



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Leslie Crandell Dawes

ldawes@artistsrep.org

A TOUCHING MUSICAL JOURNEY ABOUT THE FEMICIDES IN CIUDAD JUÁREZ,
ART ON TOUR PRESENTS THE WEST COAST PREMIERE OF

La Ruta

A harrowing story that gives a voice to the women who have disappeared.

WHO: Artists Repertory Theatre

WHAT: **La Ruta**

By Isaac Gomez

Directed by Dámaso Rodríguez

WHEN: November 2 – December 1, 2019

Preview Performances: November 2, 3, 5, 6, 7

Opening Night/Press Night: Friday, November 8 @ 7:30pm

Regular run: November 9 – December 1

Tuesdays – Sundays @ 7:30pm, Saturdays and Sundays @ 2:00pm

Thursday matinee @ noon

Open Captioned Performance: November 30 @ 2:00pm

Closing Performance: December 1 @ 7:30pm

WHERE: **Portland Opera, 211 SE Caruthers Street, Portland, OR 97214**

TICKETS: \$60 regular price; \$30 preview/student/under 35

Special Discounts:

Sliding Scale Sunday (tickets start at \$10): only applies to Sunday evening performances

SATMAT: \$25 tickets with code

20for20: 20 tickets available at every performance for \$20

Artists Rep participates in [Arts for All](#) and the [Multnomah County Library's Discovery Pass Program](#).

Buy Tickets: 503.241.1278 or www.artistsrep.org

PREVIEW WEEK PERFORMANCE SPECIALS:

November 2 & 3: Sliding Scale Saturday and Sunday (tickets start at \$10)

November 5: Ten Buck Tuesday – \$10 tickets

November 6: Techie Wine Down Wednesday sponsored by Dark Horse Wine – \$30 ticket + a glass of Dark Horse Wine + post show tech talk moderated by Production Manager Kristeen Willis

November 7: Vortex Music Magazine presents Thirsty Thursday sponsored by Lagunitas – \$35 ticket + a Lagunitas beer + post-show musical performance

POST SHOW TALKBACKS:

Techie Wine Down Wednesday with production team: November 6 (after 7:30pm show)

Post Sunday Matinees: November 10, 17, 24 (after 2:00pm show)

Oregon Psychoanalytic Center Talk Back: December 1 (after 2:00pm show)

Post Thursday Matinee: November 21 (after 12:00pm show)

BOOK & FILM LIST: [Play-inspired recommendations](#) by Multnomah County Library staff

SHOW IMAGE ATTACHED: Design credit – Jeff Hayes, Kisha Jarrett, and Leslie Crandell Dawes

PRODUCTION PHOTOS AVAILABLE: November 6

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE. Portland, Oregon | October 2019 Artists Repertory Theatre (ART) is proud to present *La Ruta* by Isaac Gomez, a Table | Room | Stage At the Apex Production.

In Ciudad Juárez, Mexico, Marisela and Yoli are searching for their daughters Rubí and Brenda, who never got off the bus that takes the women to and from their factory jobs. Brenda and Ivonne worked together on the factory line and Ivonne was the last person to see Brenda before she disappeared. Yoli desperately tries to maintain the hope of seeing her daughter again, while Marisela meets bitter heartache. Full of fervor, *La Ruta* is based on real life testimonies and bears witness to the secrets buried under the pink crosses that dot the hot desert soil.

“It’s a rare play that offers the kind of truth that *La Ruta* holds,” notes **Director of New Play Development & Dramaturgy, Luan Schooler**. “Isaac Gomez has not written ‘characters,’ he made a lens through which we meet real women confronting real evils. This play shows us the hellish depravity, as well as the astounding strength, grace, and clarity that humans are capable of. In the rehearsal hall, we are acutely aware of the responsibility we have in producing this profoundly truthful play, knowing that the women represented in the play have suffered from both brutality and indifference. And while the play is set in 1998, the conditions that made the events of the play possible have not changed, and women are still dying.”

Bouncing back and forth in time and featuring live music, the intensely harrowing *La Ruta* gives a passionate voice to the women who have disappeared. **Artists Rep Artistic Director and director of *La Ruta*, Dámaso Rodríguez** described the importance of this “staggeringly powerful play” and continued with “the play honors these women by putting an all Latina cast of

complex, funny, loving, and resilient characters at the center of the narrative, and uses traditional Mexican folk songs to poetic, beautifully moving effect. The dehumanization of Mexican asylum seekers and immigrants has been central to the political discourse around immigration. For many in the audience, this story will be completely unknown to them. I hope the play will build awareness, foster empathy, and inspire audiences to learn more and take action."

La Ruta is a Table | Room | Stage At the Apex production. At the Apex are productions of brand new plays that speak boldly and imaginatively to the pressing questions of American life today. In addition to premiering new plays, ART recognizes that second productions are vital to a play's ongoing life and we offer playwrights an opportunity to continue working on their play after its premiere.

The ART cast of *La Ruta* features Cristi Miles, Diana Burbano, Naiya Amilcar, Marissa Sanchez, Patricia Alvitez, and Portland musician Fabi Reyna – all making their Artists Rep debut.

Artists Rep's production of *La Ruta* is sponsored by Wolfgang Dempke in memory of Alise Rubin; and Charlotte Rubin.

ABOUT THE PLAY

Since 1993, the women of Juárez, Mexico have been disappearing and no one has solved the mystery. The bus route that takes these women to and from their U.S.-owned factory jobs is often the last place they are seen. Based on real life testimonies, each woman represented in *La Ruta* bears witness to the secrets buried under the hot desert sun. Bouncing back and forth in time and featuring live music, the intensely harrowing *La Ruta* gives a passionate voice to the women who have disappeared.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Isaac Gomez is an award-winning Chicago-based playwright originally from El Paso, Texas/Ciudad Juárez, Mexico. His play *La Ruta* received its world premiere at Steppenwolf Theater Company last winter. His one-woman show *the way she spoke* received its Off-Broadway premiere at the Minetta Lane Theatre (produced by Audible, directed by Jo Bonney, starring Kate del Castillo) this past summer. He is currently under commission from South Coast Repertory, Denver Center for the Performing Arts, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, the Alley Theater, and StepUp Chicago Playwrights. His plays have been supported by Steppenwolf Theater Company, Primary Stages, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Goodman Theatre, Victory Gardens Theater, City Theatre, Artists Rep, Northlight Theatre, Albany Park Theater Project, WaterTower Theater, Haven Theater, Teatro Vista, Greenhouse Theater Center, Jackalope Theater Company, Pivot Arts, Definition Theater Company, Broken Nose Theater, Stage Left, The VORTEX, and Something Marvelous. He is the recipient of the 2018 Dramatists Guild Lanford Wilson Award, the 2017 Jeffry Melnick New Playwright Award at Primary Stages, an inaugural 3Arts "Make A Wave" grantee, advisory member with the Alliance of Latinx Theatre, a Resident Playwright at Chicago Dramatists, an Artistic Associate with Victory Gardens Theater, Ensemble Member with Teatro Vista, Artistic Associate with Pivot Arts, an advisory committee

member of the Latinx Theatre Commons (LTC) and a core producer with the Jubilee. He is a Professional Lecturer at The Theatre School at DePaul University, and is represented by The Gersh Agency and Circle of Confusion.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Dámaso Rodríguez is in his seventh season as Artistic Director of Artists Repertory Theatre (ART). He is a Co-Founder of L.A.'s Furious Theatre, where he served as Co-Artistic Director from 2001-2012. From 2007-2010 he served as Associate Artistic Director of the Pasadena Playhouse. His directing credits include work at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, American Conservatory Theater, Pasadena Playhouse, Intiman Theatre, South Coast Repertory, Actors Theatre of Louisville, A Noise Within, The Playwrights' Center, The Theatre@Boston Court, Odyssey Theatre, The New Harmony Project, New Dramatists, and Furious Theatre. Dámaso is a recipient of the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award, the Back Stage Garland Award, the NAACP Theatre Award, and the Pasadena Arts Council's Gold Crown Award. His productions have been recognized by the Portland Area Musical Theatre Awards, LA Weekly, Stage Scene LA, and the Los Angeles Stage Alliance. In 2010, Furious Theatre Company was named to LA Weekly's list of "Best Theatres of the Decade." In 2012, he was honored as a Finalist for the Zelda Fichandler Award by the Stage Directors & Choreographers Foundation. In 2014 he was named a Knowledge Universe Rising Star by Portland Monthly. Dámaso is a proud member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC).

La Ruta

By Isaac Gomez

Directed by Dámaso Rodríguez

CAST

Cristi Miles* as Yolanda | Third Rail, Portland Playhouse, Profile Theatre, Portland Shakespeare Project, and Milagro

Diana Burbano* as Marisela | *American Mariachi* (South Coast Repertory)

Naiya Amilcar as Ivonne | Oregon Children's Theatre, Milagro

Marissa Sanchez as Brenda | *Real Women Have Curves* (Humboldt State University) and *Latinologues* (Hermanas Unidas)

Patricia Alvitez as Zaide | *Grand Hotel* and *Young Frankenstein* (Lakewood), *La Segua* and *Wolf at the Door* (Milagro)

Fabi Reyna as Desamaya | *She Shreds Magazine*

CREATIVE TEAM

Director | Dámaso Rodríguez

Assistant Director/Cultural Consultant | Yasmin Ruvalcaba

Scenic & Costume Designer | Christopher Acebo

Lighting Designer | Blanca Forzán

Music Director, Sound Designer, and Composer | Rodolfo Ortega^#
Projection Designer | Alan Cline
Props Master | Laura Savage
Fight Choreographer | [Jonathan Cole](#)^^
Dramaturg | Tiffany Ana López and [Luan Schooler](#)
Dialect/Voice Coach | Stephanie Gaslin
Intimacy Consultant | Amanda K Cole#
Assistant Scenic Designer | Rick Anderson
Stage Manager | [Carol Ann Wohlmut](#)*^
Production Assistant 1 | Ariela Subar
Production Assistant 2 | Megan Thorpe
Live Sound Operator | Dave Petersen
Assistant Costume Designer | Alex Pletcher

PRODUCTION TEAM

Producing Director | Shawn Lee
Associate Producer & Production Manager | Kristeen Willis#
General Manager & Casting Director | Vonessa Martin
Costume Shop Manager/Wardrobe | Alana Wight
Technical Director | Nathan Crone
Scene Shop Foreman | Eddie Rivera
Master Carpenter | Charlie Capps
Scenic Charge Artist | Sarah Kindler
Master Electrician | Gavin Burgess
Sound Technician | Dave Petersen

** Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the U.S.*

+Actors' Equity Associate Candidate

^^ Member of Stage Directors and Choreographers Society

The scenic, costume, lighting, projection & sound designers are represented by United Scenic Artists

^ Artists Rep Resident Artist

ABOUT ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE

[ARTISTS REPERTORY THEATRE'S](#) mission is to produce intimate, provocative theatre and provide a home for a diverse community artists and audiences to take creative risks. Artists Rep gratefully acknowledges our theatre rests on the traditional lands of the Multnomah, Wasco, Cowlitz, Kathlamet, Clackamas, Bands of Chinook, Tualatin Kalapuya, Molalla and many other tribes who made their homes along the Columbia River.

Artists Rep is Portland's premiere mid-size regional theatre company and is led by Artistic Director Dámaso Rodríguez and Managing Director J.S. May. Founded in 1982, Artists Repertory Theatre is the longest-running professional theatre company in Portland. ART became the 72nd member of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) in 2016 and is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network (NNPN). Artists Rep's 2019/20 season can be found [here](#).

Artists Rep has become a significant presence in American regional theatre with a legacy of world, national, and regional premieres of provocative new work with the highest standards of stagecraft. The organization is committed to local artists and features a company of Resident Artists and professionals of varied theatre disciplines, who are a driving force behind Artists Rep's creative output and identity.

TABLE | ROOM | STAGE (T|R|S) was established in 2015 and is Artists Rep's new play program whose mission is to develop and produce new work that vividly expresses Artists Rep's aesthetic values. We focus on work by writers of color, women, LGBTQIA+ and gender nonconforming writers, and offer an environment where these playwrights can create provocative, intimate new theatre pieces that challenge, illuminate, and inspire.

T|R|S has produced the following commissions: *The Talented Ones* by Yussef El Guindi (April 2017), *The Thanksgiving Play* by Larissa FastHorse (Sicangu Lakota) (April 2018), the NNPN Rolling World Premiere *Wolf Play* by Hansol Jung (March 2019), and *Looking for Tiger Lily* by Anthony Hudson (May 2020).

Current playwright commissions include: Linda Alper, Dael Orlandersmith, Steve Rathje, and Andrea Stolowitz. In addition, ART and Oregon Shakespeare Festival are co-commissioning playwright E.M. Lewis's *The Great Divide*. New projects are also being developed with Susannah Mars, Sue Mach, and Bill Wadhams.

T|R|S *At the Apex* has a hand in shaping World Premieres and vital second productions by some of the nation's most exciting emerging playwrights. *At the Apex* productions are: *La Ruta* by Isaac Gomez (November 2019), *Teenage Dick* by Mike Lew (January 2019), *Magellanica* by E.M. Lewis (January 2018), and *Cuba Libre* by Carlos Lacámara (Book) and Jorge Gómez (Music & Lyrics). To learn more about all the projects, playwrights, and programs of T|R|S [visit here](#).

RESIDENT ARTISTS have an ongoing history of working on stage and behind-the-scenes of Artists Rep's main stage productions. They collaborate with administrative staff on education, community engagement, new play development, and fundraising efforts. The Resident Artist title is offered by the Artistic Director in appreciation of each artist's achievements with ART and in the spirit of continued collaboration. These multidisciplinary theatre makers are deeply committed to ART's success, share organizational values, and participate in decision-making processes that impact the theatre's mission and its future. Through the Resident Artists program, we ensure that a diverse community of Portland-based artists are at the center of the day-to-day life of the theatre and play a vital part in creating the culture at ART.

EDUCATION is dedicated to developing theatre artists, students, business and arts professionals, and life-long learners at every ability, interest, and level of expertise. Education opportunities focus on engaging and elevating our community by offering professional-level classes, coaching, and workshops with our teaching artists. Programs like these serve artists and others seeking professional development, students seeking to engage in the transformative power of the arts, and life-long learners who can take classes in subjects such as dramaturgy, script-writing, communication for non-actors, and more. With the Student Ambassador Program, students learn about the inner-workings of a major nonprofit professional theatre, meet once per month, see shows for free, and participate in discussions with leading theatre artists and professionals. Access and enrichment are available for educators who enjoy ticket discounts, school programming, and workshops. Enhanced viewing experiences include post-show

discussions with the cast, panel discussions with experts, and a dedicated conversation with production designers.

ARTSHUB is Artists Rep's resource sharing and community-building initiative supporting Portland theatre makers, arts and education nonprofits, and community groups. The mission of the ARTSHUB is to create a cultural center by supporting Portland's rich artistic ecosystem. Programs and services include below market rates for rehearsal, performance, and meeting space; shared administrative work space for individuals and organizations; and production services such as set construction, scenic painting, and professional technical support from design through performance. We prioritize artists and organizations that support ART's values of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and seek to provide a home for artists and audiences to take creative risks.

While the program's origin six years ago was in response to an opportunity to share underutilized performance space, we have found that the most vital and lasting impact of the ARTSHUB is the bustling community that has been formed, and the myriad ways it has led to the empowerment of local artists and the accelerated growth of participating organizations. In the 2018/19 Season, over 1,500 events were held in our building by 42 local nonprofits, including 11 resident companies — 380 ARTSHUB public events, 462 rehearsals, 422 classes and 306 ART events. Our new facility is being designed so that the ARTSHUB can include even more organizations than it currently serves.

RISE: The Campaign for Artists Repertory Theatre is the capital funding drive that will make possible the reinvention of ART's building at 1515 SW Morrison. Originally an Elks Lodge health club, the Artists Rep building has reached the end of its useful life. A major gift in 2018 paid off the outstanding mortgage on the entire downtown block catalyzing the 2019 sale of the north half of the building. ART received \$9 million in the sale, which is now the lead investment for the reimagining of the remaining building. The roof and two massive wood beams will rise to create a modern multiuse performing arts center with two theatres, four rehearsal halls, and collaborative spaces that will give space to the many new stories waiting to be shared.

Artists Repertory Theatre receives generous support from our community of patrons, including significant leadership gifts from: The Robert & Mercedes Eichholz Foundation; Ronni Lacroute; Regional Arts & Culture Council; The Shubert Foundation; David & Christine Vernier; Colliers International; and Wood Partners. Additional Corporate and Foundation support comes from: Dark Horse Wine; Lagunitas Brewing Company; Nossa Familia Coffee; the Kinsman Foundation; Rafati's Catering; Howard S. Wright/Balfour Beatty; and US Bank.

###