

ALLEY THEATRE

Alley Theatre Announces 72 Miles | 72 Stories Community Celebration April 11-13

A continuation of El Zócalo, the celebration is a part of Houston's Spring of Latino Art

HOUSTON –The Alley Theatre continues its El Zócalo initiative with a three-day celebration: **72 Miles | 72 Stories** in the Neuhaus Theatre April 11-13. The event coincides with Latino Art Now! (LAN!) and Spring of Latino Art (SOLA) Houston and embraces the rich heritage and homegrown stories within the Latinx community. Live simultaneous Spanish translation will be provided by Antena Houston. Tickets are free and may be reserved at alleytheatre.org or by calling the Box Office at 713-220-5700.

Since January of this year, the Alley has provided schools and community groups the opportunity to tell their own compelling stories through 8-10-week residencies of Alley's First Draft personal narrative curriculum. From the beginning to the end, students and community members write, revise, and eventually perform their own personal narratives. During the 2017-18 inaugural year of the El Zócalo initiative participants marveled at how simple theatre activities and writing prompts inspired their writing, and how sharing stories created deeper community connections and celebrated their local heritage.

The 72 Miles | 72 Stories residencies will culminate with the El Zócalo community celebration in the Alley's Neuhaus Theatre at 7:30 p.m. on **April 11, 12, and 13**, as part of SOLA. In this curated story event, students, families, and organizations will present their First Draft stories along with local Latinx artistic participants. Storytellers range in age from sixth graders to senior citizens, representing East Early College High School, Raul Yzaguirre Schools for Success (RYSS), Ortiz Middle School, Stevenson Middle School, The Nehemiah Center, University of Houston-Downtown, and Community Family Centers. Select performers will include performance artist Jordi Viscarri, Mariachi singer Martha Sanchez, comedian Jerry Carrillo; poets Lupe Mendez from Tintero Projects and Cristina Martinez from Write About Now Poetry, a short play performance lead by Marissa Castillo from TEATRXX, dance performances lead by Karina Gonzalez from the Houston Ballet and Adam Castaneda from the Pilot Dance Project; a dance and spoken word collaboration lead by Cynthia Garcia; and traditional Mexican dances performed by Mixteco Ballet Folklorico.

All stories, performances, and works of art will explore the universal themes addressed in Hilary Bettis's new play *72 Miles to Go....* presented during Alley Theatre's Alley All New Festival, January 19-26, 2019. The themes in the play include: The American Dream: DACA and Dreamers, American Sanctuary: Refugees and Asylum Seekers, Life at the Border, Disenfranchisement and Marginalization of Immigrants, Deportation and Family Separation Impact on Communities, Familism – Sacrificing for the sake of family, Identity Struggles for Latin Americans, and The Ethics of Immigration: Moral vs Legal Obligations.

The submission period for *72 Miles | 72 Stories* is open now. Submissions may include monologues, poems, short plays, dance pieces, musical performances, visual or multimedia artwork, or other formats. Featured artists will perform side-by-side with students and community members who have created First Draft personal narratives through Alley Theatre residencies. For more information on submissions and the form, visit alleytheatre.org/elzocalo.

ABOUT EL ZÓCALO

Inspired by the traditional meeting places found all over Latin America, Alley Theatre's metaphoric "El Zócalo" is a place-making initiative that celebrates, expands, and engages Houston's diverse,

Latinx culture and artistic community. The Alley Theatre is proud to partner with established cultural and social organizations and Houston-area schools to foster community and reinforce Houston's presence as a diverse arts center that serves every neighborhood in its community. For more information, visit www.alleytheatre.org/elzocalo.

PHOTOS: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ghofwyoohuirk3c/AAAKP_lgQlfLHxSgoHZtSnv-a?dl=0

SPONSORS: The Alley Theatre is supported by the 2018-19 Season sponsor United Airlines, the official airline of the Alley Theatre; Four Seasons Hotel Houston, the official hotel of the Alley Theatre; and Lynn Wyatt.

ABOUT THE ALLEY THEATRE

The Alley Theatre, one of America's leading nonprofit theatres, is a nationally recognized performing arts company led by Interim Artistic Director, James Black and Managing Director, Dean R. Gladden. Rob Melrose will serve as the Alley's Artistic Director beginning with the 2019-20 Season. The Alley produces up to 16 plays each year in its newly renovated Theatre, ranging from the best current work to re-invigorated classic plays, to new plays by contemporary writers. The Alley is home to a resident company of actors. In addition, the Alley engages theatre artists of every discipline – actors, designers, composers, playwrights – who work on individual productions throughout each season as visiting artists.

The recent renovation of the Alley's Hubbard Theatre created a new 774-seat state-of-the-art performance venue. Matched with the newly rebuilt 296-seat Neuhaus Theatre, the Alley offers nearly 500 performances each season. The Company reaches over 200,000 people each year through its performance and education programs. Its audience enrichment programs include pre-show and post-performance talks, events, and workshops for audience members of all ages.

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