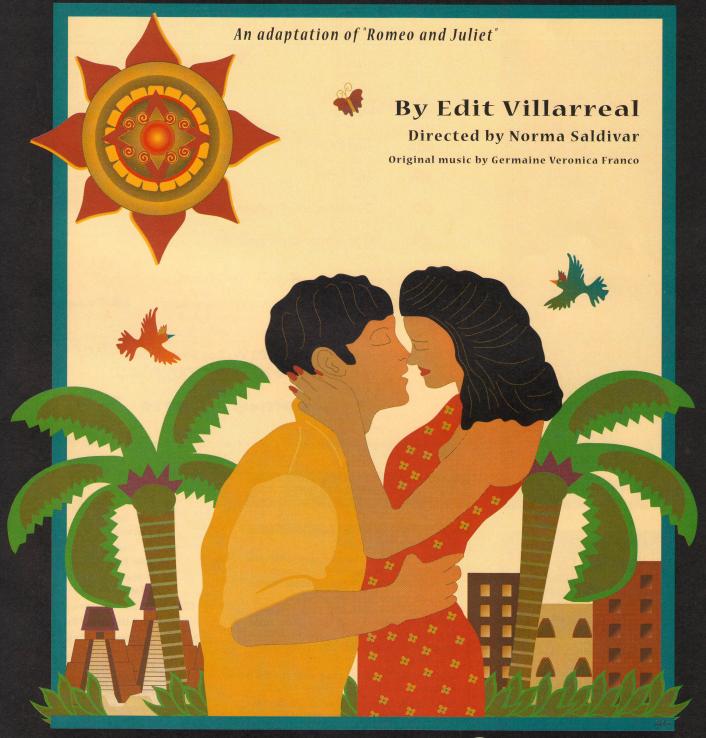
WORLD PREMIERE

# the Language of Flowers





# the Language of Flowers

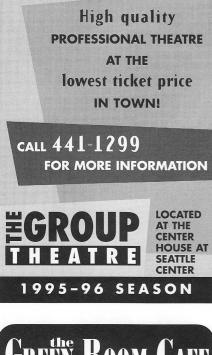
book and lyrics by Edit Villarreal original music by Germaine Veronica Franco directed by Norma Saldivar

October 14 - November 12, 1995

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Notes from the Playwright



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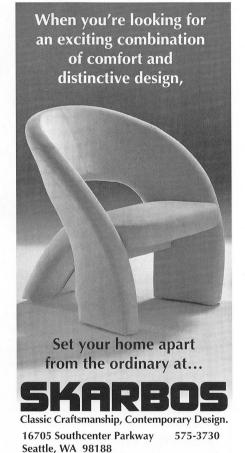
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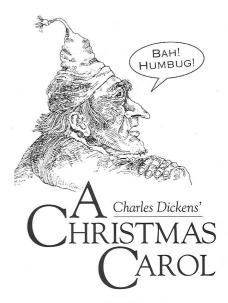
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We invite you to attend sign-interpreted performances for *The Language of Flowers* on November 3 and *A Christmas Carol* on December 8.

Audio-described performances are provided by AVIA (Arts and Visually Impaired Audiences), funded in part by the Seattle Arts Commission, the King County Arts Commission, the Washington State Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts. These are scheduled for *The Language of Flowers* on November 5, and *A Christmas Carol* on December 9.

Assistive listening devices are available at no charge for all performances (except those which are audio-described). They are provided by Ackerley Communications, Inc. Please see the House Manager for them.

Large print programs are available upon request.

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presents

World Premiere

# the Language of Flowers

freely adapted from Shakespeare's The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet

# By Edit Villarreal

Book and lyrics by Edit Villarreal Original music by Germaine Veronica Franco

Director

Set Designer

Costume Designer

Light Designer Sound Designer

Fight Director

Vocal Director

Assistant Director

Stage Manager

Norma Saldivar

Michelle Riel

Rose Pederson

Michael Wellborn

Tom Utterback

Geoffrey Alm

Richard Gray

Scott Strode

John Kingsbury

#### Cast in alphabetical order

Sgt. Lopez, Coyote Calavera

Julian Bosquet, Curandero

Tommy Bosquet

Maria

Zoot Suiter Calavera, Ensemble

Benny Martinez

Fr. Lawrence

Candelaria, Tijuana Calavera

Migrant Worker Calavera, Ensemble

Romeo Martinez

Juliet Bosquet

Ruben Gutierrez, Revolutionary Calavera, Ensemble

Corradista, Manuel Catrina Calavera, Ensemble Alex Balderrama

Laurence Ballard

Chris Boscia Kate Brickley

Mario Burrell

Hassan El-Amin

Seán G. Griffin

Laura Kenny

Paul Kramer Benito Martinez

Dawnnie Mercado

Eric Salamon

Meg Savlov

Stephanie Stephenson

Time:

The present

Place:

Los Angeles

Original music for this production was recorded by Germaine Veronica Franco, percussion and keyboards; Gary Lemos, Native American flutes; Federico Ramos, guitars, silbato, and guitar arrangements; and Jaime Valenzuela, recording engineer.

Under its previous title, R and J, The Language of Flowers was stage read and developed at South Coast Repertory Theatre in its annual Hispanic Playwrights Project. Special thanks go to Jose Cruz Gonzalez, California State University, Los Angeles, Cliff Harper, Gilbert Cates, Robert Israel, Rich Rose and the UCLA School of Theatre, Film and Television.

> Understudies never substitute for listed players unless a specific announcement is made at the time of the performance. Please check the castboard in the lobby for program changes.

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#### The Actors



Alexander Balderrama Sgt. Lopez, Calavera

Alex was last seen at ACT in the 1991 touring production of *The Falcon*, playing the

dual role of Ivane and the Father. Originally from L.A., Alex was assistant stage manager for the improvisational theatre project at the Mark Taper Forum before moving to the Northwest in 1980. Local audiences may recognize him from his work at The Group and various fringe theatres. His film and TV credits includes Not In My Church, The Year of My Japanese Cousin, Facing Up, Bill Nye the Science Guy and numerous industrial films.



Laurence Ballard Julian Bosquet, Curandero

In the past 10 years, Laurence has performed in numerous productions at ACT, including

Gray's Anatomy, Lonely Planet, Life During Wartime, Shadowlands, The Revengers' Comedies, Sunsets and Glories, The Illusion, Our Country's Good, Halcyon Days, A Normal Life, A Walk in the Woods, Red Noses, Woman in Mind, The Voice of the Prairie, Principia Scriptoriae, Tales from Hollywood, True West, Maydays and Other Places. In 1992, Laurence directed Eleemosynary and A Christmas Carol. He has performed locally with several theatres, most recently as Roy Cohn in Angels in America at the Intiman Theatre Company. Nationally, other theatres include Arena Stage, Arizona Theatre Company, Berkeley Repertory Theater, Eureka Theatre, Joyce Theatre, Milwaukee Repertory Theater, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, San Jose Repertory, and StageWest. Internationally, Laurence has performed with Tadashi Suzuki's company in Tokyo, Toga-Mura, and Mito City, Japan.



Chris Boscia Tommy Bosquet

Chris performed this year in John Leguizamo's one-man show, *Mambo Mouth*, at both New City Theatre

and at AHA! Chris has also performed locally with Alice B. and with Seattle Group Theatre. *The Language of Flowers* marks his debut with ACT.



Kate Brickley Maria

Kate was last seen by Seattle audiences as Mother Dorn, Constanze, Aunt Clara, Hannah and others in

this season's production of *Handing Down the Names*. Prior to that, she was seen as Mrs. Darling in the Intiman Theatre's production of *Peter Pan*. She also appeared this season as the cook and baker in the Seattle Children's Theatre production of *Sara Crewe*. She has appeared out of town at the American Conservatory Theatre in San Francisco, where she was a company member for six years, at PCPA in Santa Maria, CA, the San Jose Repertory Theatre, and American Inside Theatre in Wisconsin. Audiences may have spotted Kate in a recent episode of *Northern Exposure* where she played Margaret Spencer.



Mario Burrell Calavera, Ensemble

The Language of Flowers will be Mario's first production at A Contemporary Theatre.
Originally from the Los

Angeles area, he received his undergraduate theatre degree in San Diego. He is currently working toward his MFA degree in the University of Washington's Professional Actor Training Program, where he has enjoyed being in such productions as *The Colored Museum*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *West Side Story*. Locally, Mario has been seen at the Village Theatre and as Daniel in the Tacoma Actors Guild production of *Once On This Island*.



Hassan El-Amin Benny Martinez

Hassan played Theseus and the Messenger in *The Gospel at Colonus* earlier this season. He recently performed at

Milwaukee Rep as James Hewlett in The African Company Presents Richard III. Other roles include Caliban in The Tempest at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Edmund in King Lear, and Prospero in The Tempest at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival. He also played Corporal Lestrade in Dream on Monkey Mountain and the Prince of Morocco in The Merchant of Venice at the Guthrie Theater, to name a few. Hassan received his MFA (Theatre) from the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Delaware.



Seán G. Griffin Fr. Lawrence

Seán's Broadway credits include: Dancing at Lughnasa; Ned and Jack, directed by Colleen Dewhurst; The Queen

and the Rebels, playing opposite Colleen Dewhurst; The National Health; Ah! Wilderness and Poor Murderer. Off-Broadway credits include The March on Russia, Immigrant Voices (Ellis Island) and Elektra (Carnegie Hall), with Colleen Dewhurst. Seán has been a member of many regional theatre companies including Seattle Rep, Long Wharf Theatre, Pittsburgh Public, Cleveland Playhouse, Goodman Theatre, Syracuse Stage and The Huntington Theatre, and was a founding member of the PAF Playhouse on Long Island. He has appeared in films and on TV including PBS specials, Movies of the Week and many popular series and commercials. He has toured Eastern Europe for the State Department, the U.S. in Cyrano de Bergerac and the East Coast in Dancing at Lughnasa. His wife Bernadine Griffin is Director of the Annual Fund for Seattle Symphony and Seán is also very proud of his daughter, Heather, who recently graduated from college.



Laura Kenny Candelaria, Calavera

Laura is delighted to be back at ACT where she last appeared in *The Cover of Life* and *A Christmas Carol.* At the

Seattle Repertory Theatre, she was seen in The Good Times Are Killing Me, Six Characters in Search of an Author, The Prize, The Merry Wives of Windsor and My Uncle Sam. For Tacoma Actors Guild she has done Noises Off, A....My Name is Alice, A Christmas Carol, I Hate Hamlet, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, The Comedy of Errors and The Night of the Iguana. Some of her other work includes You Can't Take It With You and A...My Name is Alice at Seattle Group Theatre, and Daddy's Dying (Who's Got the Will?) and Angry Housewives at Pioneer Square Theatre. Some film and TV credits inclue Harry and the Hendersons, Love at Large and Northern Exposure as well as a number of TV and radio commercials. Laura dedicates her performance to Raymond Lee Malott.



Paul Kramer Calavera, Ensemble

Paul recently finished his MFA at Mankato State University in Minnesota, where he enjoyed lead roles in

South Pacific, Oklahoma!, 1776, 42nd Street, Antigone, Richard III, Love's Labour's Lost and Lend Me a Tenor. This past summer he was the company manager for the Peterborough Players in New Hampshire. Other professional credits include stage manager for Highland Summer Theatre, assistant director/stage manager for Mixed Blood Theatre's *The Grapes of Wrath*, stage manager for Illusion Theater's *Miss Evers' Boys*, and assistant director/production assistant for Playlabs at the Playwrights' Center in Minnesota.



## **Benito Martinez**Romeo Martinez

Benito is a native of Alburquerque, where he started acting at age 10. Now a resident of L.A., he has done several L.A.

performances including *The Comedy of Errors*, *Taming of the Shrew*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *The Time-Out* among others. His most recent screen credits include *Outbreak* and *Mi Familia*, and with this production he joyfully makes his Seattle debut.



#### Dawnnie Mercado Juliet Bosquet

Dawnnie has played Juliet before, in the touring production of Romeo and Juliet staged by the National Theatre

for the Performing Arts. She appeared as Miranda in *The Tempest* at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, where she also understudied Cordelia and The Fool in *King Lear*, and has worked in several industrial films. After earning her BA in Theatre at UC/Santa Barbara, Dawnnie earned an MFA degree at New York University/ The Tisch School for the Arts, where she appeared in *Richard III*, *Twelfth Night*, *Hay Fever*, *The Cherry Orchard*, *Threepenny Opera* and other productions.



**Eric Salamon**Ruben Gutierrez,
Ensemble

Eric appeared in last year's *A Christmas Carol*. His other local credits include Seattle

Children's Theatre touring production of *The Secret of N Power*; AHA! Theatre's productions of *Translations, Star Drek: The Musical*, and *Bent*; and Seattle Theatre Project's production of *Jack's House*. He has also been seen locally as Sebastian in *Twelfth Night* and Orlando in *As You Like It*. Eric earned his BFA at Carnegie-Mellon University.



Meg Savlov Corridista, Manuel

Meg participated in the First ACT playwrights' workshop last spring. Meg has appeared in Harvest Moon and Voices

of Christmas at the Group Theater, and has also worked with Annex and Theater Schmeater. Recent TV credits include Medicine Ball and



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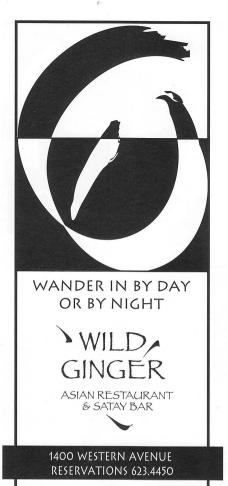




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Under One Roof. Some favorite roles are Masha in Three Sisters, Angustias in The House of Bernarda Alba, and Lucky in Waiting for Godot. Meg has made Seattle her home after living in Santa Fe, New Mexico for several years, where she worked in the creation and performance of original flamenco theater pieces. This work is dedicated to Clarence Berg — Que viva la vida!



#### Stephanie Stephenson Calavera, Ensemble

Stephanie performed this summer in Montana with The Virginia City Players in *The Drunkard*,

A Secret Wife, and Rip Van Winkle, in addition to musical/vaudeville variety shows. A third year student in the UW's Professional Actor Training Program, her roles there include Ellen and Priscilla in The Gut Girls, Monica in Present Laughter, Hermia in A Midsummer Night's Dream, Mimi in The Workroom, and Meg in Away. Other roles include Katherine in The Taming of the Shrew, Lady Sneerwell in A School for Scandal, and Luciana and Nurse Duckett in Catch-22 at Florida State University.

# Directors and **Production Staff**

Peggy Shannon Artistic Director

arrived at ACT last fall from Los Angeles, where she was associate producing director of L.A. Theatre Works and the artistic director of the School of Theatre at the University of Southern California. Seattle audiences may remember her work at The Empty Space, The Group Theatre, Pioneer Square Theatre and Theatre Off-Jackson. She directed Hunting Cockroaches at the Seattle Rep in 1988 and earlier served as assistant director and dramaturg at ACT. Peggy's credits as a free-lance director include work at the Los Angeles Theatre Center, The Matrix Theatre, Portland Repertory, San Jose Rep, and most recently You Can't Take It With You at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland. She has also directed many plays for National Public Radio.

Susan Trapnell Moritz Managing Director joined ACT in 1982 as Administrative Manager and became Managing Director in 1989. Susan holds a B.A. in French from the University of North Carolina and attended the University of Lyons in France. She also did graduate work in dance education at George Washington University. Prior to coming to ACT, Susan spent four years with Bill Evans Dance Company/Dance Theatre Seattle as Educational Director and then General Manager. She served as a UNESCO bilingual aide in Paris and held writing and editing positions in the Washington, D.C., area. Other experience includes work with the National Urban League and a teaching position in Algeria.

She is a member and past president of the Washington State Arts Alliance, a member of the King County Arts Commission, and a member of the Leadership Tomorrow class of 1992. Susan is a native of Arlington, VA.

**Phil Schermer Producing Director** 

has been working in professional theatre for over 25 years. He began his career at the Seattle Repertory Theatre as a painter and then scenic carpenter. He has also designed lighting for the Seattle Rep and its Second Stage, The Bathhouse Theatre, The Empty Space Theatre, The Seattle Group Theatre, Tacoma Actors Guild and Montana Repertory Theatre as well as numerous productions at ACT. He served as Technical Director and Production Manager at ACT before being named Producing Director in 1989. For the past five years, he has been actively involved in the design process for ACT's new facility. Phil received a B.A. in Literature/History from Reed College in Portland and an M.A. in Lighting Design/Technical Production from the University of Washing-

Edit Villarreal Playwright

Edit Villarreal's comedy, My Visits with MGM (My Grandmother Marta), has received productions throughout the country, including productions at San Jose Repertory, Milwaukee Repertory Theater and The Bilingual Foundation of the Arts. Her teleplay, La Carpa, co-written with film director Carlos Avila, aired on American Playhouse on PBS in 1993. A member of the Writer's Guild of America, and a graduate of the Yale School of Drama, she is currently Acting Head of the Playwriting Program at the UCLA School of Theatre, Film and Television.

#### Germaine Veronica Franco Composer

Originally from El Paso, Germaine is of both Mexican and Native American descent and has woven the cultural styles from both sides of her heritage to create this music. Her credits include Women of Fire - A Celebration of La Mujer, Highways, Santa Monica, CA; The Young Conservatory and Noche de Risa y Susto, L.A. Theatre Center; La Carpa, for American Playhouse on PBS; Break Pan with Sol and a Tanto Tiempo for Universal Television; El Festival Internacional de la Raza, Mexico; and The Getty Museum's Summer Concert Series in Malibu, CA. A composer, performer and teacher, she received the Latinas in Music award from Comision Femenil in L.A. and is listed in the current "Who's Who in Composing" by the Hollywood Reporter.

#### Norma Saldivar Director

is a Chicago native who earned her MFA at the University of Illinois. She worked for three years with Blind Parrot Productions in Chicago, where she coordinated and co-authored Exploits of the Living Newspaper, the Joseph Jefferson Citation winner for New Works. While resident director of the Milwaukee Repertory Theatre, she directed An Evening with Mamet, Gray and Linney (one-acts); Mother Jones: The Most Dangerous Woman in America, written and performed by Ronnie Gilbert; Edit Villarreal's My Visits with MGM (My Grandmother Marta); Harold Pinter's Betrayal, and

the critically acclaimed *The Baltimore Waltz*, by Paula Vogel. Among her many other credits are Seascape, Getting Out, Artaud at Rodez, Bloody Poetry, Sweeney Todd, The Fantasticks, They're Playing Our Song, and The Lucky Spot.

Geoffrey Alm Fight Choreographer

is pleased to return to ACT, where his previous credits include Hospitality, Handing Down the Names, Voices in the Dark, Life During Wartime, Red Noses (in which he appeared as Charlie Bembo), The Illusion and Voice of the Prairie. His other local credits include Julius Caesar, Lips Together, Teeth Apart and Twelfth Night at the Seattle Repertory; Angels in America: Millenium Approaches and Perestroika, The Kentucky Cycle, Hamlet and Macbeth at Intiman; and Naomi's Road and The Hardy Boys at Seattle Children's Theatre. He also worked on Henry V for Montana Shakespeare in the Parks. Geoffrey is a certified teacher for the Society of American Fight Directors, as well as the national certified teachers' and regional representative for the SAFD.

Richard Gray Vocal Director

recently composed Little Rock for Seattle Children's Theatre and four shows for the GAP Theater. At Cabaret de Paris, he has written Forbidden Xmas '93, '94 and is hard at work on '95. At Tacoma Actors Guild, he has musical directed Ain't Misbehavin', Guys and Dolls, Beehive, Pump Boys and Dinettes, Oil City Symphony, A Chorus Line and Once on This Island. He also composed the "Moscow Train" number for TAG's recent production of The Quick Change Room. Seattle credits include Buckskin to Satin and BlackStageViews at the Bathhouse; Falsettos and A... My Name is Still Alice at the Group Theater and Too Marvelous for Words at the Cabaret de Paris. As an actor, he has appeared at the Bathhouse in five versions of The Big Broadcast and as the title role in The Hostage.

John Kingsbury Stage Manager

Celebrating his 20th year of theatre work, John has staged managed at The Old Globe Theatre, The Alley Theatre, PCPA, The Shakespeare Theatre and Seattle Repertory. Most recently ACT's production of *Das Barbecū* was added to the list. John has also served as production manager at Seattle Rep, The Shakespeare Theatre at the Folger and PCPA/Theaterfest; associate professor at the University of Wisconsin/Milwaukee; producing director of ART in Amsterdam; and director for *Greater Tuna* and *Season's Greetings* among others.

Rose Pederson Costume Designer

has designed numerous productions at ACT including Life During Wartime, Sunsets and Glories, Shadowlands and Eleemosynary. She designs regularly at the Seattle Repertory Theatre, where her credits include Marvin's Room, The Lisbon Traviata, Elliot Loves, House of Blue Leaves and The Heidi Chronicles. On Broadway she designed costumes for Bill Irwin's Largely/New York. Other recent work includes Enter the Night by Irene Fornes at New City Theatre, where she also designed costumes for Theatre Zero productions of Eddie Goes to Poetry City by Richard Foreman and

Fefu and her Friends by Irene Fornes. Rose's work has been seen at The Kennedy Center, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Arizona Theatre Company, The Empty Space, The Bathhouse Theatre, Seattle Group Theatre, Tacoma Actors Guild and Seattle Children's Theatre.

Michelle Riel Set Designer

Michelle makes her debut at A Contemporary Theatre with The Language of Flowers. Recent work includes An Almost Holy Picture at La Jolla Playhouse, El Paso Blue at San Diego Repertory Theatre and Marvin's Room at Gaslamp Quarter Theatre. Other credits include costumes for No. Time Like the Present at the Whitney Museum of American Art, Performance on 42nd series with Sledgehammer Theater and Last Summer at Bluefish Cove at Theatre Geo, for which she received a Dramalogue Award. Upcoming projects include La Posada Magica with Norma Saldivar at San Jose Repertory Theatre. Michelle is a founding member of the San Diego based company Theater E and a University of California, San Diego MFA alumna.

Tom Utterback Sound Designer

received his MFA in sound design from the University of Illinois. He has designed in New York, San Diego, North Carolina and with Tacoma Actors Guild. Recently he collaborated with Steven Klein on *Handing Down the Names at ACT*, and designed the sound effects system for the *Ring* cycle at Seattle Opera.

Michael Wellborn Lighting Designer

previously designed *Das Barbecū* and *Agnes Smedley* at ACT. He has designed lighting for many organizations in the Northwest, including the Seattle Repertory Theatre, Intiman, Tacoma Actors Guild, Empty Space, Seattle Children's Theatre and Spectrum Dance Theatre. Nationally he has designed six seasons at the Colorado Shakespeare Festival, and has toured the U.S. and Southeast Asia with the Ririe-Woodbury Dance Company. Michael is also the Technical Director/Lighting Designer for the University of Washington Dance Program.

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## Notes from the Playwright

n Romeo and Juliet, Shakespeare brings vividly to life many questions which young people all over the world answer in one way or another. How can I accommodate the will of an overly protective and demanding parent? What does it mean to be someone's friend? Should I leave the place where I was born? Is death better than life? Young people also have to answer extremely perplexing questions about love. How do I know when I'm in love? Can I love someone that I shouldn't love? Can I love someone else more than I love myself? Is love passion? What is passion? Romeo and Juliet answer all these questions in the course of a three-day romance which begins with joyous playfulness and excitement and ends with acute fear and loneliness.

When I began this adaptation of Romeo and Juliet, I decided to stage it during the Mexican holiday of Day of the Dead, a time of carnival not unlike the one Shakespeare mentions in his play. Day of the Dead, Dia de los Muertos in Spanish, is an ancient holiday with Mesoamerican cultural roots which go back to both Aztec and Mayan civilizations. During this holiday it is commonly believed that the dead come back to visit with family and friends. It is commonly accepted that the dead decide voluntarily to return at this time and that the living should welcome them without fear.

Though the holiday is called Day of the Dead, it actually comprises two days of celebration. The first Day of the Dead is set aside to welcome home dead children; the second Day of the Dead is set aside to welcome home dead adults. Interestingly, Day of the Dead occurs on November 1st and 2nd, immediately after our American holiday of Halloween. I thought it would be dramatically interesting to include both holidays in my adaptation, since the American Halloween emphasizes the horror of death, while the Mesoamerican Day of the Dead emphasizes the wisdom and gentle irony which the dead offer the living.

As I re-read *Romeo and Juliet* with my adaptation in mind, I was stunned by the multitude of references to death in Shakespeare's play. But the Mesoamerican attitude towards death, which I wanted to present in my adaptation, is very different from our modern Western idea of death.

Mesoamerican Indian culture, which to this day still thrives in many parts of

Mexico, long ago addressed the two ultimate metaphysical questions, namely, what is life and what is death? The ancient Mesoamericans answered both questions with a surprisingly simple answer. Life and death, they decided, were really the same thing, alternate spectrums of the same energy. When we are alive, the life force is very strong within us. After we die, that same force, though unseen by most of us most of the time. stays in the world. The foremost scientist of our time, Albert Einstein, discovered a fixed mathematical relationship between energy and matter ( $E = MC^2$ ). Long before Einstein, the ancient Mesoamericans came to the same conclusion, if you accept matter as representing the bodies of the living, and energy representing the spirit of the dead.

Our Mesoamerican ancestors concluded that death was not only near, but as present, in its own way, as life. Furthermore, they concluded that since life and death were actually the same thing, both states were equally sacred and equally profane. To our Mesoamerican ancestors, life and death, the spiritual and the mundane, the awesome and the ridiculous were equally present *all the time*. In this context, one can begin to understand the humor, playfulness and even fondness with which death is viewed in Mexico.

In the course of writing this adaptation, I myself learned many things. If life and death are equally present in the world, maybe the living can see the dead, particularly as they get closer to their own deaths. Maybe the dead help the living. Maybe the dead continue to be the same as they were when they were alive. Maybe we never leave. Maybe we just change. Maybe death is as transitory as life.

With life and death equally present in my Mesoamerican adaptation, *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet* doesn't necessarily end in death. For though they do indeed die tragically, *after* death my Mexicanborn Romeo and his Chicano Juliet, descendants of a Mesoamerican world view, continue to celebrate their love. For them, death is merely a stopping point in a relationship begun in that part of the energy spectrum called life.

As you watch *The Language of Flowers*, I hope you'll discover, as I did, new ways of looking at death and the tragedy of two teenagers named Romeo and Juliet.

Edit Villarreal

#### GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND SYMBOLS

Calaveras: Skeletons, or spirits of the deceased. Because bone is the last part of the human body to decompose, many people believe bone to be the primary place where the spirit dwells. The play casts several typical calaveras: La Catrina, a servant girl dressed flamboyantly in the latest fashion as a parody of the wealthy; the Charro, a landowner and horseman who recalls the days of the hacienda; the Migrant Worker, a common figure in California agriculture, popularized by Luis Valdez and his Teatro Campesino troupe; the Revolutionary, a soldier in the Mexican Revolution of 1910; and the Zoot Suiter, wearing a style popular among African-American, Jewish and Latino youth in the 1920s and '30s.

**Corridistas**: Musicians, usually singers, who document the life of their community.

**Coyote:** A middleman who, for a fee, helps people enter the U.S. illegally and serves as a conduit for jobs on farms.

**Curandero:** One who cures the sick with both psychiatry and applied herbal remedies, following the long Mexican tradition of herbal and folk medicine.

Marigolds: Sometimes called "flowers of the dead," marigolds are believed to attract souls back to Earth with their aromas and vivid colors. They are widely used as decorations on home altars and in cemeteries during Day of the Dead in Mexico.

**Dia de los Muertos**: Celebrated throughout Mexico and among Chicano communities in the U.S., this two-day event honors dead relatives and friends. Special objects associated with it include effusive decoration with marigolds; special breads; toys in the form of caskets, skeletons and skulls; and paper cutouts. During this holiday, adults and children dress as *calaveras* to remember the ephemeral quality of life and to make the visiting dead feel comfortable.

La Llorrona: The poor, beautiful mistress of a wealthy man, who fathered her children and then left her for a woman of his own class, driving her to drown her children. It is believed she still wanders at night, wailing, either looking for her children or looking for more children to drown.

**Nahuatl**: The primary language of the Aztec Indians, Nahuatl has been spoken in Central Mexico for at least 800 years.

Paper cutouts (papel picado): Paper has long been used in Mexico for ceremonies as well as for the practice of good and bad magic. Since ancient times, one edge of the cutout has been glued onto a string or pasted onto a thin pole. The fluttering of this "flag" indicates that a spirit is passing by.

The Sun: Believed by the Aztecs to be the source of all spiritual, biological and creative energy in the world. For this reason the Aztecs called themselves "People of the Sun."

**Tezcatlipoca**: A protean Aztec god with good and bad qualities, he was considered the god of sorcery because he could see all things, and into people's hearts, with his magic mirror. Sometimes called "Smoking Mirror," he was believed to influence human destiny as he moved through our world "invisible like the night and wind."

The Thirteenth Heaven: The Aztecs believed there were 13 heavens above the earth and 9 hells below. The supreme deity, Ometeotl, both male and female, resided in the 13th and highest heaven, where all dualities — masculine/feminine, spirit/matter, life/death — were reconciled.

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