

# Getty

The Villa Theater Lab Series

Latino Theater Company  
presents

## **LETTERS FROM THE BLACK SEA**

Saturday, November 12, 2022; 3:00 p.m.\* & 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, November 13, 2022; 3:00 p.m.

Getty Villa, Auditorium

\*=A conversation with the artists will follow the Saturday afternoon performance.

This performance is approximately 90 minutes, with no intermission.

PLEASE silence all cellular telephones and other electronic devices.

No unauthorized videotaping, audiotaping, or photography is permitted during the performance.

# LETTERS FROM THE BLACK SEA

Based on Ovid's *Epistulae ex Ponto*

Written by Oliver Mayer

Directed by Jose Luis Valenzuela

Co-produced by Latino Theater Company

## COMPANY *(in order of appearance)*

**Minerva**.....Esperanza America

**Ovid**.....Will Dixon

**Saxophonist**.....Isaac Lopez

**Advocate**.....Ruth Livier

**Obelix**.....Francisco Garat

**Augustus**.....Israel Lopez Reyes

**Livia**.....Kelsey Siepser

**Zhivka**.....Marlene Forte

## PRODUCTION TEAM

**Scenic & Lighting Designers** Emily Anne MacDonald & Cameron Jaye Mock

**Sound Designer** John Zalewski

**Costume Designer** Maria Catarina Copelli

**Projection Designer** Yee Eun Nam

**Assistant Directors** Congxiao Fei & Fidel Gomez

**Stage Manager** Christina Barco

**Technical Director** Wayne Nakasone

\*Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Latino Theatre Company, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

## **DIRECTOR'S NOTE**

The Latino Theater Company is thrilled to collaborate with the Getty Museum to present this workshop of Oliver Mayer's "Letters to the Black Sea." In a divisive time when books are being banned across the world, and artists are attacked and canceled, it is my hope that exploring the ancient past can illuminate the present. Artists must explore our common humanity. It is our task to discover the universal in the specific, to build bridges to connect our differences. In bringing the ancient into the present I hope that Oliver's play, a comedy rooted in the tragic, can unite audiences in our diverse yet divided community as human beings through the power of drama. —*Jose Luis Valenzuela*

## **PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTE**

Toxic. Cringeworthy. Cancelled. These words send a chill down the spine of any artist of a certain age whose past has resurfaced like a proverbial skeleton in the closet. In ancient times, *relatio* was the Roman form of cancellation – exile to the furthest reaches of the empire. It wasn't a death sentence, but it was stern punishment for someone like Ovid, who firmly believed that "Roma is Amor" and vice versa, and who had been the most popular poet possibly ever. What exactly made him toxic to the powers that be? How might he be cleansed? Rehabilitated? Uncancelled? These are questions worthy of a play, then and now. —*Oliver Mayer*

## **ABOUT THE LATINO THEATER COMPANY**

The Latino Theater Company's mission at the Los Angeles Theatre Center is to provide a world-class arts center for those pursuing artistic excellence; a laboratory where both tradition and innovation are honored and honed; a place where the convergence of people, cultures, and ideas contribute to the future.

The Latino Theater Company was founded in 1985 with the goal to establish a theater company dedicated to contributing new stories and novel methods of expression for the American theater repertoire and to increase artistic opportunities for underserved communities. As the company has evolved, our role as the lease-holder of the Los Angeles Theatre Center has become critical to our mission. As we continue to explore the US Latina/o/x experience in bold and contemporary terms, we program our fall and spring seasons with work by local playwrights that speaks to important issues and highlights new voices within the Latina/o/x, First Nations, Black, Asian American, Jewish American and LGBTQ+ communities.

## PERFORMANCE AT THE GETTY VILLA

The Getty Villa's public programs are designed to amplify and enhance the Museum visitor's insight into the people and cultures of the ancient Mediterranean world. Throughout the year, the Villa presents an engaging spectrum of events, anchored by its innovative theater program.

The Villa Theater Lab series fosters the work of artists employing creative, often experimental approaches to the performance of ancient stories. The Villa Auditorium's range of technologies have enabled teams of both newly emerging and long distinguished artists—directors, designers, musicians, playwrights, and actors—to freely incorporate advanced stage, sound, and visual elements into productions developed in residence here at the Villa.

Each September a major production is commissioned and presented in the Barbara and Lawrence Fleischman Theater, an outdoor performance space based on ancient prototypes. Past collaborators include Round House Theatre, SITI Company, Court Theatre, Troubadour Theater Company, the Theatre @ Boston Court and Deaf West Theatre.

From autumn through spring, the Villa's public programming also includes music and film screenings. To receive information about Getty Museum exhibitions, performances, and lecture events, please visit sign up for our weekly newsletter, [Get Inspired](#).

## THE VILLA THEATER LAB SERIES STAFF

Performing Programs Head	Laurel Kishi
Sr. Program Specialist	Ralph Flores
Sr. Public Programs Coordinator	Anna Woo
Sr. Education Specialist	Shelby Brown
Audiovisual Specialists	Heather Alvear, Clark Betty, Chris Jeong, & Marvin Jones
Getty Villa Events	Heather Leisy, Lars Francisco, & Aaron Lee Harvey

