

WHO WOULD YOU TRUST TO TELL YOUR STORY?



Who would you trust to tell *your* story?

That was the question that Cleveland activist Johanna Orozco-Fraser and journalist Rachel Dissell had to contemplate when playwright and **director Tlaloc Rivas** contacted them. His first email, sent on New Year's Day 2014, said in part:

Your story came to my attention years ago. As you know, [Johanna's] story is an inspiration to many Latinos and young women across the country.

***I share your belief that stories and storytelling have the potential for social change.** The plays I create aim to tell stories that provoke a conversation about important subjects between artists and audiences. I believe that Johanna's story has that potential.*

As it happens, I will be traveling to Cleveland [soon]... I'd like to talk with you about whether a play inspired by your articles can happen.

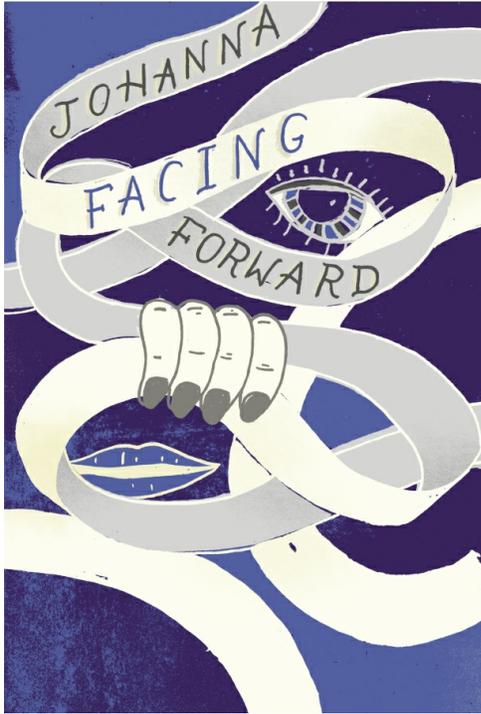
The three met just a couple of weeks later. **Orozco-Fraser, who survived a near-fatal attack by her ex-boyfriend and became a leading advocate for change in Ohio's domestic violence laws**, had become lasting friends with Dissell, a *Plain Dealer* reporter, as Rachel wrote a series of articles chronicling Johanna's recovery in 2007 (the complete 9-part series is available [here](#)). Both friends decided that Rivas deserved their trust. **They gave their blessing to his effort to bring their story to the stage.**

Just hours later, **CPT Executive Artistic Director Raymond Bobgan** offered the project a home at this theatre. As **Rivas** began to shape the script, **Orozco-Fraser** and **Dissell** became treasured advisors and collaborators on this new telling of the story.

Megan Monaghan Rivas

[Dramaturg, Johanna: Facing Forward](#)

[To read the rest of the story about the making of Johanna: Facing Forward, click 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 Pei, 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

The writings of Rachel Dissell...

Onda. As former Co-Chair of the LTC's National Steering Committee, he helped organize the largest gathering of Latina/o artists in 25 years at Emerson College, Boston. He is a member of ATHE's Latina/o Focus Group, a member of the National Association of Latino Arts and Cultures (NALAC) and an Associate Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers, the national union for stage directors and choreographers.

From the Dramaturg... (and what is a "dramaturg" anyway?)...



A dramaturg is a jack of all trades: a researcher, advocate, interface for the director, literary editor, consultant, a specialist. Dramaturgs work closely with playwrights and directors to inform choices and to dissect theatrical structure.

Megan Monaghan Rivas , Dramaturg of [Johanna: Facing Forward](#) , has been conducting extensive research on **Johanna Orozoco's** impact on legal reform. **Johanna's** advocacy helped pass two bills in the Ohio state legislature.

One made it possible for young people under 18 to get orders of protection against other young people under 18 - the "[Teen Dating Violence Bill.](#)"

The other, "[Tina's Law](#)" or "[The Tina Croucher Act,](#)" made it mandatory for Ohio public schools to teach a curriculum on domestic violence prevention. The law was named in memory of a teenage girl who was killed by her ex-boyfriend in a murder-suicide. Johanna lobbied for the law and after it was passed, she frequently spoke in schools and other venues to help train teachers, counselors and students.

[Click Here](#) to read highlights from Megan's research about the "[Teen Dating Violence Bill.](#)" , "[Tina's Law](#)" and national teen violence statistics.

Photos from the rehearsal room...

Photos by **Alejandro Rivera**, member of Teatro Publico de Cleveland, photographer and cast member of *Johanna: Facing Forward*



Tlaloc Rivas, Director and Playwright



Blanca Salva, Tania Benites and Becky Aviles



Tlalo Rivas, Megan Monaghan Rivas (Dramaturg) and Sarah Lynne Nicholas (Stage Manager)



Andrea Belser, Becky Aviles, Tania Benites, Jason Estremera and Stuart Hoffman

What is Teatro Publico de Cleveland?



Click the thumbnail above to view a short documentary created by ArtsFwd.

In 2013 Cleveland Public Theatre launched [Teatro Publico de Cleveland](#), a local Latino theatre company.

The purpose of this new theatre ensemble is to share the rich diversity and perspectives of the Latino-Cleveland culture to fulfill CPT's core mission: to raise consciousness and nurture compassion through ground breaking performance and life-changing educational programs.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Thank you to our [Johanna: Facing Forward](#) partner...



Lutheran Hospital
a Cleveland Clinic hospital

Coming Soon to Playhouse Square...



Exact Change

Written and Performed by Christine Howey

Directed by Scott Plate

June 11 - June 27

Times vary, see below

Playhouse Square in the Helen Rosenfeld Lewis
Bialosky Lab Theatre

Playhouse Square | 1407 Euclid Avenue | Cleveland
44115

Tickets: \$29.50

A moving play about finding your voice and championing your identity, Exact Change is the powerful and personal story of noted Cleveland actor, journalist and critic Christine Howey (formerly Dick Howey). Before transitioning in 1990,

Ms. Howey was a celebrated stage actor in Cleveland, known for playing such heavy-hitting male roles as Lucifer, Goebbels, "Terrible Jim Fitch," Richard Nixon, God and others. Exact Change is a one-woman tour-de force spiced with political rants, historical reflections, personal stories and an incisive wit that truly packs a punch.

Event Times at Playhouse Square

For directions, tickets and other info, visit the [Playhouse Square website](#).

- Thu, Jun 11, 2015 8:00 PM
 - Fri, Jun 12, 2015 8:00 PM
 - Sat, Jun 13, 2015 5:00 PM
 - Sat, Jun 13, 2015 8:30 PM
 - Thu, Jun 25, 2015 8:00 PM
 - Fri, Jun 26, 2015 8:00 PM
 - Sat, Jun 27, 2015 5:00 PM
 - Sat, Jun 27, 2015 8:30 PM
-



Show and ticket info:

All performances take place at [Cleveland Public Theatre](#) , Gordon Square Theatre
6415 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44102.

[Johanna: Facing Forward](#) runs May 28 - June 13. Tickets are \$12-\$28 .

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](tel:216-631-2727) 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!

Cleveland Public Theatre

6415 Detroit Ave. Cleveland, OH 44102

216-631-2727

www.cptonline.org

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