

CADA QUIEN ES UN ARTISTA. EVERYONE IS AN ARTIST.

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Teatro Publico de Cleveland and CPT are Receiving National Recognition



[A Video and Article from ArtsFwd Click the image to view and read!](#)

[ArtsFwd](#), an online community of arts and culture leaders, featured our very own [Teatro Publico de Cleveland \(TPC\)](#) this month in an extensive article about the Project, the Process, and the Impact. It highlighted the purpose of TPC; **to share the rich diversity of Latino-Cleveland culture** and to fulfill CPT's core mission- **to raise consciousness and nurture compassion through groundbreaking performance and life changing educational programs.**

In the [video and article](#), we hear from participants, teaching artists and community members about the impact of TPC professionally, artistically and personally.

"Our community came out and we loved it. Sharing together and connecting to the wider community was amazing. Everyone was looking around saying- wow, I can't believe this hasn't happened before!"

-Blanca Salva

"It changed my personality. It's a very big freedom for me and takes me out of my normal element. I really feel like TPC is part of who I am now."

-Letitia Lopez

"I'm blessed to be in TPC. I never thought in a million years I'd actually do something this big. We are just scratching the surface. Hopefully this is something that will continue for years".

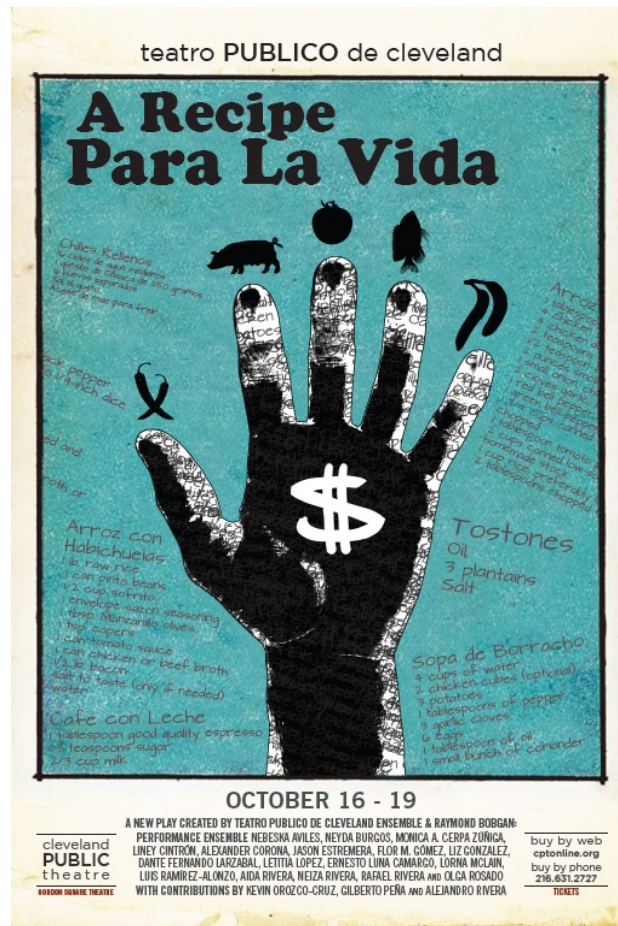
-Alejandro Rivera

The first production from TPC, [Cuando Cierras Your Eyes](#), sold out with over 750 attendees. This season, [Teatro Publico de Cleveland](#) is back, performing mainstage in our Gordon Square Theatre October 16th through October 19th.

Come and join the familia.

[Caitlin Lewins](#)

New Play Associate



[A Recipe para la Vida](#)

Created by the TPC Ensemble and Raymond Bobgan

Directed by Raymond Bobgan

Preshow Music & Food at 6:30pm

October 16 - 19 at 7:30pm

Gordon Square Theatre

Inspired by the foods that are rooted to our heritage, Teatro Publico de Cleveland's second full-

length production [A Recipе para la Vida](#) weaves family drama, ancestral stories and humorous legends into a story that celebrates the multiplicity of cultures, identities and traditions in Cleveland's Latin American community.

About [A Recipе para la Vida](#)

Supermercado Jorge is more than a corner grocery store; it's a community hub...a place where culture is passed down, celebrated and shared. Memories, dreams and stories of the past may even haunt the shelves, amidst the cans, jars and fresh produce. When business goes on the decline and financial pressures mount for the owner, Isabel, she must fight to keep it going, while at the same time struggling to keep her culture alive in her two children. [A Recipе Para La Vida](#) asks: how do we stay connected to our heritage while we are inundated by a rapidly changing world?

PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLE

Mónica A. Cerpa Zúñiga, Nebeska Aviles, Neyda Burgos, Ernesto Luna Camargo, Liney Cintrón, Alexander Corona, Jason Estremera, Liz Gonzalez, Dante Fernando Larzabal, Letitia Lopez, Lorna McLain, Luis Ramírez-Alonzo, Aida Rivera, Neiza Rivera, Rafael Rivera, Olga Rosado, Blanca Salva, Pablo Santiago

OTHER COLLABORATORS

Flor M. Gómez, Kevin Orozco-Cruz, Gilberto Peña, Alejandro Rivera

Meet Members of the [Teatro Publico de Cleveland](#) Ensemble!

Blanca Salva

Where are you from? I was born in Puerto Rico, raised in Bridgeport, CT, moved to Cleveland in late 80's. I'm a Clevelander but I'll always be the Puerto Rican girl from Connecticut.

Have you done theatre before and if so, what was your first role? I did theatre in high school but my role in high school was like a filler, I was part of the chorus that couldn't sing. I think the biggest speaking role I had was in Oliver Twist, I played a begger and my only line was "Please sir, can I have some more?"

What is something most people don't know about you? My girlfriends and I, Carmen and Sheila, we started an all-female hip hop group. We were the first female trio to come out before Salt-N-Pepa and all these other famous hip hop artists. We would do what we call "battles" which is similar to a poetry slam and we'd compete in underground clubs against other groups that were doing rap at that time. I also did breakdancing.

Why did you get involved with CPT? The more I found out about CPT, the outreach in the community, the STEP program, Y-Haven, I thought, "wow, this is different than what most people think of theatre. This is a warm and inviting kind of place to be". In most minority groups, when you



think of Theatre, you think of this hoity toity kind of place where only the rich would go- where you have to be stiff and quiet. It was nice to see that we had a theatre here that invited folks from every part of every community regardless of ethnic background or social status.

And TPC? It's a breath of fresh air. It's my way of giving back to my Latino roots- my Puerto Rican roots. So far it's been a wonderful experience- everyone that I've met brings a different flavor, a unique style and we gel very well. My girlfriend back home used to make this soup called Sopa Loca (Crazy Soup, it's called). So TPC is kind of like a crazy soup, you have all these flavors in it and you're not sure what is going to come out, what it will taste like, but once you

get a whiff of it, you know it's fabulous.

What else do you want people to know? I am married- I have a wonderful husband. I have 2 daughters and a granddaughter- my Sofia I call her. I always loved writing. I think some of the humorous characters I've created have evolved out of a darker time. We grew up in a rough neighborhood in CT and I saw a lot of things I shouldn't have seen as a child. I am a survivor of domestic violence. I wasn't directly the victim, my mother was, but because of what I saw, I am a survivor. A lot of my creative writing, even the rapping was to kind of express some of those dark feelings I had. I used to have a lot of journals and I still use writing as an outlet. I don't have as many journals as I used to because I think, "Oh, if my Sofia could read, I don't know if she'd be traumatized or die laughing"!

Alex Corona



Where are you from?

I grew up here in Cleveland, right in the neighborhood actually. I lived on West 48th St. right in between Bridge and Franklin. I've seen this neighborhood grow and develop. I remember what all these storefronts were like 30 years ago. It's pretty cool to see it like this. My parents are from Mexico. My family has always been on the creative side. My dad is an artist, my uncle's an artist, my brother draws and paints, I dabble in it. I enjoy painting and writing. I never thought I'd be acting, never ever! My sister's an actress but I always told myself, "I could never do that, are you crazy"??

Why are you involved in TPC?

I really believe in the project. I see it as a big opportunity for our community. We've never had this

before, especially here in Cleveland where Latinos are really spread out. Last year I didn't do it just because I didn't have the guts to do it. And then I was like- "well, if you believe in something, you gotta do it, you can't just talk about it". So I kind of forced myself to get into it. I didn't want to participate at first. The first workshop, the first exercise, I felt my heart beating, and I was looking for an excuse to head out the door like, "Raymond, I'm sorry man, but I gotta go!" I kind of forced myself to stay in it and now I enjoy it a lot. I enjoy the work, I enjoy the process. After we performed at Pandemonium, it was like, "wow, that felt so good"!

Tell me about your family!

I have a 5 year old son named Javier, we call him Javi and a 9 year old son named Diego. They may inherit some of the art, they both draw all the time. I have three sisters and four brothers- I come from a big family.

Why are you involved in TPC?

It's another way to give our community a voice. I always feel like, I don't see us on TV and when I do, we're always drug dealers or gang bangers or this and that- very bad images. So I think there's a lot of opportunity to bring real life issues to a broader audience that normally wouldn't have anything to do with us. Now that the door is open and we're actually invited and we're coming and we can really talk about important issues and be heard.

What is an interesting fact about yourself you'd like to share?

I used to, believe it or not, be a rapper. I recorded three albums. I was signed to a small label in Chicago and they released an album.

Aida Rivera



Tell me about yourself! I recently moved to Gordon Square. I've never done an interview before! I had low self-esteem my whole life, it's something I've always battled. Yesterday I was thinking, I started so many things in my life and I never finish, and that's part of my self-esteem. I wanted to do something, to be something, but I was scared. But now my brother, he's been acting for years, he acted in Puerto Rico and studied over there and came here, he told me about TPC. Now that I got this apartment, and I'm part of

TPC, I feel so good! Being part of the community, part of the ensemble, I love it, I love it, I love it! It's a new Aida!

How has your experience been with TPC? My brother told me, "you know there's going to be times when the director's hard on you but don't worry, he has to be like that so you get better". And it happened to me yesterday! I was telling Raymond, in the past, I would have started crying. So I think that being in this is going to help me be more secure, more confident. I think it's going to help my self-esteem because I see so much love here. I've never acted before, my brother was the actor! But I love it. One of the other things I like to do is sing, so I'm going to be singing in the play and it feels so good.

What are you most excited about when it comes to TPC? I'm most excited that I'm part of it. I tell my friends and my family and they get more excited than me! And they say, "Oh I gotta come see you!!"

Tell me about your family! I have a daughter and two sons. I have a wonderful dog, Biscuit. He is 16 years old.

What are some interesting facts about you? I'm single (*laughing*)! I love to sing. I love sewing, I've been sewing since I was 12. I designed a dress when I was 14 and I made it. I love to salsa, you should see me! So... I'm the 4 S's! I used to weight lift in my 20's. I saved a child, you can ask me about it if you want. I feel proud of myself and good about that.

Pablo Santiago



Tell me about yourself! I work for RTA and I've been there a little over 6 years. I'm very involved in the community. I have 2 kids; my daughter is 7 and my son is almost 10 months now. I live with my fiancē in the Old Brooklyn area. Besides that... I like to golf, ride my bike, and do theatre!

What do you like about TPC? TPC is an outlet for me and for many others. It gives me an opportunity to express myself and in the same way, it helps our community be known for good things and not only the negative things shown in the media.

Have you been in theatre before? I did theatre in fourth grade. The first play was "Juan Bobo, La Puerca", an adaptation of a book. It's about this guy Juan Bobo, a foolish and silly guy always hitting stuff and knocking things down... awkward, I would say. I was the lead, Juan Bobo. I've always kept that interest and so when I saw the information about TPC for auditions and workshops, I knew I needed to try it.

After I came, I saw how the theatre can be a vehicle for my community to be known and to put ideas in people's minds. The theatre offers something that no TV, no book can do for you; it's that connection between you and the spectator. I remember coming to the workshops and realizing that the leaders were so invested in this project and that was a turning point for me. I knew I needed to be just as invested as them or more. I realized and I remember going back to the rest of the members saying, "hey guys, this is serious. Let's do this right, get it down pat, and put on a good show".

What are some interesting facts people may not know about you? I love detective shows. I LOVE mysteries. I love pizza. I'm a pizza freak. If I could eat pizza every day, I would. I love Latino food, Puerto Rican food, the food my Grandmother used to make before she passed.

What are you excited about this year for TPC? I'm excited about the challenge. We're in a bigger theatre, we have new cast members, 4 nights... it's a lot of pressure! The big stage! Good pressure,

though. Sometimes I feel nervous but I remember it will all fall into place.

More on the National Front: Chris Seibert's Adventure at [DirectorsLabChicago 2014](#) - Investigating Adaptation & Devised Work



**The 2014 DirectorsLabChicago 2014 Group,
Chris Seibert third from the left, front row**

For six days **Chris, Education Director at CPT**, spent 10 hours a day in a creative laboratory with 24 other directors from seven different countries, including Germany, Israel and Australia. The lab was a blend of discussions, panels, workshops, play viewings, and condensed creation experiences that invited directors to share expertise, gain new skills, and take creative risks.



Chris, at workshop with Andrew White

"I studied with **11 different guest artists** including Michael Rohd of Sojourn Theatre/Northwestern University; Nathan Allen, founder of The House Theatre of Chicago; Andrew White, founding member of Lookingglass Theatre Company; and Anne Cattaneo of Lincoln Center Theatre/Julliard - incredible! **I left exhausted (big surprise) yet galvanized**; the best presenters were speaking the same language as the leaders and directors of CPT. We were talking about things like **authentic connection; how artists serve the public; and how theatre provides a unique experience for shared catharsis so that we, as a community, can stand in a closer circle.** I return re-inspired - a director-creator who is very **proud to call CPT my artistic home.** "

Show and ticket info:

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

General Admission tickets for *A Recipie para la Vida* are \$12 - \$28.

Shows are Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

Preshow Music and Food at 6:30/ Performance at 7:30pm.

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!

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