

**GALA**  
HISPANIC THEATRE



# MOMIA EN EL CLÓSET

EVITA'S RETURN

BOOK & LYRICS BY GUSTAVO OTT ORIGINAL MUSIC & LYRICS BY MARIANO VALES  
DIRECTED BY MARIANO CALIGARIS  
MUSICAL DIRECTION BY WALTER "BOBBY" MCCOY CHOREOGRAPHY BY VALERIA COSSU

MAY 9 – JUNE 9, 2024

IN SPANISH WITH ENGLISH SURTITLES

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD... ¡VIVA HUGO!  
GALA HISPANIC THEATRE • TEMPORADA 2023-2024 SEASON

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@TeatroGALA

GALA (Grupo de Artistas LatinoAmericanos) Hispanic Theatre is a National Center for Latino Performing Arts in the nation's capital. Since 1976, GALA has been promoting and sharing the Latino arts and cultures with a diverse audience, using theatre as a vehicle for social change, and preserving the rich Hispanic heritage for generations that follow.

GUSTAVO OTT  
Producing Artistic Director

**GALA**  
HISPANIC THEATRE

ABEL LÓPEZ  
Associate Producing Director

PRESENTS

# MOMIA EN EL CLÓSET

## EVITA'S RETURN

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ORIGINAL MUSIC & LYRICS BY MARIANO VALES  
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MUSIC DIRECTION BY WALTER "BOBBY" MCCOY  
CHOREOGRAPHY BY VALERIA COSSU  
ENGLISH TRANSLATION BY HEATHER MCKAY

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\* The Sound Designer is a member of the United States Scenic Artists, Local 829 of the IATSE, a union representing Scenic, Costume, Lighting, Sound, and Projection designers in Live Performance.



\*\* The Intimacy Choreographer is a member of the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society, a national theatrical labor union.

This production is made possible with support from the DC Commission on the Arts & Humanities, the Mellon Foundation, the NLT/National Latinx Theater Initiative, the Paul M. Angell Family Foundation, and The Morris and Gwendolyn Cafritz Foundation.



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## PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES | NOTAS DEL DRAMATURGO

*We come from fascism and towards fascism we go.*

I started writing this story in 2007 thanks to Hugo Medrano and GALA. I was immediately mesmerized by the fantastic and powerful story of what happened to Evita's body. I confess that from the beginning the *Eva/Mummy* seemed more relevant, current, and necessary to me than the woman who in life had so much control, power, and won the affection of her people.

Maybe because as a mummy, Eva was a victim, and as such she was very close to my literary universe. After all, what happens to one human being, in some specific place, also happens to all people everywhere. And societies, we already know, at some point in their history feel an uncontrollable and incomprehensible desire to commit suicide.

This incredible story of Eva Perón's mummy began in 1952. However, it not only seems like news from just yesterday, but also events that will happen tomorrow. It is clear to me that today, as at that time, we are terrified witnesses to the advent of a new fascism. A nationalist, tyrannical, terrorist, and totalitarian version of power that is gradually being imprinted not only in our most intimate perceptions but also in the control of States. This is no fascism "light" I am talking about, but one that is celebrated and defended, a fascism born in our inner circle, in the living room of our homes, which then spreads to the masses.

And that's it: this work is not about Evita, not even about the pilgrimage of her corpse. It is about us, here and now, making crucial decisions: either we reveal ourselves without respite or we succumb without resistance to those fangs that come to us in the shape of our long-time scars.



Venimos del fascismo y hacia el fascismo vamos.


*Comencé a escribir esta historia en 2007 gracias a Hugo Medrano y GALA. De inmediato, me dejé llevar por la fantástica y poderosa historia de lo sucedido al cadáver de Evita. Confieso que desde el principio la Eva/Momia me pareció más relevante, actual y necesaria, que la mujer que en vida tuvo tanto control del poder y se ganó el cariño de su pueblo.*

*Tal vez porque como momia, Eva era una víctima y, como tal, estaba muy cerca de mi universo literario. Después de todo, lo que le pasa a un ser humano, en algún lugar específico, le sucede también a todas las personas en todos los sitios. Y que las sociedades, ya lo sabemos, en algún momento de su historia sienten un deseo incontrolable e incomprensible de suicidarse.*

*Esta increíble historia de la momia de Eva Perón comenzó en 1952 y, sin embargo, no solo nos parece una noticia de ayer mismo, sino también sobre hechos que ocurrirán mañana. Para mí está claro que, como entonces, hoy somos testigos aterrados del advenimiento de un nuevo fascismo. Una versión del poder nacionalista, tiránica, terrorista y totalitaria que se está instalando poco a poco no solo en nuestras percepciones más íntimas, sino también en el control de los Estados. Hablo de un fascismo nada "light", muy celebrado y defendido, un fascismo que nace siendo doméstico, en la sala de nuestros hogares, para luego convertirse de masas.*

*Y eso es: esta obra no es sobre Evita, ni siquiera sobre el peregrinaje de su cadáver. Es sobre nosotros, aquí y ahora, tomando decisiones cruciales: o nos revelamos sin tregua o sucumbimos sin resistencia a esos colmillos que llegan con la forma de nuestras cicatrices.*

**Gustavo Ott**  
**May 9, 2024**



**In Memoriam of Our Dear  
HUGO MEDRANO**  
April 17, 1943 - May 22, 2023

As we arrive at the first anniversary of the passing of our Co-founder and former Producing Artistic Director, the GALA family thanks you for your continuous support and reiterates its unwavering commitment to maintaining and advancing Hugo's vision for the years to come.

**¡VIVA HUGO!**

## DIRECTOR'S NOTES | NOTAS DEL DIRECTOR

Eva Perón has been a global icon for decades. The young Argentine actress, who in the 1940s captivated the heart of the most important man in her country to become the "Spiritual Head of the Nation," awakened the love of millions and parted the sea in Argentina so crudely that those who hated her wrote on the walls of Buenos Aires: "Long live cancer." Eva aroused passions because Eva did not remain silent, because Eva did not settle, because Eva was a woman.

I like to think of this play as a work of musical documentary theater. *Mummy in the Closet* does not tell the story of Eva Perón but the story of what happened to Eva's corpse and what the living did to a dead Eva. That, what Eva awoke after she died, is the incredible world that will be revealed to you tonight. What you will see on stage really happened. Music and humor, valuable balms for the harsh reality, are the channel through which we will try to reflect on hatred, violence, and intolerance, the evils that cyclically attack us.



*Eva Perón es desde hace ya décadas un ícono a nivel mundial. Esa joven actriz argentina que en los años 40 cautivó el corazón del hombre más importante de su país, para convertirse en la "Jefa espiritual de la nación", despertó el amor de millones y dividió aguas en la Argentina de manera tan cruda que, quienes la odiaban llegaron a escribir en las paredes de Buenos Aires: "Viva el cáncer". Eva despertó pasiones porque Eva no se callaba, porque Eva no se conformaba, porque Eva era mujer.*

*Me gusta pensar en la obra como una obra de teatro documental musical. Momia en el clóset no viene a contar la historia de Eva Perón; nuestra obra relata lo que le sucedió a su cadáver, lo que le hicieron los vivos a una Eva muerta. Y eso que despertó Eva después de muerta es el mundo increíble que se revelará ante sus ojos esta noche. Lo que verán en el escenario sucedió realmente. La música y el humor, valiosos bálsamos para la dura realidad, son el canal a través del cual trataremos de reflexionar sobre los odios, la violencia y la intolerancia, que son males que cíclicamente nos atacan.*

**Mariano Caligaris**  
**May 9, 2024**



## SYNOPSIS | SINOPSIS

When Eva dies in 1952, at age 33, her husband, President Perón, orders that her body be embalmed to make her immortal. He entrusted the conservation of the corpse to the prestigious anatomist Pedro Ara, so that he could turn Evita into "a statue," while they built a monument "that could be seen from the moon." But a coup d'état in 1955 overthrew the government and Perón fled into exile.

Immediately, the new government found itself with a serious predicament: what to do with Eva's body? The poor and the working class loved her, but the military and the bourgeoisie despised her. Thus, to prevent her body from being used as a political weapon, the president ordered the mummified corpse be kidnapped and vanished.

This is the fascinating, fantastic, incredible, but true story of what happened to Evita's corpse. Her mummification, attacks on her physical integrity, disappearance, and exile were a kind of dress rehearsal for what would later happen not only to the Argentine people, but also to Latin America, in what we then knew as the "Dirty War" and which we continue suffering today as "State-sponsored Terrorism."

Any resemblance to real people, living or dead, or to true events — and even to events occurring in 2024 — is no coincidence.



*Cuando Eva muere en 1952, a los 33 años, su marido, el presidente Perón, ordena que su cuerpo sea embalsamado para hacerla inmortal. Encomendó la conservación del cadáver al prestigioso anatomista, Pedro Ara, para que convirtiera a Evita en "una estatua", mientras construían un monumento "que pudiera ser visto desde la luna". Pero un golpe de Estado en 1955 derrocó el gobierno y Perón huyó al exilio.*

*De inmediato, el nuevo gobierno se encontró con un grave problema: ¿qué hacer con el cuerpo de Eva? Los pobres y los obreros la querían, pero los militares y la burguesía la detestaban. Así, para evitar que fuera utilizado como arma política, el presidente ordenó secuestrar el cadáver momificado y hacerlo desaparecer.*

*Esta es la fascinante, fantástica, increíble, pero verídica historia de lo que le sucedió al cadáver de Evita. Su momificación, ataques a su integridad física, desaparición y exilio fueron una especie de ensayo general de lo que luego le sucedería no solo al pueblo argentino, sino también a Latinoamérica, en lo que conocimos entonces como la "Guerra Sucia" y que hoy seguimos sufriendo como "Terrorismo de Estado".*

*Aquí, cualquier parecido con personas reales, vivas o muertas, o con acontecimientos verídicos — y hasta con hechos que están ocurriendo en pleno 2024 — no es pura coincidencia.*

## THE CAST | EL ELENCO

# MOMIA EN EL CLÓSET

EVITA'S RETURN

*(in order of appearance)*

FRAN TAPIA.....	Evita
MARTÍN RUIZ.....	Perón
RODRIGO PEDREIRA.....	Dr. Ara, General
DIEGO MARIANI.....	Colonel Moori, López Rega
LUIS OBED VELÁZQUEZ.....	Cabanillas
CAMILA TALEISNIK.....	Isabel

### ENSEMBLE

*(in alphabetical order)*

FACUNDO AGUSTÍN (Bourgeois, Military 3)  
CAMILA ALDET (Ghost Aramburu, Bourgeois)  
LUIS ARMANDO BENITEZ (Genaro, Bourgeois)  
    TSAITAMI DUCHICELA (Nurse)  
    DARINA EID  
    SOFÍA GROSSO  
LUIS OBED VELÁZQUEZ (Military 1)  
JENNIFER PRESTON  
    RALPHIE RIVERA  
OSCAR ANTONIO RODRÍGUEZ (Military 4)  
RODOLFO SANTAMARINA (Military 2)  
    RACHAEL SMALL (Ghost Pope)  
    CAMILA TALEISNIK

### UNDERSTUDIES

FACUNDO AGUSTÍN (Moori, López Rega)  
LUIS OBED VELÁZQUEZ (Perón)  
RODOLFO SANTAMARINA (Dr. Ara, General)  
    CAMILA TALEISNIK (Evita)

### DANCE CAPTAIN

RODOLFO SANTAMARINA

### MUSICIANS

Music Director/Piano  
WALTER "BOBBY" MCCOY

Bandoneon  
EMMANUEL TRIFILIO

Cello  
EDDIE LAMONT ADAMS

Oboe/Flute/Clarinet/Alto Saxophone  
ROGELIO GARZA

Trumpet  
TYLER MIRE

Bass  
JOANNA SMITH

Drums/Percussion  
MICHAEL BARRANCO

**PLACE & TIME:** Argentina and around the world from 1952 through 1974.

THERE WILL BE A 10-MINUTE INTERMISSION.

THE VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS PERFORMANCE BY ANY MEANS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED. PLEASE TURN CELLPHONES OFF DURING THE PERFORMANCE.

Noche de GALA is courtesy of Los Hermanos Restaurant





## ORDER OF SONGS | ORDEN DE CANCIONES

### ACT I

1. **Evita, Evita**
2. **Momia, momita** (Mummy, Little Mummy)
3. **Ara**
4. **Silencio** (Silence)
5. **Golpe 55** (Coup d'état 55)
6. **Dicen** (They Say)
7. **Momia, momita** (Mummy, Little Mummy) - *Reprise*
8. **Moori**
9. **¿Dónde está la momia?** (Where's the Mummy?)

### INTERMISSION

### ACT II

10. **Velas y flores** (Candles and Flowers)
11. **Lemonchelo con champán** (Limoncello with Champagne)
12. **Nunca más cambiarás** (You'll Never Change).  
*Arr. Alejandro Ruty*
13. **Isabel, Isabelita** (Isabel, Little Isabel)
14. **La última página** (The Last Page)
15. **¿Qué es lo que quieren de mi?** (What Do They Want From Me?)
16. **Montoneros**
17. **Golpe 76** (Coup d'état 76)
18. **Requiem**

## THE COMPANY | LA COMPAÑÍA

CAST (in alphabetical order)



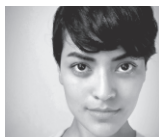
FACUNDO  
AGUSTÍN



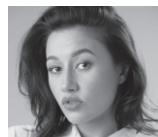
CAMILA  
ALDET



LUIS ARMANDO  
BENITEZ



TSAITAMI  
DUCHICELA



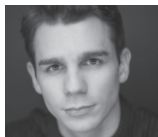
DARINA  
EID



SOFÍA  
GROSSO



DIEGO  
MARIANI



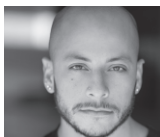
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VELÁZQUEZ



RODRIGO  
PEDREIRA



JENNIFER  
PRESTON



RALPHIE  
RIVERA



OSCAR ANTONIO  
RODRÍGUEZ



MARTÍN  
RUIZ



RODOLFO  
SANTAMARINA



RACHAEL  
SMALL



CAMILA  
TALEISNIK



FRAN  
TAPIA



MARIANO  
CALIGARIS  
DIRECTOR

**FACUNDO AGUSTÍN** (*Bourgeois, Military 3, U/S Moori/López Rega*) is an Argentinian actor, singer, and dancer who makes his GALA debut. His New York credits include *On Your Feet!* (second national tour), *On Your Feet!* (Long Island), *Hamlet in Harlem*, and *Cenicienta tanguera*, among others. He has also participated as a singer and dancer at events such as Queer Tango Festival of New York, The Gauntlet at The Rockefeller Center, and Telemundo Upfront 2022 "Turn It Up." In his native Argentina, he appeared in *Smokey Joe's Café*; *Pasión bohemia, en concierto*; *Yiya, un té musical*; and *Amar del plata, la fiesta de mar*, among others, and performed with renowned artist Valeria Lynch at Teatro Gran Rex. As part of Micro Theater New York, Facundo directed the play *En el país del encierro todo es mágico*, and he also directed and performed in *No me arrepiento* at Festival UNI2 (2022 ATI Award, Outstanding Actor in Musical Theatre). Facundo is honored to perform at GALA as part of this project, which reflects his home country's history.

**CAMILA ALDET (Ghost Aramburu, Bourgeois, Ensemble)** is a proud Argentinian performing artist with an international career and a bachelor's degree in Choreography from Argentina's National University of Arts. Camila has performed her own 'tap dance & song' show at renowned venues in NYC, such as Minton's Playhouse and The Dumbo Drop. Her theatre credits include *On Your Feet!* Broadway National Tour (US), and *Empleado cama adentro* and *Lapsus* (Argentina), among others. She is thrilled to make her GALA debut and wants to thank her family and friends for the big support! IG @cami.aldet

**LUIS ARMANDO BENITEZ (Genaro, Bourgeois, Ensemble)** is thrilled to be returning to GALA after being a member of the Helen Hayes Award-winning ensemble of *Revoltoza* and of the multi-award winner musical *On Your Feet! En español*. Other regional credits include *Little Mermaid*, *Four Guys Named José*, *West Side Story*, and *Denver Salutes 9/11*. Film credits include "Across the Universe," "El cantante," and "Sea of Dust." Luis would like to dedicate this performance to the unparalleled legacy of Hugo Medrano; his nurturing leadership and inspiring fight for representation has and will continue to pave the way for Latine Arts. ¡Que viva Hugo! An enormous Thank You to my husband Chris for your unconditional love and support! And for looking after the fur babies while I'm away! IG @papiuis

**TSAITAMI DUCHICELA (Nurse, Ensemble)** is over the moon to make their Mainstage debut at GALA! DC credits include *6 Othellos* (Othello/lago, Folger Theatre's Reading Room Festival) and *Rigoberta, ¿dónde estás?* (Quetzal, GALita). MD credits: *Fiddler On The Roof* (Grandmother Tzeitl, Olney Theatre Center), *On The Far End* (UJS Jean Chaudhuri, Roundhouse Theatre), *Luchadora!* (Liesl, Adventure Theatre), *El rostro de la luna* (Viracocha, Convergence Theatre). Film credits include "Facing Change," "Saving Springville," and "Common Ground 2" (WILL Interactive). DC Drag credits: *Boi Esponjoso* (Fabulosé), *Lonely Cat Anthem* (TransAgenda), *Wrath of Pachamama* (Half&Half), *El general Mariposo* (Cafecito), and *Spooky Love Story* (WeTheKingz). Tsaitami holds a BS in Business and Entertainment with Specialization in Multidisciplinary Arts and Management from American University. IG: @ThunderboiTsayi Youtube: @ThunderboiTsayi. "Alli Kawsay."

**DARINA EID (Ensemble)** is honored to make her GALA debut. Her regional credits include *La traición en la amistad* (Repertorio Español) and *Five Times in One Night* (HB Playwrights Theater). International credits include *Crossroads*, *Bohemian Soul*, *Diamond Run*, *Club Wonderland*, *Divos and Divas* (Norwegian Cruise Line's Regent Seven Seas). Film credits include "The Redeemer" (SoHo Film Festival), "Happy Anniversary" (Love & Hope - Barcelona International Film Festival), and "Ciruelo," which she wrote, produced, and starred in. Darina has a double BA in Dance and Politics & Human Rights, in addition to recently completing HB Studio's Uta Hagen Acting Training Program.

**SOFÍA GROSSO (Ensemble)** is an artist from La Pampa, Argentina, who makes her GALA debut. She debuted in New York in the production *Barba* at Teatro Pregonos. Her artistic journey began at age five when her grandmother took her to her first ballet class. She trained in ballet, jazz, and Flamenco for 11 years at the Lis García Alomar School and learned contemporary dance with Karen Ruppel. She also trained under distinguished dance teachers, including Madonna's dancer Salim Gawloos and Karol G's dancer Tamara Kovalchuks. She graduated from Full Dance School and was awarded a scholarship in 2022. Soon after, she received scholarships to Fundación Julio Bocca, to Step on Broadway in New York, and to the Professional Latin Program by RumbaMena (NY). *Es un honor para mí estar en GALA, representando a mi país y contando una historia tan importante.*

**DIEGO MARIANI (López Rega, Colonel Moori)** is an Argentinian actor, director, singer, and playwright who returns to GALA having appeared in the original production of *Momía en el clóset* and in *Ay! Carmela*. With over 25 years of experience, Diego has performed in plays and musicals at the most important venues in Buenos Aires such as Teatro San Martín, Teatro Cervantes, Paseo La Plaza, Maipo, and Luna Park, and throughout his home country. He created and directed *Border*, the first sustainable theatre in Argentina. Among his TV and film credits are "Santa Evita," "Argentina, tierra de amor y venganza," "Tango sangriento" (Germany), "Aliados," "Condicionados," "Mujeres asesinas" (Italy), "Para vestir santos," "Alma pirata," "Epitafios II," and "La niñera," among others, and has had the opportunity to work in the US, France, Russia, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile, and Uruguay. Diego has been a nominee for the T. Guevara, HUGO, and Helen Hayes awards. He holds a degree in Acting from the National University of Arts in Argentina.

**LUIS OBED VELÁZQUEZ (Cabanillas, Military 1, U/S Perón, Ensemble)** is a Puerto Rican actor, singer-songwriter, dancer, and guitarist who feels blessed to make his GALA debut. His credits include Broadway's second national tour of *On Your Feet!*, *West Side Story*, *Once on This Island*, *Cabaret*, and *Quién mató a Héctor Lavoe*, among others. Luis is a graduate of the University of Puerto Rico in Drama and Foreign Languages and won the 2021 Victoria Espinosa Award as Outstanding Actor. He's currently working on his first album and is grateful to all his mentors, family, and friends. Glory to the Creator, YHVH. @luisobed22

**RODRIGO PEDREIRA (General, Dr. Ara)** is a professional stage, TV, and film actor, singer, and dancer who makes his GALA debut. Thanks to his extensive training and experience, he has captivated audiences worldwide with his memorable and versatile performances. He has appeared on Disney TV shows *Violetta*, *Soy Luna*, and *Entrelazados*, which all air in South America, Mexico, the United States, Spain, France, Italy, and Germany. Rodrigo has received several awards in recognition of his work and talent, and he hopes to continue dazzling audiences for years to come.

**JENNIFER PRESTON (Ensemble)** is thrilled to be performing in her first production with GALA. Previous credits include *An American in Paris* and *White Christmas* (Beef & Boards), *Rodgers & Hammerstein's Cinderella* and *West Side Story* (Upper Room Theatre), and *The Mistletoes* and *Willie's Western Wake* (Cedar Fair Entertainment).

**RALPHIE RIVERA (Ensemble)** is a performer, dance teacher, and choreographer from Puerto Rico. Among his most recent credits are the second national tour of *On Your Feet!*, *¡Viva! Broadway aquí y allá*, and *In the Heights* (Graffiti Pete, Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival). Ralphie has a BA in Graphic Design from the University of Puerto Rico. *¡Amante del movimiento y el arte!* @ralphie\_rrj

**OSCAR ANTONIO RODRÍGUEZ (Military 4, Ensemble)** is an accomplished musical theater performer who has appeared in *Aida* (Metropolitan Opera House), *Evita* and *On Your Feet!* (Swing), *In the Heights* x2 (Ensemble), *West Side Story* x2 (Bernardo, Pepe), *Saturday Night Fever* (Ensemble/Salsation Choreographer), *Chicago* (Fred Casely/Ensemble), *Encores! The Life* (Pre-Production for *The Life* and *Once Upon a Mattress*). He also appeared in *Dancing with The Stars Costa Rica* and in *Dancing Through*, produced by the TANK NYC and Theatre Dance Vietnam, and was part of the Saudi Arabian musical, *Mu'allaqatna*. Oscar was featured in Steven Spielberg's remake of "*West Side Story*" and in Rebecca Miller's latest film "*She Came to Me*." Oscar has performed with Cherylyn Lavagnino Dance and recently with Amanda Selwyn Dance Theatre. He is a proud member of SAG-AFTRA and holds an MFA in Dance from NYU Tisch School of the Arts. He is beyond excited for his GALA debut with such an amazing and talented team. @oscarantonio0704.

**MARTÍN RUIZ (Perón)** is an Argentinian actor with over 20 years of experience. He returns to GALA after having appeared in the first production of *Mummy in the Closet* in 2009 and in *Las polacas* in 2014 (Outstanding Lead Actor, HHA Nomination). Credits in Argentina include *Next to Normal* (Dan), *A Chorus Line* (Zach), *Chicago* (Billy Flynn), *Beauty and the Beast* (Beast), *The Producers*, *Applause*, *Forever Young*, *The Little Prince*, *La cage aux folles*, *Cantando sobre la mesa*, *The Penitent*, *Sarmiento*, and *Calígula*, among others. Martín is a two-time winner of the HUGO Award (Best Actor in a Musical). Always grateful to Hugo and Rebecca.

**RODOLFO SANTAMARINA (Associate Choreographer, Dance Captain, Military 2, U/S Dr. Ara/General, Ensemble)** is an artist from Buenos Aires, Argentina, who returns to GALA after having appeared in *On Your Feet! En español* and *FAME The Musical*. National credits: *On Your Feet!* (national tour). Regional credits: *In The Heights* (LI, NY), *Cabaret* (VA), *On Your Feet!* (LI), *The Littlest Tree* (PA), and *Joseph* (NJ). International credits (Argentina): *Sugar, El gran final*, *Disney Momentos mágicos*, *Colección primavera-verano*, and *Cinderella*. Television credits: "Argentina's Got Talent," "Susana Giménez TV Show," and "AM Antes del mediodía." Film credits: "High School Musical," "El desafío" (Argentina and Mexico), and "Felicitas." Choreography credits: *Infernal the Musical* (NYC), *Malawi*, *Un cielo lleno de estrellas*, and *Super-Tropa Showchoir* (Argentina). Dance credits: Accent Dance NYC and Dardo Galletto Tango Dance Company (NYC), Royal Caribbean International, and Proyecto 2 (Argentina). Rodolfo graduated from the San Martín Contemporary Dance School. @rodosantamarina

**RACHAEL SMALL (Ghost Pope, Ensemble)** is excited to return to GALA after her debut in *Las hermanas Palacios* this season. Past credits include: *The Tempest* (Classical Theater of Harlem), *Death of a Salesman* and *Evita* (Arkansas Rep), *As You Like It* and *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* (Arkansas Shakespeare Theater), *Beauty and the Beast*, *Dracula*, *Phantom of the Opera*, *Cyrano*, and *The Tempest* (Synetic Theater), *Of Mice and Men* and *Dead Man's Cell Phone* (Arkansas Public Theater). Rachael holds an MFA from Shakespeare Theater Company's Academy of Classical Acting at George Washington University.

**CAMILA TALEISNIK (Isabel, U/S Evita, Ensemble)** is an Argentinian performer thrilled to be back at GALA after performing in the world premiere of *On Your Feet! En español* and *Revoltosa* (2023 HHA, Outstanding Ensemble in a Musical). Recent credits include the National Tour of *On Your Feet* and *Barba, A Brazilian Musical* (Off Broadway). Past international credits include *The Lion King* (Mexico) and *Shrek, The Musical* (Argentina). She also led the aerial immersive theatre experience "Hombre vertiente" (De La Guarda). Camila wants to thank everyone she's met along the way and has guided her and paved the way for being on this stage today! IG: @camitaleisnik. camitaleisnik.com

**FRAN TAPIA (Evita)** is a Chilean performing artist, singer, and songwriter who brings her magnetic presence to the stage in her third GALA production after making her US debut in *On Your Feet! En español* (2023 Helen Hayes and Broadway World DC awards, Outstanding Supporting Performer in a Musical) and appearing in *Revoltosa* (2023 HHA, Outstanding Ensemble in a Musical). Recent US credits include *In the Heights* (Ensemble, u/s Daniela, u/s Camila) and *On Your Feet Broadway National Tour 2022-2023* (Gloria Fajardo). International credits include *Cats and Tirana* (Chile), *Emergenz* (Germany), *Rite of Spring* (Germany, France, Netherlands, Chile). Beyond performing, Fran is a passionate educator empowering Latinx and BIPOC youth through art, as seen in John Leguizamo's first Season of "Leguizamo Does America." Follow me on IG @franciscatl and join the journey!

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## DIRECTION AND DESIGN | DIRECCIÓN Y DISEÑO

**GUSTAVO OTT (Playwright, Lyricist)** is a Venezuelan playwright, fiction writer, translator, and journalist with over 15 years of experience in the United States. He is GALA's Producing Artistic Director and, for 20 years, was Executive Artistic Director of Teatro San Martín and Fiesta: International Theatre Festival in Caracas, Venezuela. He has directed more than 40 plays; has written over 50 plays; and has been translated into 15 languages. He has translated into Spanish plays by William Shakespeare, Charles Dickens, Orson Welles, David Mamet, Daniel McIvor, Frank Loesser/Jo Swerling/Abe Burrows, Lisa Loomer, Rosemary Frisino Toohey, and Karen Zacarías. Ott participated in the International Writing Program of the University of Iowa (1993), the New Work Now Program at the Public Theater in New York (2002 and 2003), the Residence Internationale Aux Recoilets (2006, Paris), the Cité Internationale des Artes de Paris Residency (2010), and the Playwriting Program La Mousson D'Ete and La Mousson a Paris in the Comedie Française.

**MARIANO VALES (Lyricist, Composer)** has written music for five musicals that have premiered in his native Argentina. In Washington, DC, he wrote the music and lyrics for GALA Theatre's production of *Las polacas* (2015) and wrote music for several plays for local theaters, including GALA, Washington Shakespeare Company, American Century Theatre, Constellation Theatre, and WSC Avant Bard. Mariano served as music director of the DC Youth Orchestra for 10 years. He currently coordinates a program for the prevention of violence via orchestral and choral music with the Organization of American States that serves several countries in the hemisphere.

**MARIANO CALIGARIS (Director)** has directed numerous musical productions in Buenos Aires, including *Jesus Christ Super Star*, *Cabaret*, and *La Barricada* at the Stella Maris Theater. Other directing credits include *Macbeth*, *Micropibe*, *Rill*, and *Shakespirence*. Caligaris studied at the Teatro de Complicitè, Teatro Obstáculo de Cuba, and the Buenos Aires Theater School.

**WALTER "BOBBY" MCCOY (Music Director)** is a noted music director and conductor thrilled to be returning to GALA after music directing *On Your Feet!* He has worked in New York on projects including *Xanadu*, *The World Goes 'Round*, and *Medusa: The Musical*. He recently was music coordinator for *A Strange Loop* (Woolly Mammoth Theatre). Other projects include *Masterclass* (Arizona Theatre Company), *Fame* (GALA Theatre; 2022 Helen Hayes winner, Outstanding Musical Direction), *In the Heights* (2018 Helen Hayes winner, Outstanding Musical Direction), *Disney's Beauty and the Beast*, *Miss You Like Hell*, and *Annie* (Olney Theatre Center), *Legally Blonde* (Keegan Theatre; 2020 Helen Hayes Winner, Outstanding Musical Direction), *A New Brain*, *A Civil War Christmas*, *Fly By Night* (2019 HHA Nom), *Old Wicked Songs* (2016 HHA Nom), *Bat Boy*, and *Altar Boyz* (1st Stage Tyson's), *Little Shop of Horrors* (2020 HHA Nom), *Aida* (2019 HHA Nom), and *The Wild Party* (2018 HHA Nom) (Constellation Theatre).

**VALERIA COSSU (Choreographer)** is an international artist choreographer/director. She toured all over Europe as part of several dance and theatre companies and served as John Rando's Assistant Director on the Broadway production of *The Wedding Singer* in Spain. Upon moving to NYC, she choreographed *Ser o no Cer...Vantes*, the 2011 Choreographers Festival, *BOUNTIFUL*, *To Be Or Not To Be*, and *The Tempest*. She served as choreographer/associate director in the LONJ Opera production of *La Bohème*. Valeria recently directed *In the Heights* at the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival, and she won Best Director for the musical *Discovering Magenta*. Valeria is a long-time member of Salgado Productions who has worked with Luis Salgado as Associate Director and Choreographer on many productions such as *In The Heights*, *Ragtime*, *FAME*, *Aida*, *Matilda* and the world premiere of *On Your Feet! En Español*.

**GRISELE GONZALES (Scenic Designer)** is a Scenic Designer from Tijuana, Mexico, who grew up on the San Diego-Mexico Border. She returns to GALA after having designed *Jardín salvaje* last season. Grisele discovered her true passion for scenic design when she began an internship with the Tony Award regional theater La Jolla Playhouse under the supervision of Prop Master Debra Hatch. Her design credits include *The Sins of Sor Juana*, directed by Helen Hayes and Barrymore award-winning playwright Aaron Posner (American University), *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Certified Organic*, *Chasing the Ghost*, *Mr. Burns a Post Electric Play*, and *Legally Blonde* (NJIT/Rutgers University), *Las Azurduy* (Brava Theater, San Francisco, CA), *RENT* (Yale University), *Oyeme, the Beautiful* (Imagination Stage, DC), *The Shorts* at Theater Row (NYC), and *Hurricane Diane* (People's Light Theater). Grisele holds an MFA in Scenic Design from Pennsylvania State University. griselegonzalezdesign.com

**HAILEY LAROE (Lighting & Projection Designer)** is excited to be back with GALA Theatre for this fabulous show! Hailey is a Lighting and Projection designer, based in the DC area. Recent Lighting designs include *Human Museum* (Rorschach Theatre), *Dance Company* (Howard Community College), *Henri IV* (American University), *Las hermanas Palacios* (GALA), *School girls; or the African Mean Girls Play* and *Ride the Cyclone* (NestStop Theatre), *Golden Fish* and *Cyrano de Bergerac* (Synetic Theatre), *Hazardous Materials* (Perisphere Theatre), and *Monstress* (Flying V). Recent Projection designs include *Nancy* (Mosaic Theatre), *Dance Showcase* (PGCC), *Bathing in Moonlight* and *Kumanana* (GALA), *Monsters of the American Cinema* (Prologue Theatre), and *Sometimes the Rain*, *Sometimes the Sea* (Rorschach Theatre). Enjoy the show! Haileylaroesdesigns.com.

**JUSTIN SCHMITZ (Sound Designer)** returns to GALA after having designed *Las hermanas Palacios*, *Bathing in Moonlight*, *Kumanana!*, *La valentía*, *Jardín salvaje*, and GALita's *Picasso*. He has collaborated Off-Broadway with 59E59 Theaters and Round House Theatre, and The Dixon Place Theatre. Regionally-Chautauqua Theatre Company, Cincinnati Playhouse In The Park, The St. Louis Black Rep, amongst others. Local credits include various productions at: The Kennedy Center, Signature Theatre, Olney Theatre Center, Shakespeare

Theatre Company, Woolly Mammoth, Studio Theatre, Constellation Theatre Company, Imagination Stage, Round House Theatre, Shakespeare Theatre Company, Prologue Theatre Company, VOCA, NextStop Theatre Company, amongst many others. Justin is the Eastern Region Trustee for USA829's LUEB, Co-Chair for the USA829 Sound Design Committee, Co-Vice Chair for the Theatrical Sound Designers and Composer's Association (TSDCA), and frequently guest artists and teaches for many universities and high schools across the DMV region. Helen Hayes nominations include 2017 (*The Wild Party*, Constellation Theatre Company) and 2016 (*I Call my Brothers*, Forum Theatre Company). justinschmitztheatre.com

**BECCA JANNEY (Costume Designer)** is so thrilled to be designing at GALA for the first time! Professional design credits include *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Chesapeake Shakespeare Company); *Cinderella, A Salsa Fairytale* (Imagination Stage); *Cinderella* (Creede Repertory Theatre); *Everything Is Wonderful*; *Godspell*; *Harvy* (WaterTower Theatre); and *Ada and the Engine* (Stage West Theatre). Educational design credits include *Damn Things Will Kill Ya* (American University), *Don Giovanni* (Maryland Opera Studio), *A Bicycle Country*, *Fefu and her Friends* (University of Maryland), and *Rhinoceros*, *Peter and the Starcatcher* (Baylor Theatre). Becca is pursuing an MFA in Costume Design at the University of Maryland. beccajanney.com

**IARA ROGERS BENCHOAM (Properties Master, Scenic Charge)** returns to GALA after doing props for GALita's *Quijote y Sancho Panza*. Other DC credits include *Voices of Now* (Arena Stage). Her film credits in New York include "Saturday Church" (Set Dresser), "Big Time Adolescence" (American High, Set Dresser - premiered at the Sundance Film Festival), "Empire Waist" (American High, Costumer - premiered at the Annapolis Film Festival), "Sid is Dead" (American High, Costumer), "Looks that Kill" (American High, Costumer), and "Pottersville" (Wing and A Prayer, Art PA). Iara has a BS in Television, Radio, and Film from S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications. She's currently working on her debut album under the moniker, Rawra (@dearrawra). Thanks to my folks for supporting this art journey.

**ANDRE HOPFER (Hair & Makeup Designer)** has been doing make up and wig styling for over two decades. He was head of Hair and Make Up for *Christmas in Washington* for over a decade as well as the Memorial Day concert on the National Mall and the 4th of July concerts. Andre has collaborated with Signature Theatre and Black Rock Performing Center of the Arts and has also worked on independent films. He is part of the creative team of Skylark Creative Group, a DC-based entertainment company. Andre is very excited to be part of *Mummy in the Closet*, which is his third show with GALA.

**SIERRA YOUNG (Intimacy Choreographer)** is a Helen Hayes nominated Violence and Intimacy Director working in the DC/Baltimore area. Sierra is the resident Fight and Intimacy Director for Mosaic Theater Company and an active member of the Society of American Fight Directors, Intimacy Directors and Coordinators, and the Stage Directors and Choreographers Society. Recent DC choreography credits include *POTUS!* (Arena Stage), *Little Shop of*

*Horrors and Shout Sister Shout!* (Ford's Theater), *Merrily We Roll Along* and *Sweat* (Keegan Theatre), *Spring Awakening* (Monumental), *King Lear* and *Red Velvet* (Shakespeare Theatre Company), and *Nancy, Confederates, Monumental Travesties, One in Two, Unseen*, and *The Till Trilogy* (Mosaic Theater). [sierrayoung.org](http://sierrayoung.org).

**CAT MORESCHI (Stage Manager)** is excited to make her GALA debut. Previous local credits include *Tempestuous Elements* (Arena Stage), *A Christmas Carol* and *As You Like It* (Chesapeake Shakespeare Company), *FELA!*, *The World Goes 'Round*, *Kinky Boots*, *Beauty & the Beast*, and *Dance Nation* (Olney Theatre Center as part of their Apprentice Program). Additional credits include *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Henry V*, and *Macbeth* (American Shakespeare Center).

**RODOLFO SANTAMARINA (Associate Choreographer)**. See bio under "THE COMPANY" section.

**LUZ NICOLÁS (Assistant Director)** is a GALA company member who has appeared in GALA's *Las hermanas Palacios*, *Baño de luna*, *La valentía*, *Native Gardens*, *Revoltosa* (2023 HHA Award, Outstanding Ensemble in a Play), *La casa de la laguna*, *Doña Rosita la soltera*, *La tía Julia y el escribidor*, *Exquisita agonía*, *Cervantes – El último Quijote* (2017 HHA nomination, Outstanding Ensemble in a Play), *Yerma* (2016 HHA nomination, Outstanding Supporting Actress), and *Mariela en el desierto*, among others. Additional credits include *Las místicas de México* (InSeries), *La llorona* (Capitol Hill Arts Workshop), *Abismo* (Miami and Madrid, 2022), *Alice in Costa Rica*, *Exquisita agonía* (2018 HOLA Award for Best Actress, Repertorio Español - NYC, Miami Dade County Auditorium), *An Invisible Piece of this World* (IATI Theatre, NY), *Iberian Mystics: The Confluence of Faiths*, part of the Iberian Suite: Global arts remix festival (Kennedy Center), *The Vip* (Single Carrot Theatre, Baltimore), *Última partida* (The Final Draw), a jazz and words performance, *The Merchant of Venice*, *Los intereses creados*, and *La casa de Bernarda Alba*.

**ARTHUR KOHN (Lighting & Projection Assistant)** has worked closely with the National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts (NHFA) non-profit organization for many years, acting as an Associate Producer for their annual *Noche de Gala* celebration and assisting with many other events, including *PitchDC*, and *NY DMV* area credits include *FatHam*, *Fun Home*, and *People Places and Things* (Studio Theatre), *John*, *The Last Days of Judas Iscariot*, and *Arcadia* (St. John's College in Annapolis). He is thrilled to return to GALA after designing lights for GALita's *Quijote y Sancho Panza*.

**MEL MADER (Assistant Stage Manager)** recently graduated from the University of Maryland. Previous professional stage management credits include *The Play That Goes Wrong* (Cumberland Theatre) and *Florencia en el Amazonas* (Assistant, Maryland Opera Studio). She thanks GALA Theatre and the *Momia en el clóset* cast and creative team for welcoming her.



## COMMUNITY FORKLIFT



PHOTO BY JON TOWNSON

Salvaged materials from Community Forklift were used in the set for *Mummy in the Closet: Evita's Return*!



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Associate Choreographer / *Coreógrafo Asociado*.....RODOLFO SANTAMARINA  
Assistant Director / *Asistente de Dirección*.....LUZ NICOLÁS  
Lighting & Projection Assistant / *Asistente de Iluminación y Proyecciones*.....ARTHUR KOHN  
Assistant Stage Manager / *Asistente de Regidor de Escena*.....MEL MADER  
Production Assistant / *Asistente de Producción*.....DELBIS CARDONA  
Wardrobe Supervisors / *Supervisoras de Guardarropa*.....RUKIYA FIELDS, RACHEL HENEY  
Wardrobe / *Guardarropa*.....YLIANA CHICAS, MARDELLE SINGLETON  
Run Crew / *Asistentes tras bastidores*.....MUTTAQI "TAQI" DANIELS, NOAH WESLEY  
Master Electricians / *Maestros Electricistas*.....DAELYN FUNK, JOURDAN HOLDEN  
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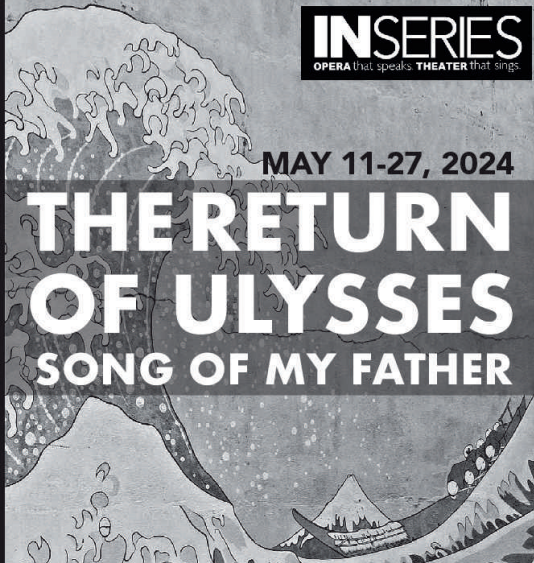
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