On Facebook...

Tlaloc Rivas
May 25 at 10:47am · Edited ·

It is not often a play written/directed by a Chicano about a Guatemalan girl played by a Peruvian actress gets a full page spread in a major newspaper. But here it is. Thanks to everyone who have worked so hard to bring it to life.

#JohannaCPT #NewPlay #CafeOnda #WorldPremiere — with Andrea Belser and 21 others at Gordon Square Arts District
Tlaloc Rivas, Playwright and Director of Johanna: Facing Forward.

If you missed the spread in The Plain Dealer’s Sunday’s arts section, check out the full article online here!

Johanna: Facing Forward

Written and Directed by Tlaloc Rivas

May 28th - June 13th
7:30pm, Gordon Square Theatre
Tickets are $12 - $28

Inspired by the true story of Johanna Orozco, a Cleveland teen who survived a gunshot wound to the face by her boyfriend in 2007 and whose story sparked a nation-wide movement against teen domestic violence. Based on the Pulitzer prize-winning series "Facing Forward" by Plain Dealer journalist Rachel Dissell, Johanna: Facing Forward is a vivid recount of the young woman’s extraordinary journey of courage and recovery. Produced in conjunction with Teatro Publico de Cleveland. World Premiere.

Featuring Tania Benites, Becky Aviles, Andrea Belser, Courtney Brown, Arthur Chu, Jason Estremera, Stuart Hoffman, Leticia Lopez, Gilberto Peña, Alejandro Rivera and Blanca Salva

Sarah Lynne Nicholas- Stage Manager
Megan Monaghan Rivas- Dramaturg
Aaron Benson- Scenic Designer
Inda Blatch-Geib- Costume Designer
T. Paul Lowry- Video Designer
Sam Fisher- Sound Designer
Michael Cunningham- Lighting Designer
Kevin Orozco- Board Operator
Sarah Lynne Nicholas- Stage Manager

An intimate and compelling peek into the creation of Johanna: Facing Forward
"Tania Benites, who plays Johanna Orozco in the new play that opens at Cleveland Public Theatre on Friday, May 29, sits in a hospital bed listening to voice-mail messages.

For those who don't know Orozco's story, one told in a gripping series of newspaper articles by Plain Dealer reporter Rachel Dissell, the calls are breadcrumbs, marking a curious trail.

An actor appearing in an alcove on an unfinished set in CPT's Gordon Square Theatre delivers each message.

The first is from a teacher at Lincoln West High School, asking the 18-year-old senior about some missing homework. She'll need to finish the assignments so she can graduate.

Another is from a bubbly girlfriend, calling about trying on dresses for prom. 'Are you still going?' she asks. 'Listen, don't worry about what everyone's saying - Michelle and I are gonna make you look bea-u-ti-ful!'"
The last is a gently scolding call from Dr. Michael Fritz, Johanna’s surgeon, who reconstructed her ruined face and jaw. She has to remember to turn in the proper paperwork for an upcoming dental surgery, one in a seemingly endless succession of operations to repair the skin and teeth and bone blown apart by a shotgun blast. Juan Ruiz, the boy she once loved, had pulled the trigger.

'Great,' says director and playwright Tlaloc Rivas. 'Let's do it again.'"

-excerpt from "How a shocking story of teen-dating abuse, first reported in The Plain Dealer, became the world-premiere play, 'Johanna: Facing Forward' at Cleveland Public Theatre"

Click here to read the full article by Andrea Simakis, Plain Dealer journalist and theatre critic.

A local teacher uses Johanna: Facing Forward script as a teaching tool

Johanna Orozco dances with prom king Zlatko Zlatanov after the two were named prom king and queen at the Lincoln West prom. (Gus Chan/The Plain Dealer)

"For students at Lincoln West, Orozco's journey still has the same thought-provoking power as it did eight years ago, when many of them were in elementary school."

-excerpt from "How students at Lincoln West High school used alumna Johanna Orozco's
Photos from the rehearsal room...

Photos by Jason Estremera, member of Teatro Publico de Cleveland and cast member of *Johanna: Facing Forward*

Becky Aviles, Blanca Salva and Alejandro Rivera
Thank you to our [Johanna: Facing Forward](#)
Show and ticket info:

All performances take place at Cleveland Public Theatre, Gordon Square Theatre
6415 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44102.


Shows are Thur/Fri/Sat/Mon at 7:30pm. Thursday and Monday shows are just $12!

For tickets and show information, call the CPT Box Office at 216-631-2727 x501 or visit www.cptonline.org.

FREE BEER FRIDAY is every Friday at CPT. Audience members are invited to mingle with artists after the show and enjoy a drink on CPT!

Want to see the complete 14/15 season at-a-glance?
Visit www.cptonline.org for up-to-date information on all of our upcoming productions!