FOR ROBERTO CLEMENTE*, *CINDERELLA EATS RICE AND BEANS*, *FERDINAND THE BULL*, and *FRIDA LIBRE*. Her musical *CHASING GEORGE WASHINGTON* premiered at The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts and went on a National Tour. Her script was then adapted into a book by Scholastic with a foreword by First Lady Michelle Obama.

Karen is currently working on the adaptation of Edith Wharton’s *THE AGE OF INNOCENCE*, a drama for Oregon Shakespeare Festival, and a Brazilian themed *Oliver Twist* musical: *OLIVERIO: A BRAZILIAN TWIST ON DICKENS* for the Kennedy Center. Her libretto of *THE SUN ALSO RISES* for the Washington Ballet received accolades in the New York Times and she is currently writing the libretto for *THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW* with Washington Ballet artistic Director Septime Webre. She is proud to be currently commissioned to write new plays for Arena Stage, Cincinnati Playhouse, Ford’s Theater, Adventure Theater, and First Stage.

Her plays have been produced at The John F. Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, Arena Stage, The Goodman Theater, Round House Theater, The Denver Center, Alliance Theater, Imagination Stage, GALA Hispanic Theater, Berkshire Theater Festival, South Coast Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, Cleveland Playhouse, San Jose Repertory Theater, GEVA Theater, Horizon’s Theater, People’s Light and Theater, Walnut Street Theater, Arden Theater, Milagro Theater, Teatro Vista, Aurora Theater, and many more.

Her awards include: New Voices Award, 2010 Steinberg Citation-Best New Play, Paul Aneillo Award, National Francesca Primus Prize, New Voices Award, National Latino Play Award, Finalist Susan Blackburn, Helen Hayes for Outstanding New Play.

Karen is the first playwright-in-residence at Arena Stage in Washington, DC and has taught playwriting at Georgetown University. She is the founder of Young Playwrights’ Theater, an award-winning theater company that teaches playwriting in local public schools in Washington, DC. YPT won the 2010 National Arts and Humanities Youth Program Award from the White House as one of the most innovative arts programs in the nation. The YPT curriculum is currently being used in public schools in DC, VA, MD, New Orleans, Detroit, and Texas and is published on Amazon as “WRITE TO DREAM.”

Karen is represented by the Graham Agency and published by Dramatic Publishing. Karen is fluent in English and Spanish and highly proficient in Danish and French. She has BA with distinction from Stanford University and a Masters in Creative Writing from Boston

University. Born in Mexico, Karen now lives in Washington D.C. with her husband and three children.

## 1.4 Inspiration in Arena Stage's Residency Program

Playwright Karen Zacarías finds inspiration in Arena Stage's residency program

By DeNeen Brown October 14, 2011

[https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/playwright-karen-zacarias-finds-inspiration-in-arena-stages-residency-program/2011/10/11/gIQAObvBkL\\_story.html?utm\\_term=.4ed4774272e0](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/playwright-karen-zacarias-finds-inspiration-in-arena-stages-residency-program/2011/10/11/gIQAObvBkL_story.html?utm_term=.4ed4774272e0)

ACT ONE. SCENE ONE..

Playwright sits at a kitchen table in pink T-shirt and jeans, rewriting the second act of a play that will be produced in two weeks at a major Washington theater. Playwright is in her early 40s, attractive and accomplished. Variety calls her a “writer of comedic skill.” A clear vase sits on the table, filled with plump, pink roses the playwright has bought herself. She opens her laptop.

Playwright Karen Zacarías is wrestling with her play's final scene. The ending needs one more “aha moment,” she says. The main character must break down and come to the realization that she has ruined things for the other characters. Right now, Zacarías is not sure her character has realized that.

This is a moment that requires high-wire crafting. That's why people who write plays are called playwrights. A play is wrought.

Unlike other forms of literature, plays need a stage to make their words live. Audiences can be unforgiving. Success or failure is very public. For the playwright, this means failure can feel exponentially more devastating, and success beyond magnificent.

Zacarías, 42, who was born in Mexico to a family of poets, is rewriting her comedy “The Book Club Play.” Later, she will deliver these new lines to the actors who will perform the play through Nov. 6 at Arena Stage, under the direction of Molly Smith. The posters are already hung in the windows of the striking new Southwest D.C. theater complex, and the pressure is on: “The Book Club Play” will be the first work produced under Arena's American Voices New Play Institute, launched in July 2009 with a \$1.1 million grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. The institute, which Smith, Arena's artistic director, says provides tools for writers to do their best work, operates as a “think tank” for the development of new American plays.

It includes fellowships to train young producers, and a course called Theater 101 gives audience members an intimate look at play production. But its playwright-in-residence program is generating the most buzz. Five emerging and established playwrights — Lisa Kron, Katori Hall, Charles Randolph-Wright, Amy Freed and Zacarías — have been selected to receive, for three

years, a \$40,000 annual salary, health benefits and production seed money that they control to revisit older works or write new ones.

Arena promises to produce at least one play by each of the playwrights, who are invited to live and work in a Southwest townhouse that Arena has rented three blocks from the theater. The house has become a setting to create, hang out and talk about drama.

When Freed got the news that she had been selected for the paid residency, “I was kind of in a state of shock. The reality is playwrights make no money. I said, ‘Do you realize what that means for a writer, that you are given space and time to do work without 80 percent of the energy going to “How am I going to get the bills paid”?’ ”

After the call, “my husband and I looked at each other, and we both knew my life had changed,” says Freed, a Pulitzer Prize finalist whose play, “You, Nero,” is set to open at Arena on Nov. 25.

“For the next three years, I know I am a working playwright,” she says. “It’s making me cry talking about it. I have had a play in production almost every year for 17 years; still, at the end of that, every year there is the question, ‘Can I live to fight another day?’ ”

The residency “cast a backward glow over what I have been doing for two decades. I have been in some embattled corners. This thing I love, that I am about, will have another year of existence.”

SCENE TWO — Flash to Mexico City, a scene of a small girl growing up in a house full of poetry-lovers.

Zacarías saved her allowance to buy her first typewriter at age 6. Her mother, who is Danish and a nurse, and her father, who is Mexican and an epidemiologist, remember that she titled her first two poems “I Wake Up With Love” and “I Am Sick and Tired of the Moon.”

Although her famous movie-director grandfather, Miguel Zacarías, wrote poetry, Karen Zacarías resisted the idea of becoming an artist. “In some ways, I grew up thinking that being an artist meant you were selfish or self-involved or irresponsible.”

Zacarías says she loved her grandfather, “but we were a little scared of him as kids. I think he was a little selfish. . . . He died at 101 years, one month and one day. How poetic is that?”

When Karen was 10, her father, Fernando Zacarías, received a scholarship to Harvard University. The family, which includes a younger sister, moved to Brookline, Mass., and unexpectedly decided to stay in the United States. Eventually, Fernando Zacarías became head of the AIDS program for the Pan American Health Organization in D.C.

Karen Zacarías graduated from Stanford University with a degree in international relations in 1991. Her first job was working in Latin American policy at a think tank. She lived frugally and in three years paid off all her student loans. When she was 22, she began studying playwriting at night at Georgetown University.

A few years later, Zacarías decided to obtain a master's in playwriting, but she got cold feet when she considered the debt. Another student in her class at Georgetown made her an astounding offer: Patricia Smith, who is now a playwright and runs a nonprofit, told Zacarías that she would pay for her graduate school if she promised to use her talent to help others in some way.

So after getting her master's from Boston University in 1995, Zacarías returned to Washington and promptly founded the Young Playwrights' Theater, a nonprofit program that teaches high school students playwriting. Last year, it received a youth program award from the President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities.

These days Zacarías lives with her lawyer husband, Rett Snotherly, and their three children, ages 9, 7 and 5, in Adams Morgan, but she often retreats to the quiet of the townhouse in Southwest to write. Before arriving in its kitchen on a recent morning to stare at her computer screen, she made a trip to the grocery store to buy food for her children's lunches.

An adjunct professor of playwriting at Georgetown, Zacarías says she is grateful for the material and artistic autonomy that the residency provides. "Most programs would say, 'Start writing a new play.' . . . I felt what I needed was time to deepen and get them to the point where they are done."

Her works include "Legacy of Light"; an adaptation of a novel, "How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents"; and "Mariela in the Desert." Her play "Sins of Sor Juana" won a Helen Hayes Award in 2000 for outstanding new play. Her works have been produced at Arena Stage, the Kennedy Center and Round House Theatre, where "The Book Club Play" debuted in 2008. The comedy revolves around a Type A woman who has a seemingly perfect marriage and career, until her book club becomes the subject of a documentary film and her life threatens to unravel.

Later that year, "The Book Club Play" was produced at the Berkshire Theatre Festival. It was then that Zacarías decided to rewrite it.

"It did well for both theaters," she says. "But there was part of me that knew I had something deeper to say."

SCENE THREE — Lunchtime on a Wednesday inside the playwrights' townhouse. On the kitchen counter might be all a writer needs: sharpened pencils, a blender, a can of Hormel corned beef and a bottle of Yellow Tail wine. The walls are bare.

In the living room, Arena Stage's associate artistic director, David Dower, and Polly Carl, dramaturge and director of the American Voices New Play Institute, are meeting with young producers who have plopped into overstuffed chairs. The conversations about playwriting flow into the kitchen, where Zacarías is immersed in more cuts after a week of rehearsals.

She taps on her pink laptop. Right now, she is considering whether to break up the marriage of her main character, Ana, who is described in the billing as living "in a letter-perfect world with an adoring husband, perfect job and her greatest passion: Book Club."

Zacarías is confident that the structure of her play is sound. But the ending needs something. "In a play, if you feel the ending needs a lot of work," she says, "actually something needs to be resolved earlier."

All night she had wrestled with what to write. About 3 a.m., the answer came. She woke up, raced downstairs, found a pen and scribbled on the back of an old script. Now she reads aloud what she wrote: Popular books are delicious, flavorful condiments, but to call "Twilight" literature is like calling catsup a vegetable. These condiments do not make a meal. Eating solely this, and we will be malnourished.

Zacarías ponders a bit. "But it is too beautiful," she says. "People don't talk that way." She flips pages in her pink notebook.

Eventually, she boils the lines down to this: You cannot be serious! "Twilight" is not literature any more than ketchup is a vegetable.

Later today, she will deliver these lines to the actors, always a delicate task. "You are dealing with everybody's imagination," Zacarías says. "You cut a line, and they will say, 'I thought I had a kitty cat.'"

Zacarías understands her play more deeply when she sees it performed. "A play is visually cooked in front of an audience," says her dramaturge, Jocelyn Clarke, a former theater critic who lives in Ireland. "In the course of rehearsals, a play grows. You get other voices and bodies inhabiting the characters. That raises all sorts of interesting questions, and you make changes in response to what is happening in the room."

Clarke keeps reminding Zacarías why she rewrote this play. "I call him a play therapist," she says. "They look at your play and let the play speak to them and tell you what they hear. A dramaturge might say, 'You say that is what you want, but I see the play is about this.'"

As she talks, she puts on a gray sweatshirt, packs her backpack and leaves for the three-block walk to daily rehearsals, where the play is being tested.

SCENE FOUR — Cut to rehearsals. The copies of the script are still warm, the last words written 15 minutes ago. The director gathers actors in a rehearsal room draped with blue velvet curtains. The set is quiet enough to hear a pin drop.

Zacarias sits next to director Molly Smith, wearing a crisp white shirt. A kind of “super editor” for the playwrights, Smith is meticulous in her approach to the script and her directions to the ensemble cast. Each actor has “depth of ability,” Smith has said, enough talent to carry a one-person show. As the actors read, Smith flips through the script. “Don’t break up that line,” she tells an actor. The retorts of the other characters must be swift. “Rhythmically,” she says, “it has to boom, boom, boom!”

The actors repeat the lines, this time with a precise quickness. Smith approves.

“Let’s take it from the line, ‘Honey, please wipe the table with that napkin.’ When you played this before, something happened different physically. There needs to be physical tension between you.”

The actors take a 20-minute break.

Smith says her job is to help Zacarias’s play become more of what it is. “This is a gorgeous, sensible play,” Smith said earlier. “It is a comedy with teeth. A lot is operating beneath it.”

She listens for what is said and what is unsaid. “I worry a scene. . . . Is she saying what you want her to say? Why is she bringing this up at this moment? I ask a lot of questions because I think that is also the way we learn as human beings. When someone asks us questions, then we learn what is inside us.”

SCENE FIVE — Two nights before previews start. The play “is up” onstage in the Kogod Cradle, an intimate space for new works. The production staff is adjusting lighting and sound. The actors are practicing the timing of their costume changes between scenes. An electric-blue screen burns behind a set that includes two elegant sofas, a coffee table and a rug.

Zacarias waits several rows back from the stage. She is both nervous and excited. “After so many years of working on it, I feel confident about it,” she says.

She exhales. “This theater is gorgeous. Most new plays are done in little, scroungy black boxes,” she says, but in here, “there is nowhere to hide. The play is exposed. It feels both protected and naked at the same time.”

An actor onstage asks for a “little liquid in the wine glass.”

Smith calls for an action break.

“Tonight, we will put it all together,” Smith tells them. “But it feels good.”

A voice calls out: “Six-thirty is the half-hour call. Seven o’clock is the down beat.”

The actors leave the stage.

In the lobby, Zacarías lies back on a red suede bench. She is wearing a black baby-doll shirt and jeans and a new bob haircut. She is tense. “The idea of eating a whole bag of Cheetos, comfort food, sounds really good right now.”

In two days, she will cut her play loose. “At some point,” she says, “you have to let go and let the baby soar.”

SCENE SIX — Cut to previews. The play zips by. The audience laughs at the right jokes. When the final act is over, the cast takes a bow.

The crowd files out, chattering. “That was great,” a woman in a blue coat tells a man in black. A group of women lingers, recounting a scene in which characters in the book club talked about Zora Neale Hurston.

Zacarías, who did not leave the theater during intermission, stands in the back, listening to the departing crowd. Her agent, Earl Graham, who has come tonight from New York, shakes her hand.

Her dramaturge, Clarke, who has just flown in from Ireland, tells her, “It is a huge success in the sense it is all working.”

Nick Olcott, who directed the play three years ago, stage-whispers: “It makes perfect sense” for one character, and not another, “to have a nervous breakdown. It was perfect! You made smart choices in the rewrites.”

This is the change she slipped into the play to make the ending more effective.

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“Plays are never finished,” Olcott tells her. “They are only abandoned.”

Zacarías plans to make eight more pages of cuts by Sunday’s matinee. Now, the first act is one hour, eight minutes long. By Sunday, it will be cut to one hour — precisely.

During the play, Zacarías did not watch the audience. Instead, she “felt” the room.

There came a point when she heard people talking back to the play. “There is a point when the audience loses itself in a play, when they forget they are watching characters and believe they are watching people. That is a good sign,” she says. “It was a good night.”

BLACKOUT.

## 1.5 Karen Zacarias Awarded Primus Prize

*Stage Directions*, Aug 2006; 19, 8; Research Library pg.12

staged readings of their scripts. Richard Greaves received an honorable mention for *Oswald on Ice*, about Lee Harvey Oswald's undertaker.

To learn more about Arkansas Repertory Theatre and the Kaufman & Hart Prize, visit [www.therep.org](http://www.therep.org).

## Karen Zacarias Awarded Primus Prize

Karen Zacarias, playwright, as well as founder and artistic director of Young Playwrights' Theater in Washington, DC, has been awarded the 2006 Francesca Primus Prize by the Francesca Ronnie Primus Foundation and the American Theatre Critics Association (ATCA).

Zacarias was recognized for her 2005 play, *Mariela in the Desert*, about an artist whose dream of painting was put on hold to take care of her ailing husband, as well as her work with children through the Young Playwrights' Theater, which attempts to foster literacy and conflict resolution through playwriting in DC's inner-city schools.

According to the Primus Foundation's administrator, Barry Primus, the foundation was established "to recognize and support emerging women artists, who are making a difference in the theater community in which they work." The prize is worth \$10,000 and will be presented during ATCA's mini-conference in New York City in January.

## 1.6 UpClose: Karen Zacarías, Women's Voices Theater Festival

September 1, 2015 by Lorraine Treanor, DC Theatre Scene.com

<http://dctheatrescene.com/2015/09/01/upclose-karen-zacarias-womens-voices-theater-festival/>

Karen Zacarías' new play *Destiny of Desire* opens September 11 at Arena Stage at the Mead Theater for American Theater. Her award-winning plays include *The Book Club Play*, *Legacy of Light*, *Mariela in the Desert*, *The Sins of Sor Juana*, the adaptations of *Just Like Us* and *How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accent* plus many more. She collaborated on the libretto for *Sleepy Hollow* and *Hemingway: The Sun Also Rises* for the Washington Ballet. She is one of the inaugural resident playwrights at Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., and is a core founder of the Latino Theatre Commons. She is the founder of Young Playwrights' Theater, an award-winning theater company that teaches playwriting in local public schools in Washington, D.C. Karen lives in D.C. with her husband and three children. Learn more at [www.karenzacarias.com](http://www.karenzacarias.com).

Why are you a playwright?

A play is live literature; a written medium that depends on people being alive and together in a room. And since I am a writer and an extrovert...playwriting affords me the opportunity to begin a world with words, and then actively build that world with artists and an audience.

What type of theatre most excites you?

I really am open to lots of types of theater: Very theatrical, abstract, kitchen sink, dramas, comedies, musicals...as long as there is something truthful and moving and surprising in the storytelling. I always appreciate a well-constructed play; I also love messy inspired, hard to define plays even more.

What starts a play moving in your imagination?

Sometimes it's an image from a scene that I see in my mind. Sometimes it's the feeling I want to create in the audience. I am always aware of the audience when I write; the point of all my stories is to create a response from the people that see it.

Do you have a favorite writing place?

I write a lot at my kitchen table, my computer surrounded by breakfast bowls and coffee mugs. I also write a lot at Tryst Coffee Shop...also with my computer surrounded by coffee mugs and plates.

How did you choose this play to debut at the Festival?

I wrote *Destiny of Desire* exactly a year ago and had a reading of it at Arena. It was a play that had lived in my mind for a while. I am fascinated by telenovelas and their effect on their audience. I really wanted to write a very engaging and evocative play about the power of the telenovela that would test the genre and employ a large Latino cast while being a love letter to the theater. The result is a Brechtian telenovela with original songs and wild plot twists.

What female playwrights have influenced your writing and how?

Locally, I am inspired by the works of Jennifer Nelson, Caleen Sinette Jennings, Ally Currin, Audrey Cefaly, Heather McDonald, D. Wiskeyman, Renee Calarco, Laura Zam and many others. Other powerful influences have been Maria Ines Fornes, Caryl Churchill, Sarah Ruhl, Lisa Loomer, Lisa Kron, Julia Cho, and others.

What's missing from theatre today?

More faith in our audiences. And a real active diverse season that will attract diverse audiences.

What are you working on now?

In addition to working on *Destiny of Desire*, I am working on *Oliverio: A Brazilian Twist* set to premiere at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts; *Native Gardens*, a comedy set to premiere at Cincinatti Playhouse; *Into the Beautiful North* in a rolling premiere from NNPN; a musical adaptation of *Ella Enchanted* for First Stage and Adventure Theatre; and a revival of *Looking for Robert Clemente* at Imagination Stage this spring.

Answer this: "If I weren't a playwright, I would be ... "

a diplomat, or salsa dancer or a beach bum.

## 1.7 Women Playwrights of DC: Karen Zacarías

By Jacqueline E. Lawton

8/30/2012

<http://www.jacquelinelawton.com/blog/women-playwrights-of-dc-karen-zacarias>

Jacqueline Lawton: How long have you lived and worked as a playwright in DC? What brought you here? Why have you stayed?

Karen Zacharias: I went from policy wonk to playwright. After college, I worked as an assistant Program Officer for Latin America for The National Endowment for Democracy across the street from the Washington Post. It was an amazing job focusing on giving disenfranchised populations tools to find their voice through the political process. At the same time, I missed creative writing, so I took a night class on playwriting at Georgetown University taught by Ernie Joselovitz...who encouraged me to keep at it. I took his advice to heart and did a Masters in Playwriting at BU. I returned to DC to start Young Playwrights' Theater an organization which combines all my interests: playwriting, education, and battling disenfranchisement: by giving kids the tools to find their own creative voice.

JL: Have you ever been a member of a DC area playwrights writing group? If so, did you find it useful? Would you recommend that other playwrights join them?

KZ: I loved being a part of The Playwrights' Forum. Ernie Joselovitz has done so much for so many DC area playwrights. I strongly recommend being part of a group that encourages and understands you and your plays. The friends I made at Playwrights Forum have been invaluable to me.

JL: In DC, we have the Capital Fringe Festival, the Intersections Festival, the Source Festival, the Kennedy Center's Page-to-Stage Festival, the Black Theater Festival, and the Hip Hop Theatre Festival. We also have the Mead Lab at Flashpoint Theater Lab Program. Have you participated in any of these? If so, can you speak about your experience?

KZ: I've been part of Kennedy's Center Page-to-Stage, The Source Theatre Festival, and most recently the Intersections Festival (run by the amazing playwright Mary Hall Surface); I think any event that allows playwrights to share and vibe together is very vital in reminding DC we are here...and in reminding our peers that we are here for each other. I find these festivals renew bonds and inspire new, deeper art.

JL: What kind of work do you do to pay the bills? How do you balance this work with your writing?

KZ: I've been lucky that every pay check I have gotten in since 1995 is related to playwriting. I am founder and was Artistic Director of Young Playwrights' Theater for ten years...(which involved all the rewards and challenges of running and fundraising for an arts education non-profit). I teach Playwriting at Georgetown University...I have commissions and royalties for and from several plays. I am the playwright in residence at Arena Stage...which miraculously provides a solid salary for the time being. I find that like every other playwright I know...we are doing a million things at once...and always trying to carve out time to write.

JL: How many plays have you had produced in the DC area?

KZ: Blue Buick in Mt Driveway (Source Festival, 1994), The Sins of Sor Juana (Theater of the First Amendment, 1999), The Magical Birthday Pinata (Imagination Stage, 1999), Ferdinand The Bull (Imagination Stage, 2000 & 2010), The 13th Summer of William and Pilar (ACTCO/Gala Hispanic Theater/YPT, 1998), The Invisible City with Robert Alexander (Woolly Mammoth Theatre. 2001), Cinderella Eats Rice and Beans (Imagination Stage, 2003), Choices: Reflections on the Holocaust (YPT/Theater J/Holocaust Museum, 2004), Retratos (Discovery Theater Company/YPT, 2005), The Other River: Ripples and Vibes from DC's Southside with Patrick Crowley (Woolly Mammoth Theatre, 2006), Los Pecados de Sor Juana (Gala Hispanic Theater, 2006), African Roots/Latino Soul (Discovery Theater/YPT, 2007), The Book Club Play (Round House, 2008 and Arena Stage, 2011), Chasing George Washington (The Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, 2008), Looking for Roberto Clemente (Imagination Stage, 2008), Mariela in the Desert (TFA, 2008), How the Garcia Girls Lost Their Accents (Round House Theater- 2008) Maria La O (In Series, 2011), and Legacy of Light (Arena Stage, 2009)

JL: If you could be produced at any theatre in DC, which would it be and why?

KZ: I love being a repeat offender at Arena Stage, Round House Theater, Imagination Stage, and The Kennedy Center...those theaters all feel like home to me. I was very saddened by the closing of Theater of the First Amendment...that theater that instrumental to my birth and growth as a playwright. I would love an opportunity to work with Studio Theater...I love the intimacy of their space. I love Forum Theater. I find Theater J to be a real home for playwrights. I would like to write a Woolly Play. I would like to write a full length musical and have it come to life in DC.

JL: DC audiences are ...

KZ: ... very smart, very attentive, very loyal.

JL: DC actors, designers and directors are ...

KZ: ...world class.

JL: DC critics are ...

KZ: ...here! And there are many! And there is something to be said about that. I may disagree at time with some of them, but I do recognize that having as many critics and reviews as we do is a vital sign of our thriving Theater scene. Let's get some more!

JL: How do you feel the DC theatre community has addressed the issues of race and gender parity? How has this particular issue impacted you and your ability to get your work produced on the main stages?

KZ: All of my work has a feminist edge (Female protagonist...women in power etc) ...and much of it also reflects my Latino background. Almost all of my plays (some which have premiered else where) have found a home in DC which is not something I expected when I first started writing here.

JL: What advice do you have for an up and coming DC based playwright or a playwright who has just moved to D.C.?

KZ: See lots of plays. Attend the festivals. Try to be part of a slam. Support other playwrights. Find different ways use your skills to be part of the community...of your neighborhood. Create genuine good will. And then write. write. And re-write.

JL: What's next for you as a playwright? Where can we keep up with your work?

KZ: I am writing a 15-actor piece entitled JUST LIKE US based on the non-fiction book by the current political climate of immigration for the Denver. I am collaboration with Septime Webber and the Washington National Ballet on a Libretto for "THE SUN ALSO RISES." I am doing an adaptation of THE AGE OF INNOCENCE as part of my residency at Arena. I am working on projects for the Kennedy Center and Imagination Stage. And I am on a steering committee to help organize an unprecedented national convening of Latino Theater artists that addresses the issues of being us in the U.S.

## 2 World of the Play

### 2.1 Spain in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spain\\_in\\_the\\_17th\\_century](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spain_in_the_17th_century)

#### Reign of Charles II of Spain (1665-1700)

During the long regency for Charles II, the last of the Spanish Habsburgs, validos milked Spain's treasury, and Spain's government operated principally as a dispenser of patronage. Plague, famine, floods, drought, and renewed war with France wasted the country. The Peace of the Pyrenees (1659) had ended fifty years of warfare with France, whose king, Louis XIV, found the temptation to exploit weakened Spain too great. As part of the peace settlement, the Spanish infanta Maria Teresa, had become the wife of Louis XIV. Using Spain's failure to pay her dowry as a pretext, Louis instigated the War of Devolution (1667- 68) to acquire the Spanish Netherlands in lieu of the dowry. Most of the European powers were ultimately involved in the wars that Louis fought in the Netherlands.

#### Spanish society during the 17th century

Spanish society in the 17th century Habsburg Spain was extremely inegalitarian. The nobility, being wealthier than ordinary people, also had the privilege of being exempt from taxes, which the lower classes did not have. Spanish society associated social status with leisure and thus work was undignified for nobles. Even wealthy merchants invested in land, titles and juros to avoid working for a living. Two ways of avoiding work were the church and education. In 1620, there were 100,000 Spaniards in the clergy, by the late 17th century there were 150,000. Many Spaniards spent long years in universities, taking advantage of the increase in the number of universities. By 1660 there were about 200,000 Spaniards in the clergy and the Church owned 20% of all the land in Spain.

## 2.2 Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz as a Playwright

### FEMALE PLAYWRIGHTS

There were a number of female playwrights in Spain during the seventeenth century. Most of their works were not produced during their lifetimes; however, recent scholarship has shown that these women wrote texts which subverted many of the traditions of the comedias and called into question the traditional views of gender roles, love and honor, and political authority. In addition, the female playwrights exhibited, within their dramas, great awareness of the theatrical traditions of the golden age; and in some instances male dramatists seem to have borrowed from their plays.

Six female playwrights of the Spanish golden age whose works have gained significant scholarly attention are Angela de Azevedo, Ana Caro Mallén de Soto, Leonor de la Cueva y Silva, Feliciano Enríquez de Guzmán, María de Zayas y Sotomayor, and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz.

Except for Sor Juana, little is known about the lives of these playwrights; even their dates of birth or death may be uncertain. It is believed that Caro may have earned money for autos she wrote between 1641 and 1645. Zayas was a well-known literary figure who wrote prose and poetry. She was very much involved in the literary life of Madrid, receiving praise from many notable authors including Lope de Vega.

Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz (1651–1695), a nun, was born Juana de Asbaje y Ramirez, in San Miguel Nepantla, Mexico. Sor Juana, who spent her life in Mexico, wrote *The Trials of a Noble House* (1683) and *Love the Greater Labyrinth* (1689). These secular dramas were probably produced at the palaces of governmental officials. Her sacramental play *The Divine Narcissus* was published in Mexico in 1690. Sor Juana also wrote many other short dramatic works and poems, as well as prose.

### PRODUCING THE COMEDIAS

#### THE CORRALES

The nonreligious plays of writers like Lope de Vega and Calderón were staged in public theatres known as corrales. Corrales were constructed in existing courtyards; like Elizabethan public theatres, they were open-air spaces with galleries and boxes protected by a roof. Since these were outdoor spaces, performances started at 2 P.M. in the colder months and an hour or two later in the warmer months. These courtyard theatres were temporary at first but later became permanent spaces. The first public theatre was built in Seville in 1574, but the two most famous, both in Madrid, were the Corral de la Cruz (1579) and the Corral del Principe (1583).

### 2.3 Gender Politics

“Women in convents were not encouraged to dedicate themselves to a life of study, and Sor Juana’s great book collection was unique for a nun, granted to one who enjoyed special status due to her globally recognized intellectual and literary talents along with the protection the viceroys afforded her.”

Excerpt From: Kirk, Stephanie;. “Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and the Gender Politics of Knowledge in Colonial Mexico.” iBooks. Page 56.

“Sor Juana’s library functioned as a zone from which she could challenge the masculine monopoly on knowledge and from where she could prepare to compete in this ambit, arming herself with the intellectual weapon of knowledge men accessed through educational institutions closed to women.”

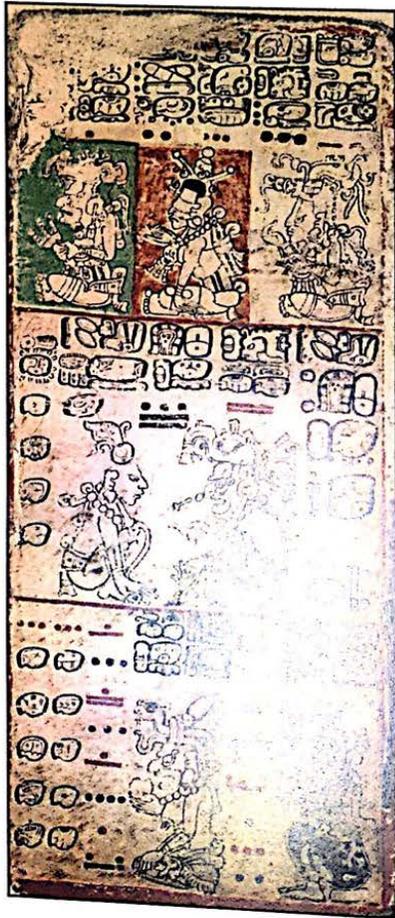
Excerpt From: Kirk, Stephanie;. “Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and the Gender Politics of Knowledge in Colonial Mexico.” iBooks. Page 67.

“One of the chief reasons offered for women’s lack of access to education hinged on the questions of decency. Society forbade women from frequenting the public spaces where institutionalized education took place, as women should live within the necessary seclusion that the private sphere provided.”

Excerpt From: Kirk, Stephanie;. “Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and the Gender Politics of Knowledge in Colonial Mexico.” iBooks. Page 225.

## 2.4 Sor Juana and Isaac Newton

## The Library



▲ The earliest known book written in the Americas, The Dresden Codex dates to the eleventh or twelfth centuries. Named for the Royal Library at Dresden, Germany, which acquired it in 1739, the work is attributed to Yucatan Mayas and is one of the few pre-Columbian codices to survive eradication by Spanish conquistadors.

history that portrayed the Aztecs as rightful rulers. Now, the Aztec books were, in turn, destroyed by Cortés and his priests.

Within a few years, the Spanish realized the immense value of these books, which were filled with precolonial history, genealogies, land claims, astronomy, poetry, and medicine. The surviving volumes were collected and copied, and Spanish priests and scholars collaborated with native scribes, who were taught the Roman alphabet in order to translate them. New books were published in both Spanish and Nahuatl, the native language. These translations included a massive encyclopedia that delved deeply into the culture and nearly forgotten ancient history of Mesoamerica.



As New Spain developed, its rapidly growing printing industry turned out pamphlets and monographs by colonial intellectuals. Among these writers was Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz, a Carmelite nun who dared to challenge the opinions of leading priests.

Born in 1648 into a prosperous family near Mexico City, Sister Juana was a favorite at the colonial viceroy's court, where she had been a lady-in-waiting before joining the Carmelites. Her library consisted of more than four thousand books, mostly inherited from a grandfather. In this library, Sister Juana educated herself at a time when young women were not permitted to attend college. Intellectual pursuits were not considered appropriate for women, but nevertheless she became a playwright, poet, and composer. She was also a student of scientific thought and experiment, and corresponded with English scientist Isaac Newton.

Priests and even bishops admired and respected Sister Juana, but in 1690 she fell afoul of church politics. A



▲ Sister Juana Inés de la Cruz, the “Mexican Phoenix,” at the writing desk in her beloved library.

private letter of criticism she had written to a Jesuit priest was discovered and published by a bishop, who wished to use it to his advantage against the priest. The bishop agreed with the contents of Sister Juana’s letter, but since she was a woman, he admonished her to stop writing and instead to devote herself to prayer. She wrote an eloquent rejection, asserting the right of women to education, declaring that the original church fathers had been in accord with schooling women.

## 3 Period Music

### 3.1 Spain and the New World

#### Spain and the New World

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charged an entrance fee, and paid the performers out of the proceeds (see Source Readings). Soon the first commercial concert halls were built, and modern concert life began. Public concerts gradually spread to the Continent, reaching Paris in 1725 and major German cities by the 1740s.

### SPAIN AND THE NEW WORLD

The third great monarchy in western Europe was Spain. By 1600, the flood of silver from its New World colonies had made Spain the richest country in Europe. It was the most powerful nation on earth, with an empire that included Portugal (annexed in 1580), half of Italy and the Netherlands, the Philippine Islands, almost all of Central and South America, and much of North America. Ironically, Spain's great wealth led to its economic decline in the seventeenth century because it spent vast sums elsewhere in Europe for food, manufactured goods, and military adventures rather than nurturing its own industries. In the 1640s, Spain suffered defeat by France during the Thirty Years' War and revolutions in Catalonia (eastern Spain), Portugal, and southern Italy. Although Spain regained control in Catalonia and southern Italy, Portugal won its independence (taking Brazil with it). Never again was Spain a dominant military power in Europe.

Spain still ruled vast colonies in the Americas, stretching from present-day Chile and Argentina through Florida, Texas, and California. More than a century of colonization had produced an ethnically diverse society, encompassing a wide range of native peoples, Spanish immigrants and their descendents, African slaves imported to work the mines and plantations, and people of mixed race. Each group had its own music but also borrowed musical elements from other groups, a habit that has characterized music in the Americas ever since. Musicians in the Spanish colonies drew directly on Spanish and wider European traditions; in turn, dances, songs, rhythms, and musical traits popular in the colonies often found eager listeners in Spain, Italy, France, and elsewhere in Europe, as we have seen with the spread of the chacona and sara-bande. For these reasons, it makes sense to consider the music of Spain and the Spanish New World together, while recognizing the different circumstances of the home country and the colonies.

*Spanish colonies*

#### OPERA, ZARZUELA, AND SONG

Spain developed its own national types of opera and musical theater. An opera in Spanish modeled on the early Florentine operas was presented at the royal court in 1627, but the style did not catch on. In 1659–60, for celebrations of peace with France and the wedding of Spanish princess Maria Teresa to Louis XIV, dramatist Pedro Calderón de la Barca and composer Juan Hidalgo (1614–1685) collaborated on two operas that inaugurated a distinctively Spanish tradition. The music survives only for the second opera, *Celos aun del aire matan*; it consists mostly of syllabic, strophic airs in Spanish styles and dance rhythms, with recitative monologues reserved for the first.

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moments. Hidalgo also wrote music for many plays. Together with Calderón, he devised the distinctly Spanish *zarzuela*, the predominant genre of musical theater in Spain for several centuries, which was a light, mythological play in a pastoral setting that alternates between sung and spoken dialogue and various types of ensemble and solo song. Hidalgo was for Spain what Lully was for France, the founder of enduring traditions for the nation's musical theater and a composer who knew how to appeal both to his royal patrons and to a broader public.

La púrpura de la rosa

CD 5/46

The characteristics of Spanish Baroque opera are seen in *La púrpura de la rosa* (The Blood of the Rose, excerpt in **NAWM 87**), the first opera produced in the New World. It was staged in 1701 at the court of the viceroy of Peru in Lima to celebrate the accession to the Spanish throne of Philip V, grandson of Louis XIV and the first Bourbon king of Spain. The libretto was adapted from that of Calderón and Hidalgo's first opera. The music was by Tomás de Torrejón y Velasco (1644–1728), who may have studied with Hidalgo in Spain, went to Peru in 1667, and became *maestro di capilla* of the Lima cathedral and the most famous composer in the Americas. As was traditional in Spanish lyric theater of the time, most of the roles were played by women. The story centers on love between Venus and Adonis, threatened by the jealousy of Mars. Example 16.5 illustrates the distinctly Spanish practice of setting the dialogue, not in recitative, but rather to a strophic song. Venus and Adonis converse in the first strophe, shown here; then Venus sings three strophes to the same music, and the fifth strophe is again in dialogue. The syncopations are typical of Spanish song. The scene closes with a five-part chorus of nymphs welcoming Adonis to Venus's garden with dance and song, marked by even greater syncopations. The sound of the accompaniment was also distinctive, since the continuo in Spanish works was usually played by harps, guitars, and viols rather than by lute or keyboard as in Italy and France.

Example 16.5: Excerpt from Torrejón's *La púrpura de la rosa*

Venus: What old-fashioned flattery!

Adonis: Pardon me, for I must go on following your beauty.

Venus: What for? If in my garden, [which now from this place lets us observe from the watchtower a laurel tree that a loving vine embraces, there are signs that all is love.]

Many songs from theatrical productions also circulated in manuscript throughout Spain and Spain's possessions in Italy and the Americas. So did independent songs in genres such as the *romance*, scored for two to four voices or for solo voice with guitar or harp accompaniment, and the *tonada*, a solo song. The many variants between manuscripts give evidence to a strong Spanish tradition of treating music as common property suitable for reworking and improvisation. Relatively few Spanish pieces were published because Spain lacked music printers, discouraging the growth of a strong amateur performing tradition as in England or France.

Songs

### CHURCH MUSIC

In Spain and the Spanish colonies, many liturgical works, especially masses, continued to be composed in imitative polyphony well into the eighteenth century. But the most vibrant genre of sacred music was the villancico, sung especially at Christmas, Easter, and other important feasts. Scored for one or more choirs, soloists with choir, or solo voice with continuo, and in the vernacular rather than Latin, these works brought into church the concertato medium and the rustic style of the secular villancico (see chapter 11). The form resembled that of villancicos of the previous century, with a refrain (*estribillo*) that precedes and follows one or more stanzas (*coplas*), but the proportions were often greatly enlarged.

A typical example is the Christmas villancico *Los coflades de la estleya* (NAWM 88) by Juan de Araujo (1646–1712), who was a *maestro di capilla* in Peru and Bolivia. The two treble soloists and choir alternate in rapid dialogue over an active accompaniment. As shown in Example 16.6, both vocal and instrumental

CD 5/50

Example 16.6: Araujo, *Los coflades de la estleya*, beginning of first copla

Let us follow the star (Come on!), we black courtiers (Let's go!)

parts are full of syncopations, suggesting rhythmic influences from West Africa as well as Spain. The text speaks of poor black boys (meaning South American natives as well as Africans) going to Bethlehem to see the infant Jesus, and the music hits just the right balance of boyish exuberance with reverent awe.

### INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Few instrumental ensemble pieces survive from seventeenth-century Spain, but there were vibrant traditions of solo music for organ, harp, and guitar.

#### *Organ music*

Spanish organ music is characterized by strong contrasts of color and texture, particularly in the *tiento*, an improvisatory-style piece that often featured imitation, akin to the sixteenth-century fantasia. A striking example is the *Tiento de batalla* (Battle Tiento) of Juan Bautista José Cabanilles (1644–1712), which imitates trumpet-calls resounding from opposite sides of a battlefield. Cabanilles was the leading Spanish composer for organ, and he left us over a thousand works, including tientos, hymn-settings, and toccatas.

#### *Harp and guitar music*

The main chamber instruments were harp and guitar, and their repertory centered around dances and variations on familiar dance tunes, songs, bass ostinatos, or harmonic patterns. Compositions included the sarabande, chacona, passacalle, and other dance types that became the most widely disseminated contributions of Spain and its American colonies to European music as a whole. But apart from these instrumental dances, Spanish music remained relatively little known in the rest of Europe.

## FRENCH STYLE AND NATIONAL TRADITIONS

Although France, England, and Spain were all monarchies, France and its king were the most powerful and influential. French music was imitated throughout Europe, and Lully's operas were performed for more than a century after his death, a remarkable legacy for the time. The elegant, restrained manner cultivated by French composers remained strong in the eighteenth century and contributed to the distinctive flavor of later French works. The suite remained an important genre for almost a century and was revived in the twentieth century. Several of the dances, especially the minuet, had long careers in other instrumental music.

Purcell represented a high water mark for English music, but in the century that followed, foreigners dominated English musical life. Because there are no institutions devoted to the performance of masques or semi-operas, English dramatic music of the seventeenth century has languished in obscurity. In part because historians have focused so intently on opera in telling the story of seventeenth-century music, *Dido and Aeneas* is renowned and widely performed, while other English music of the time is relatively unknown. Meanwhile, the public concert, an English innovation, became one of the cornerstones of musical life.

### 3.2 Aztec Musical Instruments

#### THE AZTEC AREA

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systematic study of musical instruments known to have been used by Aztecs, Mayas, Tarascans, and Zapotecs; (2) the assembling of opinions on Aztec music from sixteenth-century authors who were friendly to Indian cultures rather than opposed; (3) the collection of melodies from certain out-of-the-way Indian groups which even today, after the lapse of centuries, may still preserve some of the basic elements found in the pre-Cortesian system.

#### AZTEC MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN MUSEUMS AND CODICES

For more than a century the minute scrutiny of archaeological instruments has been a favorite method in the study of music from extinct cultures. F. J. Fétis (1784–1871) based his conclusions concerning ancient music on results obtained from the study of Egyptian flutes. Using Fétis' methods, such later investigators as F. W. Galpin (1858–1954) and Kathleen Schlesinger (1862–1953) studied the music of the ancient Sumerians and Babylonians, and of the classical Greeks. The use such Mexican investigators as Daniel Castañeda (b. 1898) and Vicente T. Mendoza (1894–1964) have made of archaeological instruments is therefore nothing new.

After prolonged investigation of preconquest instruments, Castañeda and Mendoza reached the following conclusions concerning the organography of the aborigines at the time Cortés arrived:

I. *A notable sameness prevailed in the types of instruments used.* Obviously enough, the same instrument was given different names in the different languages spoken in preconquest Mexico. But the Aztec huehuetl was the same instrument as the Maya *pax*, and the Aztec teponaztli the same instrument as the Maya *tunkul*, the Tarascan *cuiringua*, the Otomí *nobiuy*, and the Zapotec *nicàche*. Because the like of a teponaztli had never been seen by European eyes, a Spanish-Tarascan dictionary such as Maturino Gilberti's *Vocabulario en lengua de Mechuacan* (México: Juan Pablos, 1559) had to resort to *tañer teponaztli* to translate the Tarascan word *cuirinani*. This expedient at least guarantees that the Aztec and Tarascan instruments are identical. Similarly, Juan de Córdova's *Vocabulario en lengua, çapoteca* ([México: Pedro Ocharte and Antonio Ricardo, 1578], fols. 43v, 399) vouches that the *nicàche* is the same as the teponaztli.

As for other instruments: the Aztec *tlapitzalli* was the same instrument as the Tarascan *cuiraxetaqua*, and the Aztec huehuetl the same as the Tarascan *tavenga*. Castañeda in his "Una flauta de la cultura tarasca" (*Revista Musical Mexicana*, 1/5 [March 7, 1942], 110–111) draws up a list of instruments

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who invaded Mexico were "very close to living on the Neolithic level." The Spaniards were too "barbarous" to appreciate the advanced "mental development" of the race destroyed by them, according to Rivera.

in the two cultures, Aztec and Tarascan: *puaqua* (Gilberti, *op. cit.*, 1901 ed., p. 241: “caracol grande de agua con que tañen”) = *tecciztli* (Alonso de Molina, *Vocabulario en lengua mexicana y castellana* [México: Antonio de Espinosa, 1571], fol. 93) = large conch trumpet; *pungacutaqua* (p. 92: “trompeta, o cosa assi”) = *tepuzquiquiztli* (fol. 104) = vertical trumpet; *quirihpaqua* (Juan Baptista de Lagunas, *Dictionarito breve y compendioso en la lengua de Michuacan* [México: Pedro Balli, 1574], p. 156: “vn instrumento musical de vna quixada, con que tañen, o hazen ruydo, quando representan el bayle de los Chichimecas &c”) = *omichichuaztli* = bone rasp.

Confirming Castañeda’s thesis that the instruments were the same, but gathering his results by a sounder scientific method, E. Thomas Stanford—staff ethnomusicologist of the Museo Nacional de Antropología e Historia in Mexico City—has recently published not only an exhaustive comparison of Tarascan and Náhuatl terms but also has studied Mixtec vocabulary in his definitive article appearing at pages 101–159 of *Yearbook II*, Inter-American Institute for Musical Research (New Orleans: Tulane University, 1966), “A Linguistic Analysis of Music and Dance Terms from Three Sixteenth-Century Dictionaries of Mexican Indian Languages.” Especially welcome is Stanford’s convincing analysis of Tarascan terminology.

Try as they might, the warlike Aztecs never conquered the Tarascans. Instead, the Tarascans, as late as the reign of the Aztec king, Axayacatl (1469–1481), so roundly defeated his 24,000-strong army sent against them that he died soon after the eighty-day funeral ceremonies for his dead warriors.<sup>8</sup> Their independence, one of another, vetoes the possibility that the one group imposed its culture on the other by warlike means. Perhaps the identical organography of the Otomíes and Zapotecs can be so explained, since these and many other enclaves were absorbed into the expanding Aztec “empire,” but for such unconquered tribes as the Tarascans, no such explanation holds.

II. *The organography of the Aztecs, despite their youthful exuberance, borrowed extensively from older cultures in the territory that they did conquer.* In 1946 a series of remarkably preserved Maya paintings was discovered on the walls of an eighth-century temple at Bonampak (located in what then rated as the most inaccessible jungle of Chiapas).<sup>9</sup> Interest-

<sup>8</sup> Nicolás León, *Los Tarascos: Notas históricas, étnicas y antropológicas* (México: Imp. del Museo Nacional, 1904), pp. 102–107 (quoting Diego Durán, *Historia de las Indias de Nueva-España*, chap. 37 = *The Aztecs* [New York: Orion Press, 1964], pp. 165–168).

<sup>9</sup> Sylvanus G. Morley found the date March 18, 692, inscribed on one of the Bonampak temple stones. See *Memorias y Revista de la Academia Nacional de Ciencias (antigua Sociedad Científica Antonio Alzate)*, LVI/2–3 (1948), 349. For a popular account of the spectacular Bonampak discovery see Charles M. Wilson, “Open

ingly enough, the same instruments pictured on the Bonampak temple walls were still in use when Cortés arrived in the sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> Examples of such instruments may be cited here (but with their Aztec, not with their Maya, names): the *ayacachtli* (a gourd or gourd-shaped rattle, similar to maracas, with attached handle); the *áyotl* (the shell of a turtle; when struck with a stag's antler each arm of the plastron sounded a different pitch); the *huehuetl* (an upright drum fashioned out of a hollowed tree trunk; stretched across the top of the drum was a jaguar skin that could be tightened or loosened to raise or lower the pitch; the player used his fingers rather than mallets).

III. *The precontact aborigines frequently inscribed their instruments with carvings that tell (symbolically) the purposes their instruments were intended to serve.* The significance of the hieratic carvings that Mixtec, Tlaxcalan, and Aztec instrument makers inscribed on such instruments as the teponaztli and huehuetl can be understood now only by scholars who can decipher the hieroglyphs used in their systems of picture writing.

The University of Berlin professor Eduard Seler (1849–1922) doubtless contributed more to our present-day understanding of the hieratic carvings inscribed on Aztec instruments than did any other scholar of his generation. In an article describing the most famous of surviving wooden drums, “Die holzgeschnitzte Pauke von Malinalco und das Zeichen *atl-tlachinolli*” (published at Vienna in *Mitteilungen der Anthropologischen Gesellschaft*, XXXIV/4–5 [Sept. 25, 1904], 222–274, and more accessibly in his *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, III [Berlin: Behrend, 1908], 221–304), he explained the various carvings inscribed on a *tlalpanhuehuetl* in the museum at Toluca. According to Seler, the carvings on this yard-tall upright drum show a

Sesame to the Maya,” *Bulletin of the Pan American Union*, LXXXII/7 (July, 1948), 376–384. *Excelsior*, the Mexico City daily that was the first to announce Giles Healey's stumbling on the temple (March 29, 1946) carried, on April 5, 1961, an interview with an Italian art expert, Francesco Pelesoni, prophesying the imminent ruin of the Bonampak paintings from exposure (*Katunob*, II/4 [Dec., 1961], 18–21).

<sup>10</sup> For a discussion of the Bonampak paintings as revelators of Mayan musical practices, see Karl Ruppert, J. Eric S. Thompson, and Tatiana Proskouriakoff, *Bonampak, Chiapas, Mexico* (Washington: Carnegie Institution, 1955), p. 60; also Vicente T. Mendoza, “Música indígena de México,” *México en el Arte*, IX (1950), 58. Pages 59 and 62 of the latter show color reproductions of the instruments. Because of the inaccessibility of the Lacanha Valley (State of Chiapas) where the Bonampak temples are located, the Mexican government commissioned Agustín Villagra to execute full-scale color duplicates for the Instituto Nacional de Antropología at Mexico City.

The paintings inspired the *Ballet Bonampak*, music by Luis Sandi and libretto by Pedro Alvarado Lang. A four-movement suite derived from this ballet included “Xtabay, an authentic Maya theme, which accounts for much of the beauty of the work,” wrote one of the Mexico City newspaper critics after premiere of the suite at the second Festival de Música Panamericana, August 2, 1963, José Serbelloni.

group of captured warriors being forced to dance to music of their own making, just prior to being sacrificed. These carvings on the Malinalco tlalpanhuehuatl recall a similar scene pictured in Diego Durán's *Atlas* (trat. 1<sup>o</sup>, lám. 19<sup>a</sup>, cap. 54).

Because it can be readily understood (Durán's picture uses no glyphs), Seler reproduced this drawing as illustration 68 in his article (*Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, III, 279). The Durán drawing shows several captured warriors being forced to dance to their own music before being dragged off to the sacrificial stone. One captive shakes the ayacachtli while two others play the teponaztli and the huehuatl. Standing over them and forcing them to dance and play are two of the victorious captors who carry clubs edged with obsidian knives.

After calling attention to the Durán drawing, Seler demonstrates that the symbols and glyphs carved on the Malinalco tlalpanhuehuatl tell exactly the same story of warriors awaiting sacrifice.

The carvings on the Malinalco drum surround the upper half of it. The upper half is divided from the lower half by a carved band running completely around the middle of the drum. On this central encircling band is inscribed the hieroglyph of war, the *atl tlachinolli* sign, and also the sacrificial rope sign, repeated five times. The lower half is so cut that the drum stands on three legs, each of which is separately carved.

The upper half of the drum is on one side inscribed with a carved eagle and jaguar, representing warriors. The eagle and the jaguar carry sacrificial banners and face the likeness of the sun. The upper half of the drum is on the other side inscribed with a figure representing Xochipilli-Macuilxóchitl, god of music and dancing.

Xochipilli-Macuilxóchitl wears the feathers of the coxcoxtli bird. He holds in his left hand a flower and in his right hand a feather fan. Below his feet appears the glyph for music [*cuicatli*] in the shape of an ascending vapor. In close association with the glyph for music appears another glyph signifying "green jewel, costliness." He wears on his sandals the insignia of the god of dancing.

The three legs of the drum show two jaguars and an eagle. Like the jaguar and eagle on the upper half of the drum, they carry sacrificial banners. Again, as on the upper half, these signify warriors who are about to be sacrificed.

Seler's explanation (*Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, III, 274-279), presented here in abridged form, gives some idea of the complicated symbols Aztec instrument makers inscribed on their huehuetls. Their teponaztlis were often inscribed with hieratic carvings of equal complexity. In an important monograph (*The Wood-Carver's Art in Ancient Mexico* [New York: Museum of the American Indian, 1925], pp. 64-79), Marshall H. Saville cites at least a dozen instruments of the huehuatl or teponaztli class scattered in various museums which can today be profitably studied by

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those interested in the kinds of symbols ancient Mexican instrument makers inscribed on their instruments. Over and over he repeats that the carvings are like pages from the pre-Cortesian codices.

Depicting such things as “gods, houses, ceremonial objects, and dates,” any given set of carvings may reveal such important details as the following: the exact time and place the instrument was to have been used; the part it was to have played in the ceremonial functions at which it was heard; the length of time it was to have been sounded; the persons who were supposed to play it.

So contended Saville. Nonetheless, experts may disagree on which “gods, houses, ceremonial objects, and dates” were intended by any given wood-carver. In a detailed study of *El Huehuetl de Malinalco* published a generation after Seler (Toluca: Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, 1958), Javier Romero Quiroz, for instance, accepted only the broad outlines of Seler’s interpretation summarized above. At pages 68–69 of his lavishly illustrated seventy-page monograph, Romero Quiroz specified his areas of disagreement: (1) not Xochipilli-Macuilxóchtli but Tonatiuh = the Sun (whose alias is Huitzilopochtli) is the god carved on the drum; (2) the disguise is that of the cuauhtli = eagle, not of the coxcoxtli bird; (3) instead of dancing, as Seler supposed, Tonatiuh ascends on high accompanied by two Fire-Serpents. Apart from such differences in interpretation as these, Romero Quiroz does agree that the Malinalco drum carvings depict warriors who dance to its throbbing beats before having their own throbbing hearts cut out and waved aloft to sustain the Sun.

IV. *All Aztec instruments were either idiophones, aerophones, or membranophones. Stringed instruments were evidently unknown among any of the tribes conquered by Cortés.* Just as the Náhuatl language may surprise a beginning student because it lacked such consonants as *b, d, f, g, r,* and *v,* so Náhuatl music may surprise a beginning student because it eschewed string tone.

True, there remain some authorities<sup>11</sup> who maintain that the musical bow, though not used by the precontact Aztecs, was used by other tribes in

<sup>11</sup> José Raúl Hellmer wrote an important article for the *Toluca Gazette* of June 1, 1960, lauding the musical instruments in vogue among the pre-Aztec tribes of Mexico and taking issue with the received opinion that pre-Cortesian America knew no stringed instruments. “Several authorities on musical folklore have become convinced that simple forms of stringed instruments did exist before the arrival of the Spaniards among at least several ethnic groups: the Seris and Coras in western Mexico, the Chinantecos and Huaves in Oaxaca, and the Lacandonés in Chiapas” (quoted in *Katunob*, II/1 [March, 1961], 73).

The Chinantecos came under missionary influence before 1560, to which year Joaquín García Icazbalceta assigns the publication at Mexico City of *Artes de los idiomas Chiapaneco, Zoque, Tzendal y Chiriquí* (Bancroft, *Historia del Siglo XVI*, new edition by Agustín Millares Carlo [México: Fondo de Cultura Económica,

Mexico. Convinced that the “third and highest class” of instruments is strings, these modern apologists appeal to such articles as Daniel G. Brinton’s “Native American Stringed Musical Instruments” (*American Antiquarian*, XIX/1 [Jan., 1897], 19–20). For the first of four examples controverting the generally held opinion that “the American Indians at the time of discovery did not use anywhere on the continent a stringed instrument,” Brinton cited “the *quijongo* of Central America,” a monochord “made by fastening a wooden bow with a stretched cord, over the mouth of a gourd or jar which serves as a resonator.”

Saville, in “A Primitive Maya Musical Instrument” (*American Anthropologist*, X/8 [Aug., 1897], 272–273) and “The Musical Bow in Ancient Mexico” *ibid.*, XI/9 [Sept., 1898], 280–284), supported Brinton. In the first of these articles Saville described a primitive stringed instrument which he had personally encountered in the winter of 1890–91 while exploring a cave on the Tabí hacienda in Yucatán. Some Mayas from “various small villages in the interior of the country, remote from Spanish influences,” introduced him to a “primitive form of stringed instrument” called a *hool*. This instrument was made

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1954], pp. 183–184). The compiler of this dictionary was the Spanish-born Dominican, Francisco de Cepeda (1532–1602).

Mentioned in Bk. IX, chap. 18, and Bk. XI, chaps. 14, 18, of Antonio de Remesal’s *Historia de la Prouincia de S. Vicente de Chyapa y Guatemala* (Madrid: Francisco de Angulo, 1619), Cepeda excelled both as linguist and as musician. According to Remesal, Cepeda’s musical skill greatly enhanced his missionary success (*Biblioteca “Goathemala,”* V [Guatemala: Tip. Nacional, 1932], 569: *entendía bien la música, que le importó para el tiempo que gastó entre los indios*; see also pp. 330, 544).

If all this was true of the first missionary to publish a dictionary in their language, the Chinantecos can scarcely be labeled a tribe that escaped acculturation. Claims for the purity of tribal music in any given area, no matter how inaccessible the enclave nowadays, require constant checking against surviving records of colonial missionary endeavor.

For data on the dissemination of the “music bow” among other relevant tribes, see Fritz Bose, “Die Musik der Chibcha und ihrer heutigen Nachkommen,” *Internationales Archiv für Ethnographie*, XLVIII, pt. 2 (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1958), pp. 159–160, 173–174. The importation of slaves (Negroes came to the New World with the conquistadores) accounts for the African influence to which Bose appropriately invites attention.

The latest literature on the problem, “El Arco Musical, ¿Una Pervivencia?” appearing in *La Palabra y el Hombre: Revista de la Universidad Veracruzana*, II Época/39 (July–Sept., 1966), 383–403, merits special consideration because of the many discoveries that can be credited to the author of the article, Charles L. Boilés—clay bongos and a clay mouthpiece for an apparently pre-Cortesian *caracol* in the Museo Nacional de Antropología, microtonic and transverse ocarinas from a late Olmec site (Fred Field Collection, Mexico City), and others. At page 393, Boilés comments on Saville’s possible confusion of *hool* with *jul*. After citing terms for string instruments in fourteen native language dictionaries, he leaves the question of pre-Cortesian origins open for further study (p. 395).

## 3.3 Aztec Melodic System

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*Aztec Music at Contact*

show that Aztec melody often covered so wide a range as to call for falsetto singing.<sup>301</sup>

#### THE MELODIC SYSTEM OF THE EARLY ABORIGINES

Should the methods just mentioned seem unduly roundabout, we can only reply that the Achilles heel hobbling all discussions of the Aztec musical system continues to be the lack of melodies transcribed in the conquest period. Because no tunes of clearly provable antiquity have come to light, scholars have had to guess at the Aztec melodic system. What else could they do with no better evidence in hand than melodies recorded since the 1890's (in remote sections of Mexico where it has been hoped that European influences never effectively penetrated)? A good example of an ethnologist working with the aid of phonograph recordings is Carl Lumholtz, whose two-volume *Unknown Mexico* appeared at the beginning of this century (1902). Lumholtz' transcriptions of Huichol and Tarahumara Indian melodies were all made from field recordings, and can therefore withstand the most rigorous assay.<sup>302</sup>

Lumholtz journeyed southward from Bisbee, Arizona. He first visited tribes in Sonora, thence passing into Chihuahua where he investigated the habits of the isolated Tarahumaras. Wending his way down the western cordilleras through Durango and Zacatecas, he next stopped in Jalisco where he spent considerable time with the Huicholes. Obviously none of the tribes he visited were descendants of the Aztecs.<sup>303</sup> Even had they been, it is too much to suppose that from 1519 until 1902 the musical culture of any

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men are the singers, not women. His last generalization is perhaps not infallible. Sahagún, Bk. II, chap. 30 (Anderson and Dibble, p. 113), writes: "And the medicine [women] and those who sold lime went ranged on both sides singing."

<sup>301</sup> See Martí, *Canto*, pp. 186, 193. Sahagún's informants, Bk. II, chap. 26 (English trans., p. 87), mention men who dress up as women, sing in a high falsetto, and dance after "the manner of women." Transvestitism was so common at certain festivals that both Durán and Sahagún slip into the personal pronoun "she" for female impersonators.

<sup>302</sup> Henrietta Yurchenco, "La Recopilación de Música Indígena," *América Indígena*, VI/4 (Oct., 1946), p. 322. Herself the leading collector in Mexico and Guatemala during World War II, she laments the hundreds of field recordings in the Peabody Museum, Harvard, made by Lumholtz' contemporaries of just such tribal music as he collected, but which still await transcription and analysis. The excitement of fieldwork contrasts disadvantageously with the ennui of transcription.

<sup>303</sup> According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1964 ed.), XIV, 484, the Tarahumaras with whom Lumholtz succeeded in "communicating" were "descendants of the Aztecs." No ethnologist will agree. Filiberto Gómez González, "Los Tarahumaras, el grupo étnico mexicano más numeroso que aun conserva su primitiva cultura," *América Indígena*, XIII/2 (April, 1953), 114, mentions their *tutuguri* (= *rutuburi*) and *yumare* dances to the sound of "rustic violins." Campbell W. Pennington, *The Tarahumar of Mexico* (Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1963), abundantly demonstrates the role of Jesuit colonial missions in acculturating this tribe.

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people, however primitive, would have remained completely static. But since Lumholtz' transcriptions have been so frequently quoted to illustrate the aboriginal musical habits of the Mexicans, we must here quote several of his examples—always bearing in mind, however, the date of his transcriptions, their source, and the unlikelihood that these melodies recapture in any significant way the essential flavor of preconquest music in the proud heart of ancient Mexico, Tenochtitlan.

The first three short melodies given below were taken in Chihuahua during Lumholtz' stay with the Tarahumaras; prefacing the first song, he says: "Although the Tarahumare, as a rule, has a harsh and not very powerful singing voice, still there are some noteworthy exceptions, and the airs of the rutuburi songs are quite pleasing to the ear. These, as all their dancing-songs, are of great antiquity."<sup>304</sup> He translates the first song: "In flowers is jaltomate, in flowers stands up getting ripe." The second: "Ridge yonder, ridge fog."

## Two Rutuburi Dances

No. 1 (Vol. I, p. 338)



No. 2 (Vol. I, p. 338)



<sup>304</sup> Lumholtz, *Unknown Mexico* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1902), I, 338. Throughout his long life (1851–1922) Lumholtz specialized in cannibals of Australia, headhunters of Borneo, and other exciting primitive men—always returning with a best-seller.

Another type of dance popular with the Tarahumaras at the time Lumholtz visited them was the *yumari*.

The yumari songs tell that the Cricket wants to dance; the Frog wants to dance and jump; and the Blue Heron wants to fish; the Goatsucker is dancing, so is the Turtle, and the Grey Fox is whistling. But it is characteristic of the yumari songs that they generally consist only of an unintelligible jargon, or, rather, of a mere succession of vocables, which the dancers murmur.

Unlike the rutuburi, the yumari soon becomes tiresome, in spite of its greater animation. . . . According to tradition it [the yumari] is the oldest dance.<sup>305</sup>

Before setting down a yumari dance with two variants, Lumholtz explained that the accent sign (>) in each of the following snatches meant a grunt rather than musical tone.

#### Yumari Dance and Variants

(Vol. I, p. 339-340)



The next two musical quotations were taken by Lumholtz during a short stay with the Tepehuane Indians (extreme southwest corner of the state of Chihuahua).

<sup>305</sup> *Unknown Mexico*, I, 339-340. Both rutuburi and yumari dances are linked to the peyote cult that dominated Huichol ceremonial life.

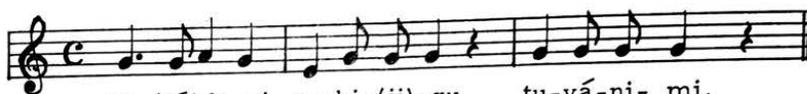
THE AZTEC AREA

Tepehuane Tribal Song

(Vol. I, p. 425)



Feast Song Sung at the Appearance of the Morning Star



So-(sō)da-gi u -ki-(ji)-ru tu-vá-ni- mi.

The next several examples were collected during Lumholtz' excursion into the extreme northwesterly portion of Jalisco. To judge from his printed examples, the Huichol Indians strongly favored rhythmically free melodies founded on simple triad arpeggios. Nearly all have religious texts. As might be expected, the rain songs invoke the aid of gods—the deer god in the first song, and the mother-eagle goddess in the second.

Huichol Rain Songs

No. 1 (Vol. II, p. 10)



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No. 2 (Vol. II, p. 18)

Vae - li-ka u-i-mā-li Vae - li-ka u-i-mā-li

(Va - vae-) me-mā- na kauri (Va -

vae-) me-mā-na kauri (Va -vae-) me-mā-na Kauri (Va-

ta-hae-mā-me (me-)mā-na kauri (Va-)ta-hae-mā-me

(me-)mā-na kauri (Va - vae-)me-mā-na kauri (Va -

vae-)me-mā-na kauri (Va - vae-) me-mā- na kauri.

Lumholtz tells of having mightily pleased his Huichol hosts by learning several such rain songs as the two just given.<sup>306</sup>

Anticipating 1913, when Stravinsky caught "the primitive mood" by constantly changing time signatures, Lumholtz bars the next two Hikuli songs in constantly shifting meters. The first is a dance in honor of the mescal button from which is fermented the highly intoxicating liquor that induces visions and ecstasies; the other precedes a deer hunt.<sup>307</sup> Because of their frenetic character, Lumholtz again insists that he has transcribed none of

<sup>306</sup> Yurchenco found it equally expedient to learn the songs of the secretive Seris when visiting the coasts of Sonora in the summer of 1941. See "La Recopilación," p. 324.

<sup>307</sup> To collect peyote, the Huichol tribesmen every September or October trekked east to the plateaus where it grows. "As soon as the peyote-seekers reach the ground where the peyote grows, the leader of the band cries out 'there is a deer'—and they advance with drawn bows and arrows ready to shoot. According to Huichol belief, the peyote springs up from footprints left by a magic deer or god in the form of a deer." To go on a Deer Hunt in September or October meant therefore to make a pilgrimage for peyote, not to seek an actual deer. See Selser, "Die Huichol-Indianer des Staates Jalisco in México," *Gesammelte Abhandlungen*, III, 361.

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the songs and dances at actual ceremonial performances, where he would have had only a flickering fire for light; instead, they were all recorded at the moment of actual performance and then later committed to paper. Even so, our conventional notation can give no idea of the methods used in performance.

## Huichol Hikuli Dance Song

(Vol. II, p. 278)



## Huichol Deer-Hunting Song

(Vol. II, p. 154)



accompanied by rubbing two notched deer bones

Commenting on these last two songs, Lumholtz again reminds us that infinite repetition of the same fragments of melody was the rule. From a narrowly Europeanized point of view such repetition soon becomes tedious,

but from the tribal viewpoint the repetition of a ritual enhances its efficacy.

The Huichol instruments included their version of the huehuetl (three-legged hollow cylindrical drum with a covering of deerskin upon which the player rapped with his fingers), the four-hole flute, and the notched bone rasp. Since the typical Huichol and Aztec *instruments* obviously resemble each other, many observers have chosen to draw parallels between existent Huichol and nonexistent Aztec *melodies*; this inference is drawn easily enough: as the instruments are demonstrably similar, why should not the melodies sung in conjunction with the instruments have been similar?<sup>308</sup>

A sampling of melody from every tribe visited by Lumholtz would leave no room for later examples recorded by Preuss and Yurchenco. We therefore pause briefly to summarize the general principles that he deduced from the Tarahumara and Huichol melodies: (1) the melodies are preeminently pentatonic; (2) they are nonexpressive in the Western sense; (3) however, they usually end on a note that Europeans recognize as a “satisfactory” tonic; (4) their range is an octave or a tenth; (5) melodic climax is not their goal; (6) a strong, rhythmic, propulsive force informs all the songs; (7) nearly all are cult or ritual songs; (8) dance and song are twins in the native culture areas.

Lumholtz, a Norwegian, was soon followed by K. T. Preuss, whose *Die Nayarit-Expedition* (Leipzig, 1912) records his work among the Cora Indians. Frances Densmore, well-known American student of Indian music, contributed two articles, one on Pápago and another on Yaqui music, in 1929 and 1932 respectively.<sup>309</sup> Rodney Gallop collected two Otomí songs at the village of San Pedro Tlachichilco in 1938; these he considered authentic enough to call “the first truly Indian music which I discovered among the Otomis.” His article, “Otomí Indian Music from Mexico” (*Musical Quarterly*, XXVI/1 [Jan., 1940], 87–100), accordingly begins with these choice

<sup>308</sup> Seler endorsed the drawing of musical parallels between precontact Aztecs and latter-day Huicholes (*GA*, III, 362–363). But Auguste Génin, “Notes on the Dances, Music, and Songs of the Ancient and Modern Mexicans,” *Annual Report of The Smithsonian Institution . . . 1920* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1922), pp. 657–658, strongly opposed the tendency to lump all tribes of Mexico together in one pot, and especially opposed the assumption that the civilized usages of the Mayas and Aztecs can be safely inferred from modern practices of primitive tribes. To Génin’s caveats still another must be added—at least for “Aztec” dances, music, and songs. All such Aztec diversion would have to be reduced to a very low common denominator indeed if what passed for polite usage at Moctezuma II’s court differed in no significant way from *macehual* entertainment.

<sup>309</sup> In *Yuman and Yaqui Music* (Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 110 [Washington: Government Printing Office, 1932]), pp. 154–165, she transcribes thirteen Yaqui songs (discussion on pp. 22–24). See also “Music of the American Indians at Public Gatherings,” *Musical Quarterly*, XVII/4 (October, 1931), 464–475; *exx.* 1–2: Pápago; *ex.* 4: Yaqui.

## 4 Production History

### 4.1 George Mason U Theatre of the First Amendment, Washington D.C. 1999

#### 4.1.1 *The Washington Post* Review by William Triplett

The Washington Post

November 11, 1999, Thursday, Final Edition

'Sins of Sor Juana': An Emotional Sacrifice on The Altar of Idealism

William Triplett, Special to The Washington Post

SECTION: STYLE; Pg. C01

LENGTH: 751 words

There's something definitely alive and trying to crack its way out of the shell of Karen Zacarias's new play, "The Sins of Sor Juana," which is receiving its world premiere at George Mason University's Theater of the First Amendment. The script isn't fully developed, but the thoroughly professional production gives you the clear sense of a talented writer struggling with Big Things.

"Sor Juana" is based on the life of Juana Ines Ramirez de Asbaje, an intellectual child prodigy who lived in 17th-century Mexico and who, at age 12, was invited to join the court of a nobleman. She accepted and spent the next five years reading and writing on humanist and feminist subjects, as well as developing a close friendship with the nobleman's wife. One day she abruptly left to join a convent, where, despite the Catholic Church's efforts to muzzle her, she continued to write. Then one day, also abruptly, she took a blood oath renouncing writing.

Zacarias, a Washington playwright, calls her play "a researched fantasy" about what drove the girl to leave the security of the court and eventually stop doing what she loved most. To wit: Poems that Juana (Maia DeSanti) has published while a nun have landed the convent's don't-rock-the-boat leader, Padre Nunez (Carlos J. Gonzalez), in hot water with the Inquisition.

Flashback to how Juana came to the convent: The viceroy of the court (also played by Gonzalez), not liking the growing friendship between Juana and his wife (Naomi Jacobson), plots to disrupt Juana's forthcoming marriage to another court nobleman. He hires an educated rogue (John Lescault) to seduce her.

As you might guess, the rogue redeems himself by falling in love with Juana, but when she discovers his part in the plot, tragedy ensues and she flees to the convent--where ultimately she renounces writing because the church will let her continue only if she submits her poems for approval.

There's much to-do in "Sor Juana" about individualism vs. conformity and idealism vs. the real world. But Zacarias makes her main point--that those who won't or can't compromise are heroically doomed--a little too easily. Juana is never made to recognize or deal with the destructive selfishness that underlies her belligerent idealism. She vows never to write again because that's better than being censored--not exactly a gut-wrenching decision. But what if continuing to write posed a more morally ambiguous dilemma--one, say, that might force her to question whether her idealism is worth the pain it causes others?

Zacarias's real talent is for intense, one-on-one scenes between people. On a human level, Juana's confrontations with almost every character are absorbing, and director Tom Prewitt rightly lets basic emotional conflicts--vs., say, sentimental ideas--set the momentum and tone of the production.

Jacobson (who doubles superbly as a weaselly nun) animates the viceroy's wife by making her both shrewd and sensitive. Lescault's scoundrel is intelligent without being smug, vulnerable without being sappy. Gonzalez makes for a wonderfully heartless viceroy and an impressively conflicted padre. Jennifer Nelson also gives strong support in two ensemble roles.

The one problem is DeSanti--in a very problematic and difficult role. The young actress has all the adolescent energy of the character and some of her passion for ideas. When Juana is just a kid in way over her head, DeSanti is fine. But as one who has more than just a rote understanding of those ideas, she fails to convince. Then again, I'm not sure a more experienced actress could pull it off.

Anne Gibson's period set and Muriel Stockdale's costumes create a definite feel for a time and place long ago and far away, and Adam Magazine's lighting complements that feeling especially well. Zacarias may not yet be terribly impressive as an ideas dramatist, but she knows how to tap emotional power, one of the indispensable elements of any good drama.

The Sins of Sor Juana, by Karen Zacarias. Directed by Tom Prewitt. Sound design by Mark K. Anduss. With Andrea Maida, John Benoit, Michael Bryant and Angela Lee Pionk. Through Nov. 21 at Theater of the First Amendment, George Mason University. Call 703-218-6500.

In "The Sins of Sor Juana," a young poet (Maia DeSanti) enters a convent after she is seduced by a handsome rogue (John Lescault). Naomi Jacobson, Andrea Maida and Maia DeSanti in "The Sins of Sor Juana" at George Mason's Theater of the First Amendment.

LOAD-DATE: November 11, 1999

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

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#### 4.1.2 Helen Hayes Awards

Karen Zacarias on Outstanding New Plays, 2012 Helen Hayes Awards

April 19, 2012 by Hunter Styles

<http://dctheatrescene.com/2012/04/19/karen-zacarias-on-outstanding-new-plays-2012-helen-hayes-awards/>

– Award winning DC playwright Karen Zacarias received the Helen Hayes Award for Outstanding New Play (*The Sins of Sor Juana*). Her works have been produced at The Kennedy Center, Arena Stage, The Goodman Theater, The Denver Center, Alliance Theater, Round House Theater, Imagination Stage, Berkshire Theater Festival, South Coast Rep, La Jolla Playhouse, The Arden, Cleveland Playhouse, San Jose Rep among others.-

There's an interesting shift right now in DC. Artists here — actors, directors, playwrights — are more aware than ever that we're not just a center for politics. The nation as a whole is starting to look at us as a real center for the arts. I think we've always known that about ourselves here in DC, but especially lately there's been a sort of tremor rumbling out from the District. I think what we're trying to do now is figure out how to harness that power and excitement.

I'm not as well-read on everything as I try to be. So, there's plenty I haven't seen this year. But I can tell you for sure that 2011 was really special and exciting, with a lot of local playwrights getting some time in the sun. I got to see a bunch of really wonderful new plays. It was great to go to Theater J and catch some of the Locally Grown series. And of course, it's exciting that Arena Stage has been doing shows by resident playwrights. That's inspiring and humbling. Getting to work with Molly Smith and the wonderful actors in the fall production of my play *The Book Club Play* was a highlight of last year. New plays are always risky, but at the same time they can be incredibly rewarding.

The Arena residency for playwrights is a three-year gig. So I'm in my last third of it now. Time goes by quickly. Seasons fly by. That's the ephemeral nature of theatre, I guess. The play is everything, for a concentrated time, and then it suddenly becomes a part of the past.

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I've been doing a lot of thinking about what makes a play "American." It's such a vast notion. But, I think what makes this country great is the fact that since the beginning we have always embraced change. And yet, change is really scary, and it can promote deep fears. There's a lot of examination of that idea — that balance — in theatre right now.

We are a country of such constant, sometimes radical reinvention. As we see a new generation of writers coming in, this theme is coming to the surface more and more, it seems. What does it mean to be American? Well, what our parents thought about the American dream versus what we think now, versus what our children will think... Some of the values will stay the same, but

it's all going to look and feel very different. Theatre needs to be able to reflect that, and serve that constant ability on our parts to change.

The personal is political, too. The idea of social communities doubling as political communications is very interesting to me. I just wrote a new play about immigration, so I've been moored in these thoughts and issues. One thing I find interesting is that I tend to see a larger amount of political theatre outside of DC than I do in DC. Plays about life inside the beltway, I mean. I wonder if we've made the decision, explicitly or not, that we live and breathe it so much every day that our theatre projects need to take us outside of that when possible.

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It's interesting to see how many new theatres are embracing new work. Signature has been doing new musicals, but they're doing new plays now too. Studio Theatre is moving into the world of world-premieres. Round House is premiering a new play by a local writer this month. It's great. I remember when I finished grad school in playwriting and I didn't head to New York, everyone thought I was crazy. But now, the fact that my students from Georgetown have been able to stay and take root here, and have thriving careers in theatre, is wonderful. I'm happy to see DC can be so diverse.

The Capital Fringe Festival has played a part in this too. Fringe just started a few years ago, and so many projects that began there have taken on a life beyond the festival. I hope DC can develop even more places to meet like that, in such a centralized way.

It's funny. The more directly people are involved in making theatre, the less theatre they have time to see. My big mantra for 2012 is that I'm going to see two to four shows a month. I should be seeing a lot more. But, hey, life with kids... I've also been trying to get up to New York and around to other cities too. I just went to the Humana Festival for the first time this year, and talked with many DC playwrights who were also there. The community of DC writers is getting stronger. We're all really talking with each other, too. I think big things are afoot.

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I've stayed in DC all this time because it's not a cut-throat community. People genuinely want to help each other out in the arts. You know, they're talking about passing this law that would allow for taller buildings downtown. But part of what gives DC its flavor is the fact that you can always see the Washington Monument. There's something about that that appeals to me. There's a feeling of openness to spending time here. There's air, and everything's accessible. The light shines through in odd places.

And so many different communities here have such different identities! When I got here, there were twenty or thirty working theatres. Now there are so many more, all different shapes and sizes. We're sending our actors all over the country and the world. We're really becoming a place not just to survive in the arts, but to live and breathe in the arts.

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Who wins or who doesn't win Helen Hayes awards in the long run... that isn't what the awards night is about. The reason I love going to the awards is simple. I get to see people who I don't always get to see all out for one night. They're all so busy, and they all work multiple jobs, but there we all are. Everyone looks good and smells good, and we can eat and dance and talk about why theatre is so great in this town. The fact that certain people get celebrated with awards serves as a sort of engine. But, for me, it's mainly a great way to see friends and to get inspired. You get a chance to really discuss topics and shows and ideas that you don't get to discuss all together at very many other points in the year.

And I love that the awards now have this larger Theatre Washington component. I think that's the right name for the next decade. "Theatre Washington." I can't wait until more of the people from Atlanta, California, New England, or wherever, who are coming in to see the Smithsonian and the National Mall also think to come out at night for the arts. Just like when we go out at night in New York or Chicago, seeing a show is kind of inherent. That'll be us pretty soon.

## 4.2 Teatro Vista, Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, Chicago, IL. 2004

### 4.2.1 *The Chicago Tribune* Review by Nina Metz

#### Romances cloud tale of 'Sor Juana'

Author: Metz, Nina

[ProQuest document link](#)

**Abstract (Abstract):** Her biography has a legendary and accessible quality -- sort of the Betty Friedan of the Spanish colonies -- and over the past quarter-century Sor Juana has become a Mexican cultural icon. So it is a little strange that [Karen Zacarias] felt the need to add a fictitious scheme involving an arranged marriage and the drama of two men vying for [Juana Ines de la Cruz]'s affections. What would a proto-feminist such as Sor Juana have made of that?"

Links: [FIND IT @ PURDUE](#)

Full text: THEATER REVIEW.

Juana Ines de la Cruz was something of a conundrum by the standards of mid-17th Century Mexico. Illegitimately born, beautiful, confrontational and exceptionally smart, she joined a convent and became Sor Juana (Sister Juana). Her intellectual pursuits invariably caused a round of tsk-tsks: Too much reading, not enough cross-stitching!

How do you solve a problem like Sor Juana?

In "The Sins of Sor Juana," playwright Karen Zacarias veers from historical fact and creates a backstory of romantic entanglements worthy of Shakespeare -- or "Dynasty" -- juxtaposing hammy humor with thoughtful moments about the rights and roles of women.

In the end, it's an awkward combination. Despite a strong performance by Sandra Marquez in the title role, director Edward F. Torres is unable to smooth things out in this joint production of Teatro Vista and the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum.

During her teenage years, Juana is the lady-in-waiting to the viceroy's wife, who believes the fairer sex can control more effectively if its members are silent like the moon. "They quietly glow," she says, "as they control the tides."

Juana has other ideas, which leads to a lifetime marked by a prolific output of secular essays and poetry, dazzling and eventually disturbing the men who control her fate.

Her biography has a legendary and accessible quality -- sort of the Betty Friedan of the Spanish colonies -- and over the past quarter-century Sor Juana has become a Mexican cultural icon. So it is a little strange that Zacarias felt the need to add a fictitious scheme involving an arranged marriage and the drama of two men vying for Juana's affections. What would a proto-feminist such as Sor Juana have made of that?"

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The Sins of Sor Juana"

When: Through Nov. 21

Where: Teatro Vista at the Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum, 1852 W. 19th St.

Running time: 2 hours, 5 minutes

Tickets: \$12-\$18 at 312-738-1503

Subject: Theater -- Sins of Sor Juana, The;

People: Torres, Eddie

Publication title: Chicago Tribune; Chicago, Ill.

Pages: 5.3

**Number of pages:** 0

**Publication year:** 2004

**Publication date:** Nov 5, 2004

**Year:** 2004

**Section:** Tempo

**Publisher:** Tribune Publishing Company LLC

**Place of publication:** Chicago, Ill.

**Country of publication:** United States

**Publication subject:** General Interest Periodicals--United States

**ISSN:** 10856706

**Source type:** Newspapers

**Language of publication:** English

**Document type:** Performance Review-Mixed

**ProQuest document ID:** 420298701

**Document URL:** <https://search.proquest.com/docview/420298701?accountid=13360>

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**Last updated:** 2010-06-28

**Database:** Chicago Tribune,ProQuest Newsstand

### 4.3 Goodman Theatre, Chicago, IL. 2010

#### 4.3.1 *The Chicago Tribune* Review by Chris Jones

##### Well-meaning 'Sins' has sins of its own

Author: Jones, Chris

[ProQuest document link](#)

**Abstract:** Despite living in 17th century Mexico, when women were typically forbidden even to read, this remarkable figure collected a huge library, penned passionate love poetry and dramas, and partook of philosophical salons with intellectuals. [...] it has the effect of weakening the heroine, because this show never gives her anyone worthy of fighting against.

**Links:** [FIND IT @ PURDUE](#)

**Full text:** 'The Sins of Sor Juana' \*1/2

Juana Ramirez de Asbaje -- who joined a convent and became Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz -- is often described as the first feminist on the American continent. Despite living in 17th century Mexico, when women were typically forbidden even to read, this remarkable figure collected a huge library, penned passionate love poetry and dramas, and partook of philosophical salons with intellectuals. Unsurprisingly, she was not popular with the church patriarchy.

If Sor Juana were to come back to life, I think this aptly revered woman would be craving a less predictable, more passionate and better-acted show than the sadly disappointing "The Sins of Sor Juana," as penned by Karen Zacarias and directed by Henry Godinez.

From time to time, you encounter well-meaning and potentially powerful dramas that might do fine on a college campus but just don't work in the kind of showcase staging worthy of kicking off the Goodman Theatre's Latino Theatre Festival. This is one of those shows. There is an array of problems, beginning with the clunkiness of the script.

We first meet Sor Juana as the convent's forces amass to take her books away and generally stamp out her free thinking. Something like that may have happened, but this opening scene feels as if the other book-burning nuns have just met the smart sister -- who, presumably, has been rattling their cages for some time. Perhaps the playwright is trying to show us that the heroine is suddenly caught in church politics and that prior tolerance has now ended. Fine. But that requires nuanced, human scenes of pain and regret, not stark melodramatic confrontations.

The scenes outside the convent are equally problematic. One of Zacarias' thematic contentions is that Sor Juana was driven to the church because that was, at the time, the only place a woman could lead an intellectual life. Indeed. But that situation hardly is boosted by the crude comedy that takes place between Sor Juana and a plethora of foppish and weasel-like men. In fact, it has the effect of weakening the heroine, because this show never gives her anyone worthy of fighting against.

The principal pseudo-romantic relationship in "Sor Juana" is between the manipulative Silvio (played by Don Mucciaccito) and the initially hopeful Sor Juana (Malaya Rivera Drew). It's here that this production falls apart; indeed, the lack of truth in the writing surely is exacerbated by the problems in the acting. Neither of these two performers seems to have any feeling for forceful stage work -- you sense no chemistry whatsoever between this pair. When she's not fending off Silvio and another unpleasant fellow named Don Pedro (Joe Minosa), Juana spars with Padre Nunez and the Viceroy, both characters played by Tony Plana, of "Ugly Betty" fame. Those scenes are livelier, but Plana, who scowls a lot, really does not have a lot with which to work. In either role.

Aside from the gutsy interjections of Amy J. Carle, who plays a more expediently savvy nun, the necessary emotional connections are similarly devoid throughout the whole enterprise. They need to be the lifeblood of

such a play as this.

Unfortunately, Drew and Mucciacito both come with the kind of contemporary demeanor that makes the whole setting of the drama even less credible. Drew is a beautiful and hard-working performer, but I didn't believe for a second that she was a 17th century nun. She read to me as a smart young actress. At one point, she puts on a coat that reminds you of a trendy bikers' jacket; she fit right in.

And so it goes. Time and again, you find yourself further intrigued by the life of the heroine and wishing that there were a different vessel for its explication. The style of the piece similarly is awry. There is a massive, mostly realistic setting from Todd Rosenthal. And yet Godinez seems to want to introduce elements of magic realism, using theatrical noises in transitions and adding an air of mystery with the theatricalized performance of Laura Crotte, who serves as a kind of moral conscience. When you throw in the hypercontemporary, TV-style acting, you've got far too much in play.

You might find a few ideas of interest here, and there is the odd spark of life. Godinez has done great theater in this city, and he will do so again.

"Sor Juana," which was first penned some 15 years ago, has mostly been seen on college campuses and in smaller theaters. Godinez committed to taking this newly revised version all the way to the Goodman. That's laudable, even if it didn't work this time around.

Shows like this only thrive when they dance with free-thinking ideas and envelop the audience with dramatic tension. When you have a heroine on the side of freedom and modernity, that's actually a trap for the historical dramatist, because the audience quickly figures out who is being venerated and who is in her way. And thus there are no surprises, which are, well, desirable in the theater.

By surrounding their Sor Juana with cardboard cutouts bouncing around on an uncertain stylistic sea, neither the writer nor the director does her any real favors.

- - -

When: through July 25

Where: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn St.

Running time: 2 hours, 15 minutes

Tickets: \$20-\$71 at 312-443-3800

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cjones5@tribune.com

Credit: By Chris Jones, TRIBUNE CRITIC

#### **Illustration**

Caption: Photo (color): Malaya Rivera Drew portrays the title character and Tony Plana is Padre Nunez in the drama written by Karen Zacarias. The play, directed by Henry Godinez, is set in 17th century Mexico.

**Subject:** Theater -- Sins of Sor Juana, The;

**People:** Godinez, Henry

**Company / organization:** Name: Goodman Theatre; NAICS: 512131;

**Publication title:** Chicago Tribune; Chicago, Ill.

**Pages:** 3.1

**Publication year:** 2010

**Publication date:** Jun 29, 2010

**Year:** 2010

**Section:** Live!

**Publisher:** Tribune Publishing Company LLC

**Place of publication:** Chicago, Ill.

**Country of publication:** United States

**Publication subject:** General Interest Periodicals--United States

**ISSN:** 10856706

**Source type:** Newspapers

**Language of publication:** English

**Document type:** Theater Review-Mixed

**ProQuest document ID:** 522811270

**Document URL:** <https://search.proquest.com/docview/522811270?accountid=13360>

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**Last updated:** 2010-07-13

**Database:** Chicago Tribune,ProQuest Newsstand

#### 4.3.2 *The TalkinBroadway* Review by John Olson

The Sins of Sor Juana

Goodman Theatre

By John Olson, [TalkinBroadway.com](http://www.talkinbroadway.com)

<http://www.talkinbroadway.com/page/regional/chicago/ch283.html>

Dion Mucciaccito and Malaya Rivera Drew

Juana Inés de la Cruz, the subject of this 1995 play by Karen Zacarías, was a 17th century Mexican poet little known to Americans but so revered by her countrymen that her image appears on their 200-peso notes. Her story is fascinating and compelling—that of a brilliant, intellectual woman in a time and place where women were expected to neither study nor even speak of anything of importance. Born in 1648 as the illegitimate child of a Spanish captain, Juana was educated by her maternal grandfather and disguised herself as a boy to attend the university in Mexico City. As news of her intellect and literary talent spread, she was taken into the court of the Viceroy (provincial governor) of New Spain. She was something of a sensation until she left the court to enter a convent, for reasons that are unknown to this day.

Zacarías speculates on the reasons for Juana's taking of religious vows. Using characters from Juana's poetry and letters, she's created a period romance offering an explanation. In Zacarías' yarn, the Vicereine—who has taken Juana in as confidante and ward—has arranged a marriage to a noble for the teenaged Juana, so that she may remain a member of the court. The Viceroy, however, is jealous of the Vicereine's attention to Juana and would like to see Juana leave. He concocts a scheme in which his bastard nephew Silvio, who has recently arrived from Spain to defraud the Viceroy, will seduce and deflower Juana, thus making her an unsuitable bride for her intended husband. The handsome Silvio, who not only recognizes but respects and matches her intellect, easily wins her affections, but, naturally, the Viceroy's scheme does not play out entirely as planned. It's all very *Dangerous Liaisons* and, with director Henry Godinez's romantic and light touch, quite fun and sexy.

As Juana, Malaya Rivera Drew is captivating in a major star sort of way, bringing to mind the sort of smart sexiness and dark good looks of the likes of Penélope Cruz and Catherine Zeta-Jones. Her leading man is played by the equally sexy and commanding Dion Mucciaccito, whose anachronistically chiseled body will likely not draw complaints from even the most obsessive history buffs. Comic relief is provided capably by Joe Miñoso as Don Pedro, a portly courtier who would prefer to do the honors of defiling Juana himself; Laura Crotte as Juana's faithful handmaiden Xochitl; and Christina Nieves as a naïve novice. Tony Plana is deliciously villainous as the Viceroy and Amy J. Carle's Vicereine is convincing in both her loving and her vindictive moments. All of this is set in a physical design that is quite beautiful and romantic. Todd Rosenthal's set is a Spanish-influenced courtyard, complemented by Joseph Appelt's gorgeous mood-setting lighting and exotic costumes by Mina Hyun-Ok Hong.

Zacarías's romance is bookended by scenes that occur in the convent, near the end of Juana's life. She has been forbidden to read or write by the church powers after offending them with a critical analysis of a 40-year-old sermon delivered by a prominent theologian. Rosenthal's set

doubles effectively as the convent just as Crotte, Plana and Carle double in roles as nuns and the convent's padre. This setup is dark and rather tragic—as we see Juana's books, paper and quills taken away and destroyed by the other sisters. Juana becomes reclusive and, though she is later allowed some limited freedom to write on approved subjects, vows never to write again.

The juxtaposition of the more factual treatment of the later years in Juana's life fights the romantic story that is placed in between the scenes at the convent. The playwright sets up the memories of Juana's youth as hallucinations introduced by Crotte as both the handmaiden Xochitl and Sor Juana's assistant Sor Filothea. Crotte introduces a magical trunk, which moves itself onto the stage and into which she packs herself and exits. So we have this paella, if you will, of fantasy, idealized memory and reality. It's a mixture of tragedy and period romance joined together by a bit of mystical fantasy. All are done well, but there's not enough of any of each element to make the play fully satisfying on any of those levels.

The lesson of Juana de la Cruz' story—that of a gifted woman whose obvious talents were not fully appreciated in her time and quite likely not fully developed —may be to make us wonder how many accomplishments of which humanity has been deprived over the centuries by its insistence on a second-class status for women. This is an important point that might have been more fully explored. The Sins of Sor Juana could have been as a weighty a drama as *A Man for All Seasons*, or as wickedly fun as *Dangerous Liaisons*. The mixture of the two doesn't entirely work as a whole piece, but audiences can still enjoy this production's gorgeous look and the star-quality performance of Ms. Rivera Drew.

The Sins of Sor Juana, the centerpiece of the Goodman's annual Latino Theatre Festival, will play through July 25th in the Goodman's Albert Theater. Tickets are available through the box office at 170 N. Dearborn, by telephone at 312-443-3800 or online at [www.GoodmanTheatre.org](http://www.GoodmanTheatre.org).

#### 4.3.3 *The Windy City Times* Review by Scott C. Morgan

The Sins of Sor Juana

THEATER REVIEW

by Scott C. Morgan

2010-07-07

<http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/gay/lesbian/news/ARTICLE.php?AID=27207>

Playwright: Karen Zacarías. At: Goodman Theatre, 170 N. Dearborn. Phone: 312-443-3800; \$20-\$71. Runs through July 25

There's a lot in the Goodman Theatre's production of Karen Zacarías's *The Sins of Sor Juana* that should be of interest LGBTQ audiences. It's too bad that the play itself proves to be a disappointment.

First off, *The Sins of Sor Juana*'s subject matter is one that should intrigue fans of women's history. The title character, Juana Ines de la Cruz, is one of Mexico's most famous female poets—all the more remarkable since she was a nun who initially defied the male hierarchy to publish her work during Spain's Golden Age in the 1600s.

Then there's the TV-celebrity factor. Malaya Rivera Drew ( Adele Channing on *The L Word* ) stars in the title role, while Tony Plana ( the dad on *Ugly Betty* ) portrays two roles: the jealous Viceroy and the agonized Padre Nunez, who bears the terrible news that Sor Juana must stop writing poetry.

Other pluses about the Goodman production include Todd Rosenthal's gorgeous Spanish colonial cloistered set ( save for that plastic orb of a moon that descends in the second act ) and other production elements like Mina Hyun-ok Hong's lush period costumes and Joseph Appelt's moody lighting design.

But no matter how pretty the production is under Henry Godinez's direction, it doesn't answer the question why so much attention was lavished on Zacarías' mediocre play which waffles between farce, magical realism, melodrama and screed about the evils of women's subjugation.

Since very little is known about the title character's history before she became a nun, Zacarías cooks up a rather ridiculous one that allows Sor Juana to have a passionate ( yet chaste ) affair via flashback. And since Sor Juana's sexuality is also up for debate, Zacarías throws in a few same-sex kisses that feel more tacked-on instead of being integral to the plot.

Another annoying factor of Zacarías' play is the instant deference that borders on hagiography whenever another character reads Sor Juana's poetry. Like many a play on historical people, Zacarías' play falls into the trap of having other characters ( and Sor Juana herself ) overproclaiming the writer's genius pre-prosperity.

Even with the muddled play, several actors still get in some good character turns that get plenty of laughs. Joe Minoso is fun as the fop Don Pedro, while Laura Crotte's salt-of-the-earth servant Xochitl proves invaluable ( despite the extra mystical mumbo-jumbo Zacarías throws in ) .

The Sins of Sor Juana is a disappointment, and it's too bad that it holds such a prominent place as the main stage production of the Goodman's fifth biennial Latino Theatre Festival. Here's hoping that a better play occupies that space in two years' time.

#### 4.3.4 *The Chicago Reader* Review by Tony Adler

The Sins of Sor Juana

By Tony Adler, Chicago Reader

<http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/the-sins-of-sor-juana/Event?oid=1954482>

Born out of wedlock around 1648, Juana Ines de la Cruz was a nun who developed a reputation as the first great poet of colonial Spain. Her work was outspoken, sensual, and profound, and she apparently couldn't see any reason why a woman--even a woman of the Church--shouldn't participate in the intellectual life of her culture. She was petted for a while by the powers that be, then destroyed. She ended up signing vows of renunciation in her own blood. The story is both epic and tragic, but for some reason playwright Karen Zacarias has chosen to tell most of it as romantic comedy, complete with a foppish suitor and a wise old Mayan lady with magical powers. Men and women both fall all over themselves vying for Juana's love, but she's oblivious until she meets the rogue who understands her mind. The cliches are unworthy not only of the historical facts, but of a talented cast and Todd Rosenthal's absolutely stunning set.

## 5 Contemporary Music in Spain, Mexico and the United States

| <b>Top Hits in Spain</b> |                              |                      |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Year</b>              | <b>Song</b>                  | <b>Artist</b>        |
| 1997                     | A Contratiempo               | Ana Torroja          |
| 1998                     | La Copa de la Vida           | Ricky Martin         |
| 1999                     | El Extrajero                 | Bunbury              |
| 1999                     | Bailamos                     | Enrique Iglesias     |
| 2000                     | Rhythm Divine                | Enrique Iglesias     |
| 2001                     | Prohibida                    | Raúl                 |
| 2002                     | Aserejé                      | Las Ketchup          |
| 2003                     | Uno mas son siete            | Fran Perea           |
| 2004                     | Dirás que estoy loco         | Miguel Ángel Muños   |
| 2005                     | La tortura                   | Shakira              |
| 2006                     | Vivir Para Contarlo          | Violadores Del Verso |
| 2007                     | Tu Recuerdo                  | Ricky Martin         |
| 2008                     | Europa                       | Mónica Naranjo       |
| 2009                     | Colgando En Tus Manos        | Carlos Baute         |
| 2010                     | Desde Cuándo                 | Alejandro Sanz       |
| 2011                     | Danza Kuduro                 | Don Omar             |
| 2012                     | Yo Te Esperaré               | Cali & El Dandee     |
| 2013                     | El Beso                      | Pablo Alborán        |
| 2014                     | Enrique Iglesias             | Bailando             |
| 2015                     | Nicky Jam & Enrique Eglesias | El Perdón            |
| 2016                     | Enrique Iglesias             | Duele el Corazón     |
| 2017                     | Luis Fonsi                   | Despacito            |

| <b>Top Hits in Mexico</b> |                            |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Year</b>               | <b>Song</b>                | <b>Artist</b>        |
| 2008                      | El presente                | Julueta Venegas      |
| 2009                      | Looking for Paradise       | Alejandro Sanz       |
| 2010                      | Mientes                    | Camila               |
| 2011                      | Golpes en el corazón       | Los Tigres del Norte |
| 2012                      | La de la mala suerte       | Jesse & Joy          |
| 2013                      | Ni Que Estuvieras Tan Bien | Calibre 50           |
| 2014                      | La Historia De Mis Manos   | Banda Carnaval       |
| 2015                      |                            |                      |
| 2016                      | La bicicleta               | Carlos Vives         |
| 2017                      | Siempre te voy a querer    | Calibre 50           |

| <b>Top Hits in USA</b> |                              |                   |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Year</b>            | <b>Song</b>                  | <b>Artist</b>     |
| 1999                   | Smooth                       | Santana           |
| 2000                   | Maria Maria                  | Santana           |
| 2001                   | All for You                  | Janet             |
| 2002                   | Foolish                      | Ashanti           |
| 2003                   | Lose Yourself                | Eminem            |
| 2004                   | Yeah!                        | Usher             |
| 2005                   | We Belong Together           | Mariah Carey      |
| 2006                   | London Bridge                | Fergie            |
| 2007                   | Irreplaceable                | Beyoncé           |
| 2008                   | I Kissed a Girl              | Katy Perry        |
| 2009                   | Boom Boom Pow                | Black Eyed Peas   |
| 2010                   | Love the Way You Lie         | Eminem            |
| 2011                   | Rolling in the Deep          | Adele             |
| 2012                   | Somebody That I Used to Know | Gotye             |
| 2013                   | Thrift Shop                  | Macklemore        |
| 2014                   | Happy                        | Pharrell Williams |
| 2015                   | Uptown Funk                  | Mark Ronson       |
| 2016                   | Work                         | Rihanna           |
| 2017                   | Shape of You                 | Ed Sheeran        |

## 6 United States When the Play Was Written

### 6.1 1996 in the United States

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1996\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1996_in_the_United_States)

#### Federal Government

President: Bill Clinton (D-Arkansas)

Vice President: Al Gore (D-Tennessee)

Chief Justice: William Rehnquist (Wisconsin)

Speaker of the House of Representatives: Newt Gingrich (R-Georgia)

Senate Majority Leader: Bob Dole (R-Kansas) (until June 12), Trent Lott (R-Mississippi) (starting June 12)

Congress: 104th

#### Events

##### January

January 7: North American blizzard of 1996

January 7 – One of the worst blizzards in American history hits the eastern states, killing more than 150 people. Philadelphia receives a record 30.7 inches of snowfall, New York City's public schools close for the first time in 18 years and the federal government in Washington, D.C. is closed for days.

January 19 – The North Cape oil spill occurs as an engine fire forces the tugboat Scandia ashore on Moonstone Beach in South Kingstown, Rhode Island. The North Cape barge is pulled along with it and leaks 820,000 gallons of home heating oil.

January 26

Whitewater scandal: U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton testifies before a grand jury.

Millionaire philanthropist John Eleuthère du Pont shoots dead his protégé, Olympic wrestler Dave Schultz, at Foxcatcher Farm.

January 28 – Super Bowl XXX: The Dallas Cowboys become the first NFL franchise to win 3 Super Bowls in a span of 4 seasons, as they defeat the Pittsburgh Steelers 27–17 at Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe, Arizona. It is the Cowboys' 5th Super Bowl championship.

##### February

February 15 – The U.S. Embassy in Athens, Greece comes under mortar fire.

February 17 – In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Garry Kasparov beats "Deep Blue" in a second chess match.

February 24 – Cuban fighter jets shoot down 2 American aircraft belonging to the Cuban exile group, Brothers to the Rescue. Cuban officials assert that they invaded Cuban airspace.

February 29 – In Lumberton, North Carolina, Daniel Green is convicted of the murder of James Jordan, the father of basketball star Michael Jordan.

### March

March 8 – The People's Republic of China begins surface-to-surface missile testing and military exercises off Taiwanese coastal areas. The United States government condemns the act as provocation, and the Taiwanese government warns of retaliation.

March 19 – In Los Angeles, California, Lyle and Erik Menendez are found guilty of first-degree murder for the shotgun killing of their parents.

### March 25

An 81-day-long standoff begins between antigovernment Freemen and federal officers in Jordan, Montana.

The 68th Academy Awards, hosted by Whoopi Goldberg, are held at the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in Los Angeles, California with Braveheart winning Best Picture.

### April

April 3: Theodore Kaczynski arrested

### April 3

A Boeing 737 military jet crashes into a mountain north of Dubrovnik, Croatia. All 35 people on board die, including United States Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown (see 1996 Croatia USAF CT-43 crash).

Suspected "Unabomber" Theodore Kaczynski is arrested at his Montana cabin.

April 9 – President Bill Clinton signs the Line Item Veto Act of 1996, granting the U.S. president line-item veto power. The Supreme Court of the United States later finds this law unconstitutional.

April 11 – Jessica Dubroff, 7, is killed in a plane crash in Cheyenne, Wyoming while attempting to set a record as the youngest person to pilot an airplane across the United States.

April 16 – The NBA's 1995–1996 Chicago Bulls, with Michael Jordan's lead, go on to set a new NBA record for the most wins in a season, achieving their 70th win.

### May

May 8 – The Keck II telescope is dedicated in Hawaii.

May 11 – After takeoff from Miami, Florida, a fire started by improperly handled oxygen canisters in the cargo hold of Atlanta-bound ValuJet Flight 592, causes the Douglas DC-9 to crash in the Florida Everglades, killing all 110 on board.

May 20 – Gay rights – Romer v. Evans: The Supreme Court of the United States rules against a law that prevents any city, town or county in the state of Colorado from taking any legislative, executive, or judicial action to protect the rights of homosexuals.

May 30 – The Hoover Institution releases an optimistic report that global warming will probably reduce mortality in the United States and provide Americans with valuable benefits.[2]

### June

June 25: Khobar Towers Bombing

June – Iraq disarmament crisis: As Iraq continues to refuse inspectors access to a number of sites, the U.S. fails in its attempt to build support for military action against Iraq in the UN Security Council.

June 10 – The Colorado Avalanche wins their first Stanley Cup in their first season based out of Denver, Colorado, defeating the Florida Panthers 4 games to none. Avalanche captain Joe Sakic wins the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP.

June 12 – In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, a panel of federal judges blocks a law against indecency on the internet. The panel says that the 1996 Communications Decency Act would infringe upon the free speech rights of adults.

June 13 – An 81-day standoff between the Montana Freemen and FBI agents ends with their surrender in Montana.

June 16 – The Chicago Bulls win their fourth NBA Championship by defeating the Seattle SuperSonics in the best-of-7 series 4 games to 2.

June 20 – The last fourth generation Chevrolet Corvette rolls off the assembly line at the GM Assembly Plant in Bowling Green Kentucky.

June 25 – The Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia kills 19 U.S. servicemen and one Saudi local.

## July

July 12 – Hurricane Bertha makes landfall in North Carolina as a Category 2 storm, causing \$270 million in damage to the United States and its possessions and many indirect deaths.

July 17 – Paris and Rome-bound TWA Flight 800 (Boeing 747) explodes off the coast of Long Island, New York, killing all 230 on board.

July 19 – The 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia, United States, begin.

July 27 – The Centennial Olympic Park bombing at the 1996 Summer Olympics kills 2 and injures 111.

July 29 – The child protection portion of the Communications Decency Act (1996) is struck down as too broad by a U.S. federal court.

## August

August – The Unemployment Rate drops to 5.1%, the lowest since March 1989, which saw the lowest rate of the previous business cycle.

August 1 – Michael Johnson wins the 200m finals of 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta in a world-record time of 19.32 seconds.

August 6 – NASA announces that the Allan Hills 84001 meteorite, thought to originate from Mars, contains evidence of primitive life-forms.

August 15 – Bob Dole is nominated for President of the United States, and Jack Kemp for Vice President, at the Republican National Convention in San Diego, California.

August 16 – Binti Jua, a gorilla, saves a three-year-old boy who fell into the 20 foot (6.1 m) deep gorilla enclosure at Brookfield Zoo, Chicago, Illinois.

August 19 – The invasive species Asian long-horned beetle is found in New York.[3]

August 23 – Osama bin Laden writes "The Declaration of Jihad on the Americans Occupying the Country of the Two Sacred Places," a call for the removal of American military forces from Saudi Arabia.

August 26 – Bill Clinton signs welfare reform into law.

August 29 - Tiger Woods makes his professional PGA Tour debut at the Greater Milwaukee Open, 4 days after winning his 3rd consecutive U.S. Amateur Championship

August 29 – U.S. President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore are renominated at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.

August 31 – The Big 12 Conference is inaugurated with a football game between Kansas State University and Texas Tech University in Manhattan, Kansas.

## September

September 3: Operation Desert Strike

September 3

Iraq disarmament crisis: As Iraq continues to refuse inspectors access to a number of sites, the U.S. fails in its attempt to build support for military action against Iraq in the UN Security Council.[4]

The U.S. launches Operation Desert Strike against Iraq in reaction to the attack on Arbil in Iraqi Kurdistan.

September 5 – Hurricane Fran makes landfall near Cape Fear, North Carolina as a Category 3 storm with sustained winds of 115 mph, just weeks prior to the landfall of Hurricane Bertha near the same location. It caused \$3.2 billion in damages and claimed a total of 27 lives.

September 13 – Tupac Shakur dies after being shot on September 7 after attending the Mike Tyson – Bruce Seldon boxing match at the MGM Grand Las Vegas in Paradise, Nevada.

September 14 – USA wins the inaugural 1996 World Cup of Hockey by defeating Canada.

September 24 – U.S. President Bill Clinton signs the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty at the United Nations.

## October

October 2 – The Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments are signed by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

October 14 – The Dow Jones Industrial Average gains 40.62 to close at 6,010.00, the Dow's first close above 6,000.

October 23 – The O. J. Simpson civil trial begins in Santa Monica, California.

October 26 – The New York Yankees defeat the Atlanta Braves to win their first World Series in 18 years.

## November

November 5: Bill Clinton re-elected president

November 5 – U.S. presidential election, 1996: Democratic incumbent Bill Clinton defeats Republican challenger Bob Dole to win his second term. This election had the lowest voter turnout since 1924.

November 7 – NASA launches the Mars Global Surveyor.

November 15 – State Street in Chicago is re-opened to pedestrian traffic.

November 16 – Mother Teresa receives honorary U.S. citizenship.

November 19 – STS-80: Space Shuttle Columbia conducts the longest mission of the Space Shuttle program.

November 21 – A propane explosion at the Humberto Vidal shoe store and office building in San Juan, Puerto Rico kills 33.

November 25

An ice storm strikes the U.S., killing 26 directly, hundreds more from accidents. A powerful windstorm blasts Florida; winds gust to 90 miles per hour (140 km/h).

The U.S. stock market, especially the Dow Jones Industrial Average, gains at an incredibly fast pace following the 1996 Presidential election. It gains 10 days in a row during the month.

November 26 – The Sands Hotel in Las Vegas is imploded to make way for the Venetian Hotel.

December

December 6: General Motors EV1

December 2 – U.S. President Bill Clinton signs the Electronic Freedom of Information Act Amendments.

December 6 – The General Motors EV1, the first production electric car of the modern era is launched and becomes available for lease.

December 20 – Steve Jobs' company NeXT is bought by Apple Computer, the company co-founded by Jobs.

December 25 – JonBenét Ramsey, 6, is murdered in the basement of her parents' home in Boulder, Colorado.

December 31

The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway is merged with the Burlington Northern Railroad to form the BNSF Railway, making it one of the largest railroad mergers in U.S. history.

The Hacienda in Las Vegas is imploded to make way for the Mandalay Bay.

Laurel Mountain, Oregon receives 204.04 inches (5,182.6 mm) of rainfall equivalent during the year, the most ever recorded for a calendar year in the contiguous United States.[5]

Ongoing

Iraqi no-fly zones (1991–2003)

Dot-com bubble (c. 1995–c. 2000)

## 6.2 1997 in the United States

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1997\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1997_in_the_United_States)

### Federal Government

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Vice President: Al Gore (D-Tennessee)

Chief Justice: William Rehnquist (Wisconsin)

Speaker of the House of Representatives: Newt Gingrich (R-Georgia)

Senate Majority Leader: Trent Lott (R-Mississippi)

Congress: 104th (until January 3), 105th (starting January 3)

### Events

#### January

January 20: Bill Clinton, the President of the United States, begins his second term.

January 17 – A Delta II rocket carrying a military GPS payload explodes, shortly after liftoff from Cape Canaveral.

#### January 20

U.S. President Bill Clinton is inaugurated for his second term.

#### January 23

Mir Qazi is sentenced to death for a 1993 assault rifle attack outside CIA headquarters that killed 2 and wounded 3.

January 26 – Super Bowl XXXI: The Green Bay Packers win the NFL Championship for the first time since 1967, defeating the New England Patriots 35–21 at the Louisiana Superdome in New Orleans, Louisiana.

#### February

February 10 – The United States Army suspends Gene C. McKinney, Sergeant Major of the Army, its top-ranking enlisted soldier, after hearing allegations of sexual misconduct.

#### February 13

The Dow Jones Industrial Average closes above 7,000 for the first time, gaining 60.81 to 7,022.44.

STS-82: Tune-up and repair work on the Hubble Space Telescope is started by astronauts from Space Shuttle Discovery.

#### February 23

1997 Empire State Building shooting

FBI agent Earl Edwin Pitts pleads guilty to selling secrets to Russia.

The North Hollywood shootout takes place between 2 heavily armed bank robbers and officers of the Los Angeles Police Department.

#### March

March 4 – U.S. President Bill Clinton bars federal funding for any research on alien cloning.

March 9 – Rapper The Notorious B.I.G. is killed in a drive-by shooting in Los Angeles.

March 13 – The Phoenix Lights are seen over Phoenix, Arizona.

March 24 – The 69th Academy Awards, hosted by Billy Crystal, are held at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, California, with *The English Patient* winning Best Picture.

March 26 – In San Diego, California, 39 Heaven's Gate cultists commit mass suicide at their compound.

#### April

April 16 – Houston socialite Doris Angleton is murdered, drawing suspicion to her estranged husband, Robert. His brother Roger confesses to the crime and the investigation reveals that Robert had amassed a fortune through illegal betting.

April 18 – The Red River of the North breaks through dikes and floods Grand Forks, North Dakota and East Grand Forks, Minnesota, causing US\$2 billion in damage.

#### May

May – For the first time since December 1973, unemployment falls below 5%. It would remain below 5% until September 2001, during the early 2000s recession.

May 2 – The Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial is dedicated in Washington, D.C.

May 15 – The United States government acknowledges existence of the "Secret War" in Laos, and dedicates the Laos Memorial in honor of Hmong and other "Secret War" veterans.

May 16 – U.S. President Bill Clinton issues a formal apology to the surviving victims of the Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male and their families.

May 22 – Kelly Flinn, the U.S. Air Force's first female bomber pilot certified for combat, accepts a general discharge in order to avoid a court martial.

May 25 – Strom Thurmond becomes the longest-serving member in the history of the United States Senate (41 years and 10 months).

May 27 – The second-deadliest tornado of the 1990s hits in Jarrell, Texas, killing 27 people.

#### June

June 2 – In Denver, Colorado, Timothy McVeigh is convicted on 15 counts of murder and conspiracy for his role in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

June 6 – In Lacey Township, New Jersey, high school senior Melissa Drexler gives birth in a toilet and leaves the newborn for dead in the trash.

#### June 7

A computer user known as "\_eci" publishes his C source code on a Windows 95 and Windows NT exploit, which later becomes WinNuke. The source code gets wide distribution across the internet, and Microsoft is forced to release a security patch.

The Detroit Red Wings win their first Stanley Cup championship in 42 years, defeating the Philadelphia Flyers 4 games to 0. Red Wings goaltender Mike Vernon is awarded the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP.

June 8 – A United States Coast Guard helicopter crashes near Humboldt Bay, California; all 4 crew members perish.

June 12 – The United States Department of the Treasury unveils a new \$50 bill, meant to be more difficult to counterfeit.

June 13 – A jury sentences Timothy McVeigh to death for his part in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing.

June 19 – The fast food chain McDonald's wins a partial victory in its libel trial, known as the McLibel case, against 2 environmental campaigners. The judge decides it was true that McDonald's targeted its advertising at children, who pestered their parents into visiting the company's restaurants.

June 28 – During the Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson II boxing match in Las Vegas Mike Tyson bites off part of Holyfield's ear.

## July

July 21: USS Constitution under sail

July 4 – NASA's Pathfinder space probe lands on the surface of Mars.

July 15 – Spree killer Andrew Cunanan shoots fashion designer Gianni Versace to death outside Versace's Miami, Florida, residence.

July 16 – The Dow Jones Industrial Average gains 63.17 to close at 8,038.88. It is the Dow's first close above 8,000. The Dow has doubled its value in 30 months.

July 21 – The fully restored USS Constitution (aka "Old Ironsides") celebrates her 200th birthday by setting sail for the first time in 116 years.

July 23 – Digital Equipment Corporation files antitrust charges against chipmaker Intel.

## August

August 1 – Steve Jobs returns to Apple Computer, Inc at Macworld in Boston.

August 6 – Microsoft buys a \$150 million share of financially troubled Apple Computer.

## September

September 4 – In Lorain, Ohio, the last Ford Thunderbird for 3 years rolls off the assembly line.

September 29 – Forced Abortion Condemnation Act was introduced in the U.S. Congress.

## October

October 1 – Luke Woodham walks into Pearl High School in Pearl, Mississippi and opens fire, killing 2 girls, after killing his mother earlier that morning.

October 4

One million men gather for Promise Keepers' "Stand in the Gap" event in Washington, DC.

Loomis Fargo Bank Robbery: The second largest cash robbery in U.S. history (\$17.3 million, mostly in small bills) occurs at the Charlotte, North Carolina, office of Wells Fargo. An FBI investigation eventually results in 24 convictions and the recovery of approximately 95% of the stolen cash.

October 15

Andy Green sets the first supersonic land speed record for the ThrustSSC team, led by Richard Noble of the UK. ThrustSSC goes through the flying mile course at Black Rock Desert, Nevada, at an average speed of 1,227.985 km/h (763.035 mph).

NASA launches the Cassini-Huygens probe to Saturn.

October 16 – The first color photograph appears on the front page of the New York Times.

October 26 – 1997 World Series: The Florida Marlins defeat the Cleveland Indians.

October 27 – Stock markets around the world crash because of a global economic crisis scare. The Dow Jones Industrial Average follows suit and plummets 554.26, or 7.18%, to 7,161.15. The points loss exceeds the loss from Black Monday. Officials at the New York Stock Exchange for the first time invoke the "circuit breaker" rule to stop trading.

October 28 – In the U.S., the Dow Jones Industrial Average gains a record 337.17 points, closing at 7,498.32. One billion shares are traded on the New York Stock Exchange for the first time ever.

October 30 – In Newton, Massachusetts, British au pair Louise Woodward is found guilty of the baby-shaking death of 8-month-old Matthew Eappen.

#### November

November 12: Ramzi Yousef guilty of planning the 1993 World Trade Center bombing

November – The Unemployment Rate drops to 4.6%, the lowest since October 1973.

#### November 10

Telecom companies WorldCom and MCI Communications announce a US\$37 billion merger to form MCI WorldCom (the largest merger in U.S. history).

A Fairfax, Virginia, jury finds Mir Qazi guilty of murdering 2 CIA employees in 1993.

November 12 – Ramzi Yousef is found guilty of masterminding the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

November 19 – In Des Moines, Iowa, Bobbi McCaughey gives birth to septuplets in the second known case where all 7 babies are born alive, and the first in which all survive infancy.

November 27 – NASA's Tropical Rainfall Measuring Mission is launched, the start of the satellite component of the Clouds and the Earth's Radiant Energy System.

#### December

December 1 – Michael Carneal opens fire on a prayer group at Heath High School in West Paducah, Kentucky, killing 3 and injuring 5.

December 3 – In Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, representatives from 121 countries sign a treaty prohibiting the manufacture and deployment of anti-personnel land mines. However, the United States, the People's Republic of China, and Russia do not sign the treaty.

December 19 – James Cameron's Titanic, the highest-grossing film of all time until Avatar (2009), premiers in the US.

#### Ongoing

Iraqi no-fly zones (1991–2003)

Dot-com bubble (c. 1995–c. 2000)

### 6.3 1998 in the United States

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1998\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1998_in_the_United_States)

#### Federal Government

President: Bill Clinton (D-Arkansas)

Vice President: Al Gore (D-Tennessee)

Chief Justice: William Rehnquist (Wisconsin)

Speaker of the House of Representatives: Newt Gingrich (R-Georgia)

Senate Majority Leader: Trent Lott (R-Mississippi)

Congress: 105<sup>th</sup>

#### Events

##### January

January 26: President Clinton becomes embroiled in the Lewinsky scandal

January 1 – Smoking is banned in all California bars and restaurants.

January 4–10 – A massive winter storm, partly caused by El Niño, strikes New England, southern Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick, resulting in widespread power failures, severe damage to forests, and numerous deaths.

January 8 – Ramzi Yousef is sentenced to life in prison for planning the 1993 World Trade Center bombing.

January 14 – Researchers in Dallas, Texas present findings about an enzyme that slows aging and cell death (apoptosis).[citation needed]

January 17 – Paula Jones accuses U.S. President Bill Clinton of sexual harassment.

January 25 – Super Bowl XXXII: The Denver Broncos become the first AFC team in 14 years to win the Super Bowl, as they defeat the Green Bay Packers, 31–24.

##### January 26

Lewinsky scandal: On American television, President Bill Clinton denies he had "sexual relations" with former White House intern Monica Lewinsky.

Compaq buys Digital Equipment Corporation.

January 27 – U.S. First Lady Hillary Clinton appears on The Today Show, calling the attacks against her husband part of a "vast right-wing conspiracy".

January 28 – Ford Motor Company announces the buyout of Volvo Cars for \$6.45 billion.

January 29 – In Birmingham, Alabama, a bomb explodes at an abortion clinic, killing 1 and severely wounding another. Serial bomber Eric Rudolph is the prime suspect.

##### February

February 14: Eric Robert Rudolph identified as a bombing suspect

February – Iraq disarmament crisis: The United States Senate passes Resolution 71, urging U.S. President Bill Clinton to "take all necessary and appropriate actions to respond to the threat posed by Iraq's refusal to end its weapons of mass destruction programs."

### February 3

Cavalese cable car disaster: a United States Military pilot causes the deaths of 20 people near Trento, Italy, when his low-flying plane severs the cable of a cable-car.

Karla Faye Tucker is executed in Texas, becoming the first woman executed in the United States since 1984 and the first to be executed in Texas since the American Civil War.

February 6 – Washington National Airport is renamed Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport.

February 7 – Roger Nicholas Angleton commits suicide in a prison cell in Houston, Texas and admits to murdering socialite Doris Angleton in his suicide note.

February 10 – Voters in Maine repeal a gay rights law passed in 1997, becoming the first U.S. state to abandon such a law.[2]

February 12 – The presidential line-item veto is declared unconstitutional by a United States federal judge.

February 14 – The Department of Justice announces that Eric Robert Rudolph is a suspect in an Alabama abortion clinic bombing.

February 15 – Dale Earnhardt wins the Daytona 500 on his 20th attempt.

February 18 – Two white separatists are arrested in Nevada, accused of plotting biological warfare on New York City subways.

February 19 – Larry Wayne Harris of the Aryan Nations and William Leavitt are arrested in Henderson, New York, for possession of military grade anthrax.

February 20 – Iraq disarmament crisis: Iraqi President Saddam Hussein negotiates a deal with U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, allowing weapons inspectors to return to Baghdad, preventing military action by the United States and Britain.

February 23 – Florida El Niño Outbreak: Tornadoes in central Florida destroy or damage 2,600 structures and kill 42.

### March

March 27: FDA approves Viagra for erectile dysfunction

March 4 – Gay rights: *Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore Services*: The Supreme Court of the United States rules that federal laws banning on-the-job sexual harassment also apply when both parties are the same sex.

### March 5

NASA announces that the Clementine probe orbiting the Moon has found enough water in polar craters to support a human colony and rocket fueling station.

NASA announces the choice of United States Air Force Lt. Col. Eileen Collins as commander of a future Space Shuttle Columbia mission to launch an X-ray telescope, making Collins the first woman to command a space shuttle mission.

March 7 – The Imperial Wizard of the Ku Klux Klan is fined for burning a cross in his garden and infringing air regulations in California.

March 10 – United States troops stationed in the Persian Gulf begin to receive the first anthrax vaccine.

March 23 – The 70th Academy Awards, hosted by Billy Crystal, are held at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles, California with the film *Titanic* winning a record 11 Oscars

March 24 – Teenagers Mitchell Johnson and Andrew Golden open fire on classmates during a fire drill, killing 5 and injuring 10 at Westside Middle School in Jonesboro, Arkansas.

March 27 – The Food and Drug Administration approves Viagra for use as a treatment for erectile dysfunction, the first pill to be approved for this condition in the United States.

March 29 – A series of 3 tornadoes in southern Minnesota kills 3 people.

#### April

April – The Unemployment Rate drops to 4.3%, the lowest level since February 1970.

April 6 – The Dow Jones Industrial Average closes above 9,000 for the first time, and ending a gain of 49.82 points, 9,033.23.

April 7 – Citicorp and Travelers Group announce plans to merge, creating the largest financial-services conglomerate in the world, Citigroup.

April 8 – April 1998 Birmingham tornado: An F5 tornado strikes the western portion of the Birmingham, Alabama area, killing 32 people.

April 16 – An F3 tornado passes through downtown Nashville, Tennessee, the first significant tornado in 11 years to directly hit a major city. An F5 tornado travels through rural portions south of Nashville (see 1998 Nashville tornado outbreak).

April 22 – The Disney's Animal Kingdom theme park at Walt Disney World opens to the public for the first time.

April 27 – The Aladdin Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas is imploded to make way for the brand new Aladdin Hotel & Casino

April 30 – Daniel V. Jones, a cancer and HIV-positive patient, commits suicide on a Los Angeles freeway after a police standoff. The event was broadcast live on television and caused controversy about airing police chases.

#### May

May 18: United States v. Microsoft antitrust suit (Bill Gates pictured in his August deposition)

May 13 – India carries out 2 more nuclear tests at Pokhran. The United States and Japan impose economic sanctions on India.

May 18 – United States v. Microsoft: The United States Department of Justice and 20 U.S. states file an antitrust case against Microsoft.

#### May 21

At Thurston High School in Springfield, Oregon, Kipland Kinkel (who was suspended for bringing a gun to school) shoots a semi-automatic rifle into a room filled with students, killing 2 and wounding 25 others, after killing his parents at home.

In Miami, Florida, 5 abortion clinics are hit by a butyric acid attacker.

May 22 – Lewinsky scandal: A federal judge rules that United States Secret Service agents can be compelled to testify before a grand jury concerning the scandal.

May 27 – Oklahoma City bombing: Michael Fortier is sentenced to 14 years in prison and fined \$200,000 for failing to warn authorities about the terrorist plot.

May 28 – Nuclear testing: In response to a series of Indian nuclear tests, Pakistan explodes 5 nuclear devices of its own in the Chaghai hills of Baluchistan, prompting the United States, Japan and other nations to impose economic sanctions.

Saturday Night Live star Phil Hartman is murdered by his wife in their home, who then killed herself when police arrived.

## June

June 2 – California voters approve Proposition 227, abolishing the state's bilingual education program.

June 4 – Terry Nichols is sentenced to life in prison for his role in the Oklahoma City bombing.

June 5 – A strike begins at the General Motors Corporation parts factory in Flint, Michigan, quickly spreading to 5 other assembly plants and lasting 7 weeks.

June 7 – Three white supremacists murder James Byrd Jr. in Jasper, Texas.

## June 12

A jury in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, convicts 17-year-old Luke Woodham of killing 2 students and wounding 7 others at Pearl High School.[3]

Christina Marie Williams, 13, is kidnapped in Seaside, California while walking her dog.

June 14 – The Chicago Bulls win their 6th NBA title in 8 years when they beat the Utah Jazz, 87–86 in Game 6. This is also Michael Jordan's last game as a Bull, clinching the game in the final seconds on a fadeaway jumper.

June 16 – The Detroit Red Wings sweep the Washington Capitals in 4 games in the 1998 Stanley Cup Finals.

## June 25

Clinton v. City of New York: The United States Supreme Court rules that the Line Item Veto Act of 1996 is unconstitutional.

Microsoft releases Windows 98 (First Edition).

## July

July 5 – Japan launches a probe to Mars, joining the United States and Russia as an outer space-exploring nation.

## July 10

The DNA-identified remains of United States Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie arrive home to his family in St. Louis, Missouri, after being in the Tomb of the Unknowns since 1984.

Catholic priests' sex abuse scandal: The Diocese of Dallas agrees to pay \$23.4 million to 9 former altar boys who claimed they were sexually abused by former priest Rudolph Kos.

July 24 – Russell Eugene Weston Jr. bursts into the United States Capitol and opens fire, killing 2 police officers. He is later ruled incompetent to stand trial.

July 25 – The United States Navy commissions the aircraft carrier USS Harry S. Truman and puts her into service.

July 28 – Monica Lewinsky scandal: Ex-White House intern Monica Lewinsky receives transactional immunity, in exchange for her grand jury testimony concerning her relationship with U.S. President Bill Clinton.

## August

August 7: U.S. embassy bombings in Tanzania and Kenya

August 7 – 1998 U.S. embassy bombings: The bombings of the United States embassies in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, and Nairobi, Kenya kill 224 people and injure over 4,500; they are linked to terrorist Osama bin Laden, an exile of Saudi Arabia.

August 14 – Gary C. Evans, infamous in New York's Capital Region for killing 5 people, escapes police custody and kills himself by jumping off a bridge.

August 19 – Monica Lewinsky scandal: On the day of his 52nd birthday, U.S. President Bill Clinton admits in taped testimony that he had an "improper physical relationship" with White House intern Monica Lewinsky. He also admits before the nation that night in a nationally televised address that he "misled people" about his sexual affair with Lewinsky.

August 20 – 1998 U.S. embassy bombings: The United States military launches cruise missile attacks against alleged al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan and a suspected chemical plant in Sudan in retaliation for the August 7 bombings of American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. The al-Shifa pharmaceutical factory in Khartoum is destroyed in the attack.

August 26 – Iraq disarmament crisis: Scott Ritter resigns from UNSCOM, sharply criticizing the Clinton administration and the U.N. Security Council for not being vigorous enough about insisting that Iraq's weapons of mass destruction be destroyed. Ritter tells reporters that "Iraq is not disarming," "Iraq retains the capability to launch a chemical strike." [4]

## September

September 8: Mark McGwire breaks the single-season home run record

September 2 – A McDonnell Douglas MD-11 airliner (Swissair Flight 111) crashes near Peggys Cove, Nova Scotia, after taking off from New York City en route to Geneva; all 229 people on board are killed.

September 4 – Google, Inc. is founded in Menlo Park, California, by Stanford University Ph.D. candidates Larry Page and Sergey Brin. [5]

September 8 – St. Louis Cardinals first baseman Mark McGwire breaks baseball's single-season home run record, formerly held since 1961 by Roger Maris. McGwire hits #62 at Busch Stadium in the 4th inning off of Chicago Cubs pitcher Steve Trachsel.

September 25–28 – Major creditors of Long-Term Capital Management, a Greenwich, Connecticut-based hedge fund, after days of tough bargaining and some informal mediation by Federal Reserve officials, agree on terms of a re-capitalization.

September 29 – Iraq disarmament crisis: The U.S. Congress passes the Iraq Liberation Act, which states that the United States wants to remove Saddam Hussein from power and replace the government with a democratic institution.

## October

October 29: John Glenn returns to space

October 4 – Leafie Mason is murdered in her Hughes Springs, Texas house by Angel Maturino Resendiz. She is his second victim in his second incident.

October 6 – College student Matthew Shepard is found tied to a fence near Laramie, Wyoming. He dies October 12, becoming a symbol of gay-bashing victims and sparking public reflection on homophobia in the U.S.

October 7 – The United States Congress passes the Sonny Bono Copyright Term Extension Act, which gives copyright holders 20 more years of copyright privilege on work they control. This effectively freezes the public domain to works created before 1923 in the United States.

October 12 – The Congress of the United States passes the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

October 14 – Eric Robert Rudolph is charged with 6 bombings (including the 1996 Olympic bombing) in Atlanta, Georgia.

October 15

American Airlines becomes the first airline to offer electronic ticketing in all 44 countries it serves.

The Bellagio Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas opens on the former grounds of the Dunes Hotel

October 17–18 – severe flooding takes place in south Central Texas.

October 21 – The New York Yankees defeat the San Diego Padres to sweep them in the World Series. The Yankees finish with 114 regular-season wins and 11 postseason victories (125 total – the most by any team in 123 years of Major League baseball).

October 29

STS-95: The Space Shuttle Discovery blasts off with 77-year-old John Glenn on board, making him the oldest person to go into space. (He became the first American to orbit the Earth on February 20, 1962.)

In Freehold Borough, New Jersey, Melissa Drexler pleads guilty to aggravated manslaughter for killing her baby moments after delivering him in the bathroom at her senior prom, and is sentenced to 15 years imprisonment.

November

November 3 – Jesse Ventura, former professional wrestler, is elected Governor of Minnesota.

November 5

Lewinsky scandal: As part of the impeachment inquiry, House Judiciary Committee chairman Henry Hyde sends a list of 81 questions to U.S. President Bill Clinton.

The journal Nature publishes a genetic study showing compelling evidence that Thomas Jefferson fathered his slave Sally Hemings' son Eston Hemings Jefferson.

November 7 – John Glenn returns to Earth aboard the Space Shuttle Discovery.

November 9 – In the largest civil settlement in United States history, a federal judge approves a US\$1.03 billion settlement requiring dozens of brokerage houses (including Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs, and Salomon Smith Barney) to pay investors who claim they were cheated in a widespread price-fixing scheme on the NASDAQ.

November 12 – Daimler-Benz completes a merger with Chrysler Corporation to form Daimler-Chrysler.

November 13–14 – Iraq disarmament crisis: U.S. President Bill Clinton orders airstrikes on Iraq, then calls them off at the last minute when Iraq promises once again to "unconditionally" cooperate with UNSCOM.

November 19 – Lewinsky scandal: The United States House of Representatives' Judiciary Committee begins impeachment hearings against U.S. President Bill Clinton.

November 20 – A court in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan declares accused terrorist Osama bin Laden "a man without a sin" in regard to the 1998 U.S. embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania.

November 24 – America Online announces it will acquire Netscape Communications in a stock-for-stock transaction worth US\$4.2 billion.

November 30 – Deutsche Bank announces a US\$10 billion deal to buy Bankers Trust, thus creating the largest financial institution in the world.

#### December

December – Grade school children in Aurora, Colorado, collect \$35,000 to purchase and free slave children in Sudan.

December 1 – Exxon announces a US\$73.7 billion deal to buy Mobil, thus creating Exxon-Mobil, the second-largest company on the planet by revenue.

December 5 – D.C. United defeats Vasco da Gama 2–1 on aggregate to win the Interamerican Cup (one of the greatest triumphs in the history of U.S. club soccer).

December 16–19 – Iraq disarmament crisis: U.S. President Bill Clinton orders American and British airstrikes on Iraq. UNSCOM withdraws all weapons inspectors from Iraq.

December 17 – Claudia Benton, of West University Place, Texas, is murdered in her house by Angel Maturino Resendiz (his third victim in his third incident).

December 19 – Lewinsky scandal: President Bill Clinton is impeached by the United States House of Representatives. (He was later acquitted of any wrongdoing.)

December 21 – Iraq disarmament crisis: UN Security Council members France, Germany and Russia call for sanctions to end against Iraq. The 3 Security Council members also call for UNSCOM to either be disbanded or for its role to be recast. The U.S. says it will veto any such proposal.

December 26 – Iraq disarmament crisis: Iraq announces its intention to fire upon U.S. and British warplanes that patrol the northern and southern "no-fly zones".

#### Ongoing

Iraqi no-fly zones (1991–2003)

Dot-com bubble (c. 1995–c. 2000)

## 7 Analysis

### 7.1 Action Analysis

#### Characters:

- Juana, a nun – PROTAGONIST.
- Silvio, intelligent, educated thief.
- Xochitl, Juana's maid from back in the court – CONFIDANTE.
- Maria, a new nun – NORMATIVE.
- Sara, a nun, same age as Juana, envious of Juana – FOIL.
- Filothea, Mother Superior of the convent.
- Padre Nunez, father of the convent – ANTAGONIST.
- Viceroy – ANTAGONIST.
- Pedro, Viceroy's valet.
- Vicereine Laura

#### Seed:

- Freedom/Compromise/Passion

#### Theme:

- It is extremely hard to have freedom without compromises.

#### 1.1

- Juana gives the letter to the Bishop of Puebla to Maria.
  - Juana believes in the freedom of expression.
- Padre asks God what Juana has done.
  - Padre wants to free Juana from her "sins".

#### 1.2

- Juana writes a poem in her room.
  - Juana finds freedom in the world of poetry.
- Filothea takes away all Juana's books.
  - Filothea takes away Juana's freedom to read/write.

#### 1.3

- Nunez abandons Juana.
  - Nunez takes away all Juana's freedom to read/write by abandoning her.
- The Vicereine tells Juana that if she marries Fabio, she can go back to the court.
  - Vicereine plans to give Juana some freedom to read/write with compromise.
- Vicereine and Juana kiss.
  - Their love for each other is freed for a moment.
- Juana agrees to marry Fabio with conditions.
  - Juana is willing to compromise for her freedom to read/write.

#### 1.4

- Viceroy and Silvio conspires to humiliate Juana in order to stop her from marrying Fabio.
  - Viceroy wants to ruin Juana's chance at freedom.

#### 1.5

- Silvio and Juana meet for the first time.

- Juana discovers another opportunity to be free to read/write.

## 2.1

- Juana tells Silvio to come to her room Monday night.
  - Juana moves forward with seizing the opportunity to freedom.

## 2.2

- Juana discovers that Silvio is a bastard.
  - Juana discovers that her chance at freedom is in jeopardy.
- They kiss.
  - Juana falls in love with Silvio, and is willing to compromise her freedom.
- Vicereine orders Pedro to kill Silvio secretly to save Juana's future.
  - Vicereine wants to save Juana's chance at freedom.

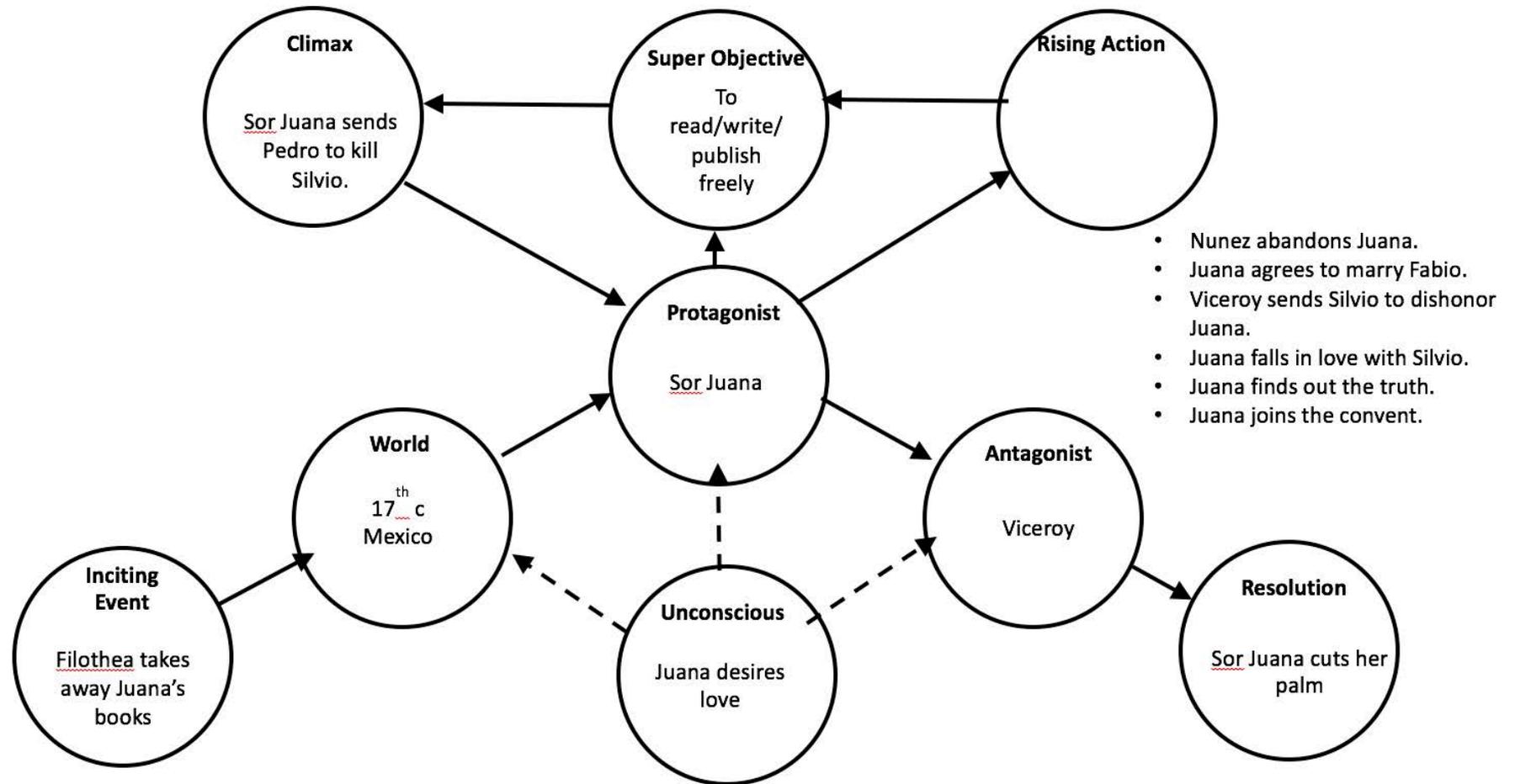
## 2.3

- Juana is heart-broken after finding out about the truth and goes out.
  - Juana now thinks her chance at freedom is ruined.
- Juana tells Pedro where Silvio is, hoping Pedro will kill him.
  - Juana essentially sends Pedro to kill Silvio, because she's mad for losing her chance at freedom.
- Silvio is back. He just killed Pedro and is fatally injured himself. He dies (but not on stage).
  - Silvio is dead. Now there's no chance at freedom at all.

## 2.4

- Juana meets Nunez. She wants to go live in the convent with Padre.
  - Juana finds another way to have some freedom to read/write.
- Novice tells Juana that she can write as long as it is something appropriate for a woman.
  - Juana needs to compromise in order to have some freedom.
- Juana cuts her own palm and refuses to be constrained.
  - Juana denies the compromise and gives up her freedom to read/write.

7.2 Zeder Analysis



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