

NOVA Alexandria

is proud to present

Searching for Aztlán

Written & Directed by
Lakin Valdez

A Teatro Milagro Touring Production

Wednesday, Sept. 30, 11 AM
Schlesinger Center Theatre

For more information: Dr. Martha Davis:
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With the support of **The Ventura Group, Inc**, Teatro Milagro is returning to NOVA in September for two days, to perform at both Alexandria and Manassas campuses, with a new bilingual play and theatre workshops. The play, *Searching for Aztlán*, begins in 2012 with the Tucson school board's acceptance of HB 2281, shutting down Mexican American Studies and removing its books from classrooms. A giant dust storm, or "haboob," strikes the city and leaves Dolores Huelga, a teacher, unemployed and in an alternate reality. Lost in the desert, Dolores sets out on a quest for the mythical city of Aztlán.

Along the way she encounters a quirky High-Spanic, a militant Super-Chicano, and a Dream student – all dispossessed exiles – with whom she joins forces to fight for truth, justice, and the "indigenous way." A biting and satirical journey, *Searching for Aztlán* takes the audience on a metaphorical yellow brick road of discovery about what it means to be Chicano in contemporary society.

Journey to Aztlan Workshop: Tyler 121 – 2:30 – 4:30

Using commedia and political satire, Milagro actors lead students through a movement exploration, which focuses on use of stock characters to create *actos*, short comedic scenes that address a social or economic problem. These commedia styles workshops can also be integrated into a Movement and Metaphor workshop, which combines dramatic movement with expressive poetry writing. Both workshops highlight social and political concerns through use of metaphorical words and images.

About Teatro Milagro

The mission of the Milagro, is to provide extraordinary Latino theatre, culture and arts education experiences for the enrichment of all communities. Since its founding in 1985, Milagro has given a primary voice to issues affecting the local and national Latino communities, and has introduced a host of new performers to the local arts and education field. Teatro Milagro, the company's education and outreach program, tours Oregon and the nation with original bilingual theatre productions and educational residencies. Current global issues are crafted into cutting edge dramatic plays infused with Latino culture and Spanish language. Since 1989 Teatro Milagro has provided culturally appropriate arts education & enrichment programs that build cultural appreciation and further Latino participation in the arts.

*This 2015 Searching for Aztlan Residency is made possible in part with the additional support of
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Bios of Cast & Crew

Lakin Valdez, director and playwright, was born and raised in the extended family of El Teatro Campesino. He served as the company's Associate Artistic Director from the years 2000 to 2005. Since 2004, Lakin has written, directed and performed in more than a dozen plays; work that reflects the rich history and vibrant culture of the Latino/Chicano community. His body of work has been described as "Powerful" (L.A. Times), "Consummately engaging" (Variety), to "Hauntingly intense" (San Francisco Chronicle). He is the recipient of two NPN Creation Fund Awards, a Zellerbach Award and NEA Access to Excellence Award for his generative work.



Ajai Terrazas-Tripathi, Jaguar & Tour Manager, is originally from Corvallis, Oregon, where he graduated from Oregon State University with a degree in Theatre Arts. During his time at OSU he performed in many memorable roles in such plays as *Much Ado About Nothing*, *Woyzek*, *The Silent Woman*, and *An Adult Evening with Shel Silverstein*. Ajai has also directed and produced *Stories of Discrimination*, two original plays *The Death Rattle*, and *The Anti-Bullying Project*, both based on real life stories in Corvallis. This is his fifth year performing in the Milagro touring company as a performer and teaching artist, he also assists with grant writing and development efforts.

Monica Domena, Dolores & Teaching Artist, is a recent graduate with a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Central Washington University. Of Puerto Rican decent, she is delighted to share her Spanish speaking skills with Teatro Milagro. In addition to acting, Monica is also a dance and fight choreographer, specializing in unarmed, broadsword, and rapier and dagger. Some favorite credits include playing Ariel in *The Tempest* with Central Theatre Ensemble and originating the lead role in Ramon Esquivel's *Luna*. Last season Monica debuted at Milagro in the title role of *SUPER ANA!* and as an ensemble member in *Searching for Aztlán*.



Giovanni Alva, Lysandro & teaching artist, is a Chicano actor from San Diego, California. He is a recent graduate from Humboldt State with a BA in Theatre Arts. In addition to his academic training, he also honed his acting skills as an ensemble member of This Is (Improv) and Underground Improv, specializing in *Long Form Improv*. As an actor of traditional theatre, he has performed at Chronos and Teatro Mascara Magica in California in such plays as *La Pastorela de Creencia* and *Johnny Tenorio* respectively. This will be Geo's first season touring with Teatro Milagro and he will also be leading educational workshops for Hacienda CDC's Exprecciones Program.

Shenekah Telles, HighSpanic & teaching artist, is an actor and costume designer from Las Cruces, New Mexico. She recently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Portland. In addition to her acting experience, she brings to Milagro her skills as a costume and hair designer. At the University of Portland she appeared in the title role of *Cymbeline* and as Divata in *Speech & Debate*. In California she performed in *The Children's Hour* and *Urinetown* with Mayfield Theatre Productions. This is Shenekah's first season of touring with Milagro and she will also be the residency costume designer for the 2015-16 season.



Dañel Malán, Founding Director of Touring & Arts Education, co-founded the Milagro Theatre in 1985 with her husband, Jose Eduardo Gonzalez and in 1989 she created the national Milagro bilingual-touring program. Dañel has written and produced several productions in the last twenty years, notably; *Cuéntame Coyote* (2014), *FRIDA, un retablo* (2013), *B'aktun 13* (2012) about the end of the Mayan calendar, *Duende de Lorca* (2011) a surrealist vision of Federico García Lorca, *El Ultimo* (2009) an eco-drama and *ZAPATISTA* (2008) the story of subComandante Marcos. In addition to bilingual plays, Dañel has worked to collaboratively design bilingual curriculum for k- 12 schools, colleges, and community groups and is currently working on her master's degree in curriculum design at Portland State University.