

Regional Premiere

Alma



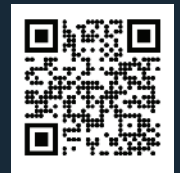
BY
BENJAMIN
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January 14 – February 18

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SCAN ME

NOTE FROM LEADERSHIP & DIRECTOR'S NOTE



From Jada Suzanne Dixon, *Artistic Director* and Jeannene Bragg, *Managing Director*:

Welcome to 2023 and our 3rd show of the season!

The staff, artistic company, and board are all filled with pride and delight as we celebrate our silver anniversary and 25 years of bold and audacious theatre. As loyal patrons to Curious Theatre Company you are familiar with our rich history and legacy of artistic excellence, exploration of contemporary issues through provocative theatre, and our fearlessness and feistiness that we carry and uphold in every aspect of our work.

In 1997, a vanguard group of artists were inspired to create and cultivate artistic work together and more importantly, artistic work that meant something. From the beginning, those artists dreamed of an artistic home for fearless political and progressive new works focused on social justice and equality. That origin is what has catapulted Curious Theatre Company to where it is today! And the undercurrent that has carried us forward and kept us afloat is you. Deep thanks and appreciation to so many artists, patrons, and of course, our community.

Yes, 25 years is something to celebrate. Something to reflect on. Under Chip Walton's leadership and vision and Dee Covington's heart and vision, Curious Theatre Company has created a remarkable body of artistic work through our shared vision, commitment to our mission and values, and the exceptional ensemble of artists that make up our artistic company. 25 years is also creating a spark. A new spark challenging us to dream big.

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From Denise Yvette Serna, *Director*:

Throughout our exploration of Benjamin Benne's powerful script, I was moved by the text's double life as a love story and a waking nightmare, and challenged by the questions it revealed. Alma and Angel's story is a familiar one on the surface: a family trying to joyfully move through quintessential milestones of the American Dream even when uncertainty chips away at courage and resolve.

Alma is activated by the specificity of its place on the timeline: the crisis and conflict that defined the 45th presidency, the horror of detainment and deportation at the U.S./Mexico border amplified on the world stage, and the tragedy of assimilation—existence in a liminal space, searching for belonging, navigating struggle, personal sacrifice, dissonance in familial ideals, and generational division. Then and now, narratives around immigrants and asylum seekers have used fear to perpetuate misconceptions about the road to citizenship, without care for the impact white-supremacist and xenophobic legislation has on families across the continent. I invite you to reflect on that time, the fears you may remember encountering, and the tremendous changes that have occurred since then.

What is the scariest force you can imagine entering your home, and destroying your family? How would you respond if you discovered what haunts your nightmares and has been hiding in plain sight all day?

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KEEP
READING



CURIOUS THEATRE COMPANY

PRESENTS

Alma

by Benjamin Benne
Directed by Denise Yvette Serna

SETTING

TIME. Early December 2016
post-election and pre-inauguration of Trump.
It's around 11pm.

PLACE. La Puente, California the living space
of Alma & Angel's one-bedroom apartment
on the 2nd floor of an apartment complex.

SPECIAL THANKS

University of Denver Department of Theatre Tech Intern Program
for set construction, Carlos Fernandez for playbill translation,
and Brian Freeland for Sound Equipment.

CAST

Alma: Laura Chavez
Angel: Iliana Lucero Barron

PRODUCTION TEAM

Scenic Design & Art by **Markas Henry****
Lighting Design by Elise Rosado
Costume Design by Nicole Watts
Sound & Projection Design by El Armstrong
Props Design by Krista Montoya
Stage Manager, Connie I. Lane*
Assistant Stage Manager, Veronica Legler
Fight Choreographer, Dane Torbenson
Scenic Coordinator, Steven McDonald

ALMA will be performed without an intermission.

*Developed during a residency at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Playwrights Conference in 2018,
and with support from the Denver Center for the Performing Arts 2020 Colorado New Play Summit, Seattle Repertory Theatre,
and the Playwrights' Center's 2016–17 Many Voices Fellowship.*

The University of Denver's Technical Theatre Internship Program provides students with paid opportunities to work with professional companies and designers in a supportive setting that prepares them for the entertainment industry. During the build process, students are engaged full-time in the construction shop with working professionals, and then experience the challenges of moving the show elements to a professional venue, working with the theatre company's team to install and present the show.

Bold = Curious Artistic Company Member

*Appearing through an Agreement between this theatre, Curious Theatre Company, and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States. **Member of the United Scenic Artists, Local USA 829



BIOS



Laura Chavez (Alma) is a professional artist in the Denver theatre community; an actor, facilitator, director, and storyteller. She is honored to return to the Curious stage as a part of this beautiful production, 20 years after her appearance in *Nickel and*

Dimed. Other acting credits include: *To the Moon*/Creede Repertory Theatre, *Recipe*/Theatre Artibus, Grapefruit Lab & Emancipation Theatre, *Suicide Lies*/The Source Theatre Company, *Santos y Santos*, *Botánica*, *The Beatification of Carmen Miranda*/El Centro Su Teatro, *Siren Song*/Buntport Theatre Company, *Unmerciful Good Fortune*/Firehouse Theatre Company, *The Last Session*/Theatre Off Broadway, and *Marisol*/Pangaea Theatre Company. Laura has always been compelled to be a part of telling the multi-dimensional stories that bring us closer to connection in unexpected ways and push us towards a deeper understanding of what it means to be a part of the human experience.



Iliana Lucero Barron (Angel) (she/ella/hers) is thrilled to be making her debut at Curious, as Angel in *Alma*. She is a bilingual, latinx performer, director, creative and advocate based in Denver, Colorado. Graduating from the University of Colorado at

Denver in 2016, Iliana became a first generation college graduate. Since then, she has worked in multiple capacities throughout the Colorado theatre community. Recent works include: *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hermia, Shakespeare in the Wild) *Shakespeare in the Parking Lot* (Ensemble, DCPA), DOT (Assistant Director, Vintage Theatre), *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Director, Central City Opera).

Benjamin Benne (Playwright) (he/him/his) is newly graduated from the David Geffen/Yale School of Drama MFA Playwriting Program. He made his professional playwriting debut with *Alma*, which had its World Premiere at Center Theatre Group's Kirk Douglas Theatre in Los Angeles, then had a subsequent production at ArtsWest Playhouse in Seattle, and is scheduled for upcoming productions at American Blues Theater (Chicago), Curious Theatre Company (Denver), and Central Square Theater (Cambridge). The World Premiere of his play *In His Hands* is currently running at Mosaic Theater Company DC. Ben's work has been developed at the O'Neill National Playwrights Conference, Roundabout, The Public, Primary Stages, Playwrights Realm, The Lark, Denver Center, The Old Globe, Two River, New Harmony Project, SPACE on Ryder Farm, among many others. He has been the recipient of Arizona Theatre Company's National Latinx Playwriting Award, the Kennedy Center's KCACTF Latinx Playwriting Award, American Blues Theater's Blue Ink Playwriting Award, the Robert Chesley/Victor Bumbalo Playwriting Award, the Playwrights' Center's McKnight Fellowship in Playwriting and Many Voices Fellowship. Ben is represented by Paradigm Talent Agency and currently under commission from South Coast Repertory Theatre and Seattle Repertory Theatre.

Denise Yvette Serna (Director) (she/her/ella) Denise is an international theatre practitioner and arts activist based in Chicago, Illinois. Denise holds an MFA in Theatre Directing from London's East 15 Acting School, and co-founded Global Hive Laboratories, an international collective working toward a global theatre through an intentional practice of Active Access and community exchange. Denise is also an alumna of Steppenwolf Theatre Company's Multicultural Fellowship, and is one of artEquity's diverse cadre of facilitators who support

BIOS

equity-based initiatives nationwide. Chicago credits include *Somewhere Over the Border* (Teatro Vista) *45 Plays for America's First Ladies* (The Neo-Futurists), *Nine Lives of a Cat* (MCA Chicago/Prop Thtr), *La Ruta* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *The Revolutionists* (Strawdog Theatre Company), *Cambodian Rock Band* (Victory Gardens Theater), *HIR* (Steppenwolf Theatre Company), *A Doll's House* (Writers Theatre), *Richard & Jane & Dick & Sally* (LTC Carnival 2018: ConeXion!), *Earthquakes in London* (Steeep Theatre Company), *The View Upstairs* (Circle Theatre Chicago), *For the Love of* (Pride Films & Plays), *HOMESET* (Pop Magic Productions), *SPARK* (20% Theatre Company), *(the)forget_me\knot* (inappropriate theatre company), *La Chingada* (inappropriate theatre company), and *Climate Change Theatre Action—Chicago* (Global Hive Laboratories). International credits include *MEDUSA* (Global Hive Laboratories, Fusion Theatre Company, La Compagnie Certes, Teatro Trieste Trentaquattro, Pleasance Theatre Trust, The Cockpit Theatre), *Much Ado About Nothing* (The Shaw Theatre), *Om Swastyastu from London—The Wailing Woman* (Institut Seni Indonesia Denpasar), and *Heart'sCore* (CAN—Refugee Women's Theatre Programme).

Markas Henry (Scenic Design & Artist) is honored to be the Artist-in-Residence as Scenic Designer for Curious' entire 25th season. In previous seasons, he has designed scenery for *Refuge*, *American Son*, *Sanctions*, *The Humans*, *The Intelligent Homosexual's Guide...*, *Appropriate*, the three-part *Elliot Plays*, *Lucky Me*, *All the Rage*, *The Whipping Man* (Colorado Theatre Guild Henry Award), *After the Revolution*, *God of Carnage*, *Maple and Vine*, and *Opus*; as well as costumes for *White Guy on the Bus*, *The Whipping Man*, *Time Stands Still*, *Dead Man's Cell Phone*, and *Mall*Mart*. His selected regional credits include Theatre Aspen, Opera Colorado, Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and BETC. Broadway credits include *Thoroughly*

Modern Millie (Tony Award), *The Life* (Tony nomination) and *Beauty and the Beast* (Tony Award). His film work includes *Elf* and *Leading Ladies*, and he was Costume Producer for Britney Spears' 2001 and 2004 US and World tours. Markas is an Associate Professor of Theatre at the University of Colorado Boulder.

Elise Rosado (Lighting Design) is designing her third production with Curious. Previously with Curious, Elise has costume designed *American Son* and the world premiere of *Refuge*. Elise graduated from the University of Colorado Boulder in 2020 with a BFA in Theatre Design, Technology and Management. Her other credits include costuming and wig styling for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, Super Summer Theatre Las Vegas, Boulder Ballet, and the University of Colorado Boulder as a guest artist. Beyond theatre, Elise has been featured in Boxcar Gallery for digital art and is currently exploring the mediums of photography and perfumery. *Alma* is Elise's professional debut as a lighting designer.

Nicole Watts (Costume Design) is a freelance designer and technician. This is her first show with Curious. Additional companies she has worked for include Colorado Shakespeare Festival, McLeod Summer Playhouse, Southern Rep Theatre, Glimmerglass Festival, Creede Repertory Theatre, Denver Center Theatre Company, The Arvada Center for the Arts and Humanities, The Catamounts, and New Orleans Shakespeare Festival. She has also worked as a designer for Loyola University and Southeastern Louisiana University. She has an MFA in Costume and Scenic Design from Tulane University and BFA in Theatre Production and Design from the University of Wyoming.

BIOS

El Armstrong (Sound & Projection Design) is an award-winning sound designer whose works have been heard in theaters and films all over the world. He is a Primetime Emmy® nominated video editor and a Grammy® nominated sound editor/mixer. El is also a recipient of a Henry Award for Special Achievement in Theater Technology and Engineering. In his spare time, he also directs, with recent productions including *Godspell*, *Voices In The Dark*, *Dietrich and Chevalier*, *Rashomon*, *Jekyll And Hide*, *Dracula*, and *She Kills Monsters*.

Krista Montoya (Props Design) is proud to be working on her first show with Curious Theatre Company! Previous credits include: Properties Design for Phamaly Theatre Company's *Vox Verger*, *The Rocky Horror Show*, and *Alice in Wonderland*, Properties Head for The Stomp Company Tour, Associate Set Decorator with Walt Disney Imagineering, Property Shop Supervisor for the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and Scenic Design for *Intimate Apparel* at the University of Northern Colorado. She graduated with her BA in Design and Technology for the Theatre from the University of Northern Colorado.

Connie I. Lane (Stage Manager) is honored to be collaborating with this talented group of artists for her first production at Curious Theatre Company. A long-time patron, but first-show working here brings this freelance Production Stage Manager immense gratitude. Connie had a rewarding ten-year career in higher education with the esteemed Faculty in the Department of Theatre & Dance at CU Boulder, teaching Stage Management and serving as Production Coordinator for over 85 productions. She returned as Production Stage Manager to work with Betty Hart and the top pro team at the Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center on *By The Way*, *Meet Vera Stark* earlier this year. Connie has joined the Local Theater Company

in Boulder as Associate Artist and is embracing a variety of production work in 2022, highlighted by the Athena Project's 10th Plays In Progress program, the 31st Cherry Creek Arts Festival, the Henry Awards and independent stage management contract work with FernFest and Olivia Travel.

Actors' Equity Association ("AEA" or "Actors' Equity"), founded in 1913, represents more than 49,000 actors and stage managers in the United States. Equity seeks to advance, promote and foster the art of live theatre as an essential component of our society. Equity negotiates wages and working conditions, providing a wide range of benefits, including health and pension plans. AEA is a member of the AFL-CIO, and is affiliated with FIA, an international organization of performing arts unions. The Equity emblem is our mark of excellence. www.actorsequity.org

NEXT UP



Join us for our next production:

AMERIKIN

by
Chisa Hutchinson

Regional Premiere

MARCH 11 – APRIL 15

Jeff, a new father desperate for community, casually follows his buddy's advice and tries to join a white supremacist group...but the results of his ancestry test prove surprising. *Amerikin* follows Jeff as serious consequences come knocking, and the line between "us" and "them" gets incredibly blurry. Gripping from the very first scenes, this play has twists and turns that travel down difficult roads until the bitter end.

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BELOW IS A LIST OF PEOPLE WHO BELIEVE THAT THEATRE CAN CHANGE THE WORLD, AND WHO GAVE BOLDLY, FIERCELY, AND GENEROUSLY TO SUPPORT FEARLESS ART. THEY MAKE IT ALL POSSIBLE.

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theatre from January 1, 2022
through December 31, 2022.*

*We are grateful for gifts of all sizes!
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please visit our website.*

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and beyond by making a donation
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“WHAT DOES
IT MEAN
TO BE AN
AMERICAN
TODAY?”

GO DEEPER

To learn more about *Alma*, go to our
Go Deeper section on the Curious website
at CuriousTheatre.org/event/alma
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SCAN ME

