

Live onstage again: a coming-of-age comedy at GALA Hispanic Theatre

The company's 45th season opens with 'Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter' by Caridad Svich, based on the novel by Nobel Prize-winner Mario Vargas Llosa.

By **News Desk** - April 10, 2021

Having implemented strict safety precautions in keeping with the Mayor's plan, **GALA Hispanic Theatre** reopens its 45th-anniversary season live with *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* (*Tía Julia y el escribidor*), a play by Caridad Svich based on the novel by Peruvian Nobel Prize-winner Mario Vargas Llosa. Directed by José Zayas, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* opens April 22 and runs through May 9, 2021.



Ariel Texidó, Luz Nicolás, Kika Child (standing), and Pablo Andrade in 'Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter.' Photo by Daniel Martinez.

About the play: When Mario, a young writer meets the more experienced divorcee and aunt Julia, his heart skips and life becomes complicated. Set at a rural radio station in the waning days of radio in 1950s Peru, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* is an autobiographical coming-of-age comedy that looks at first love and youthful passion. As the melodrama of the radio script spills into real life, laughter turns into fond memories of our first crush.

Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter is performed in Spanish with English surtitles Thursdays through Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. GALA Theatre is located at 3333 14th Street NW, Washington, DC, one block from the Columbia Heights Metro station on the Green and Yellow lines. Parking is available at a discount in the Giant parking garage off Park Road, NW.

Reservations are necessary, as only 50 patrons will be seated. Single tickets are \$45. Noche de GALA are \$50 each. Performances are Thursday through Sunday. Senior (65+), student, and military tickets are \$30. Purchase tickets **online** or call 202-234-7174.

To see GALA's detailed reopening plan, [click here](#).

This production is made possible with generous support from the the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities, and the Embassy of Peru in Washington, DC.



ABOUT THE NOVELIST

Mario Vargas Llosa was born in Arequipa, Peru and is considered one of the leading writers of his generation. A writer, politician, journalist, essayist, and college professor, he is also the recipient of the 2010 Nobel Prize in Literature. Some critics believe that he has had a larger international impact and worldwide audience than any other writer of the Latin American Boom.

Vargas Llosa received critical acclaim in the 1960s for such novels as *The Time of the Hero* (*La ciudad y los perros*), *The Green House* (*La casa verde*) and *Conversation in the Cathedral* (*Conversación en la catedral*). His novels include comedies, murder mysteries, historical novels and political thrillers. Several of his novels, including *Captain Pantoja and the Special Service* and *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*, have been adapted as feature films. A prolific writer, he also has written literary criticism, journalism and plays.

Among his most recognized plays are *La huida del Inca* (1952), *La señorita de Tacna* (1981), *Kathie y el hipopótamo* (1983), *La Chunga* (1986), *El loco de los balcones* (1993), *Odiseo y Penélope* (2007) and *Las mil y una noches* (2010).

Vargas Llosa ran for president of Peru in 1990 and was elected to the Spanish Academy in 1994. He was also International President of PEN International from 1976 to 1979. At Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., he was named the first Ibero-American Literature and Culture Chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese in 2001, was the Parker Distinguished Writer-in-Residence in 1999, and was a visiting professor in 1994. He married Julia Urquidi, his maternal uncle's sister-in-law, in 1955 at the age of 19; she was 10 years older.

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Caridad Svich received a 2012 OBIE Award for Lifetime Achievement in the theatre, a 2012 Edgerton Foundation New Play Award, a National New Play Network rolling world premiere for *Guapa*, and the 2011 American Theatre Critics Association Primus Prize for her play *The House of the Spirits*, based on the novel by Isabel Allende. Among her other works are *12 Ophelias*, *Any Place But Here*, *Alchemy of Desire/Dead-Man's Blues*, *Iphigenia Crash Land Falls on the Neon Shell That Was Once Her Heart* (a rave fable), *Instructions for Breathing*, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter*, *The Way of Water*, *Spark*, *Magnificent Waste*, *The Booth Variations*, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, *The Tropic of X*, *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *Fugitive Pieces*, *The Archaeology of Dreams*, and *JARMAN* (*all this maddening beauty*). Her works in English and Spanish have been seen in venues across the country and abroad, including GALA, Arena Stage's Kogod's Cradle Series, Denver Center Theatre, Repertorio Español, 59E59, Ensemble Studio Theatre, Lighthouse Poole UK, Teatro Mori (Chile), Artheater-Cologne (Germany), Teatro Espressivo (Costa Rica), and Welsh Fargo Stage (Wales). She is alumna playwright of New Dramatists, founder of NoPassport theatre alliance & press, and has received fellowships from Harvard/Radcliffe, NEA/TCG, Pew Charitable Trusts, and California Arts Council. Ms. Svich holds an MFA in Theatre-Playwriting from the University of California-San Diego and also trained with María Irene Fornes in INTAR's legendary HPRL Lab.



Carlos Castillo, Luz Nicolás, and Víctor Salinas in 'Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter.' Photo by Daniel Martinez

ABOUT THE PRODUCTION

Featured in the cast are guest artists from New York **Pablo Andrade** as Mario, and **Kika Child** as Julia. They are both making their GALA debut. The cast also features GALA company members **Carlos Castillo** (Pedro Camacho), **Luz Nicolás** (Olga and Josefina), **Delbis Cardona** (Genaro), and **Camilo Linares** (Javier). Mr. Castillo, Ms. Nicolás, and Mr. Cardona were last seen in *El perro del hortelano* last Fall. Guest artist **Ariel Texidó** (Lucho), who played

Teodoro in *El perro del hortelano*, is also a part of the cast, along with **Víctor Salinas** who makes his debut at GALA.

José Zayas (Director) has directed over 100 productions in New York, regionally and internationally. At GALA he directed *El perro del hortelano*, *En el tiempo de las mariposas*, *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, *Cancún*, and *La casa de los espíritus*. Among his credits are *The Magnetic Fields: 50 Song Memoir* (BAM, Mass MoCa, US and European Tour), *A Nonesuch Celebration* (BAM), *Undocumented* (Joe's Pub), *Blind Spot*, *In The Name of Salome*, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* (Ace and Hola awards for best production and direction), *Burundanga*, *The House of the Spirits* (ACE Awards, Hola Award and Ovation awards for best production and direction), *Your Name Will Follow You Home*, *La Nena Se Casa*, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, *Madre (el drama padre)*, *Besame Mucho*, *Nowhere on the Border*, and *Barcelo on the Rocks* (Repertorio Español); *Washed Up on the Potomac* (Flea Theater, San Francisco Playhouse); *Pinkolandia* and *El Coqui Espectacular* and *The Bottle of Doom* (Two River Theatre); *Corazon* (Eterno Mixed Blood); *Southern Promises* and *Strom Thurmond is not a Racist* (PS 122, Brick); *Useless* (IRT); *Father of Lies* and *Vengeance Can Wait* (PS122); *P.S. Jones and the Frozen City*, *Feeder: A Love Story* (TerraNOVA Collective); *Okay, Mrs. Jones* and *the Man From Dixieland* (EST); *The Idea of Me* (Cherry Lane Theatre); *The Queen Bees* (Queens Theatre in the Park); *Children of Salt* (NYMF); *Wedding Dress*, *The Island of Lonely Man* (Teatro Espressivo, Costa Rica). Born in Puerto Rico, he graduated from Harvard and Carnegie Mellon University.

Scenic design is by **Clifton Chadick**, who designed sets for the Helen Hays award-winning *Fame*, *Exquista Agonía*, and *El perro del hortelano*. Lighting design is by **Yannick Godts**; Costumes are by **Moyenda Kulemeka**, who also designed for *Exquisita Agonía*, and Properties are by **Rick Farella**. Sound design is by **David Crandall**, who designed *Exquisita Agonía* and *El perro del hortelano*. Stage Manager is **Rachael Sheffer** and **Tony Koehler** is Production Manager.

BUY TICKETS

News Desk