



JULIANNE ARGYROS STAGE / DECEMBER 9 - 24, 2005

# South Coast Repertory

David Emmes  
PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Martin Benson  
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

presents

## LA POSADA MÁGICA

written and directed by Octavio Solis

music by Marcos Loya

SCENIC DESIGN  
Christopher Acebo

COSTUME DESIGN  
Shigeru Yaji

LIGHTING DESIGN  
Lonnie Rafael Alcaraz

MUSICAL DIRECTOR  
Marcos Loya

CHOREOGRAPHER  
Linda Kostalik

PRODUCTION MANAGER  
David Leavenworth

STAGE MANAGER  
Jamie A. Tucker\*

Brian and Sadie Finnegan  
HONORARY PRODUCERS

Target  
CORPORATE PRODUCER

*The Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund has provided major support for the commissioning, workshop and production of La Posada Mágica through its New Works for Young Audiences Program.*

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

(In order of appearance)

Horacio ..... *Miguel Najera\**  
Eli/Bones/Lauro ..... *Kevin Sifuentes\**  
Gracie ..... *Tiffany Ellen Solano\**  
Mom/Mariluz ..... *Crissy Guerrero\**  
Papi/Jose Cruz ..... *Danny Bolero\**  
Refugio/Buzzard ..... *Sol Castillo\**  
Consuelo/Widow ..... *Denise Blasor\**  
Caridad/Widow ..... *Christine Avila\**  
Musicians/Ensemble ..... *Marcos Loya, Lorenzo Martinez*

## SETTING

*Christmas Eve. The present.*

## LENGTH

*Approximately two hours, including one 15-minute intermission.*

## PRODUCTION STAFF

Casting Director ..... *Joanne DeNaut*  
Production Assistant ..... *Jennifer Ellen Butler*  
Costume Design Assistant ..... *Merilee Ford*  
Assistant to the Lighting Designer ..... *Mat Stovall*  
Stage Management Intern ..... *Andrew Metzroth*  
Dresser ..... *Kelly Marshall*  
Additional Costume Staff ..... *Catherine Esera, Amanda Seymour*  
Deck Crew ..... *Nina Evans*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

*Las Amigas de la Cultura, Sylvia Krenzien, Teri Rocco, and Alice Rumbaugh,  
for the special exhibit in the Julianne Argyros lobby.*

*Cellular phones, beepers and watch alarms should be turned off or set to non-audible  
mode during the performance. Please refrain from unwrapping candy or making  
other noises that may disturb surrounding patrons.*

*The use of cameras and recorders in the theatre is prohibited.  
Smoking is not permitted anywhere in the theatre.*

\* Member of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

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# The Gift of Grace

**W**hen I was commissioned to write a family Christmas play for South Coast Repertory, I had no idea there would be deep synchronicities with my own life. I simply thought I would write another play for another theatre and that would be that. But while my talented collaborators (director José Cruz González and composer Marcos Loya) and I toiled away on our first draft of *Posada* at the Sundance Theatre Lab in Utah, I received a call from my wife Jeanne that she was pregnant with our daughter, and that changed everything.

The play suddenly revealed to me the essential universal sanctity of life, the glowing sense of hope and love that babies always suggest for the world. But the confluence of this play with my wife's news also transformed the holiday of Christmas for me. The adoration bestowed on the infant

cause I had just settled on that name for my protagonist. How could she have known? She hadn't read the play, nor had I spoken of it to her. And yet here now, our daughter was not only coming into our house, she was filling our play. It seemed fitting.

Gracie was born on September 24, 1994, and the play itself was delivered three months later.



Jesus spoke more deeply and directly to my new status as a father. The Nativity became a metaphor for the profound responsibility we all

owe to the fragile innocent children we dare to bring into this brutal world.

Later that spring, as I continued to write *Posada* and Jeanne pored over all the books of baby names, she told me that she wanted to name our baby girl Graciela, or Gracie, for short. This stunned me be-

**Gracie has been played by three actresses since its premiere in 1994: Ruth Livier (1994), left; Crissy Guerrero (1995-1998), top; and Tiffany Ellen Solano (1999-2005), with Mauricio Mendoza as Papi and Crissy Guerrero as Mom in 2002.**

We brought her for one of the first performances, and to this day, I can't help but feel that the wide brown eyes of the infant Graciela have shone their grace on *La Posada Mágica*.

—Octavio Solis

# The Historical Procession of Las Posadas

**T**he familiar story of Joseph and Mary's long-ago search for lodgings is related every year at Christmas-time in churches and homes the world over. But in many Latin countries, it actually comes to life again each December, reenacted for nine consecutive nights in the festive ritual of *Las Posadas*, which means inns, or lodgings.

The idea of commemorating the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem can be traced to St. Ignatius Loyola, in the 16th Century. He suggested a Christmas novena, special prayers to be said on nine successive days. In 1850, St. John of the Cross made a religious pageant out of the proceedings, and seven years later the nine-day remembrance was introduced to the Indians in Mexico by Spanish missionaries.

Solemn and deeply religious in feeling at first, the observances soon became imbued with a spirit of fun and, eventually, left the church and began to be celebrated in people's homes. The *posadas* have become community affairs with friends, relatives and neighbors sharing in the festivities and visiting a different house each evening.

The *posada* begins with a procession that sets off as soon as it gets dark. Often a child dressed as an angel goes first, followed by two more children carrying figures of Mary and Joseph on a small litter adorned with twigs. After more boys and girls come the lead figures, then come the grown-ups and last of

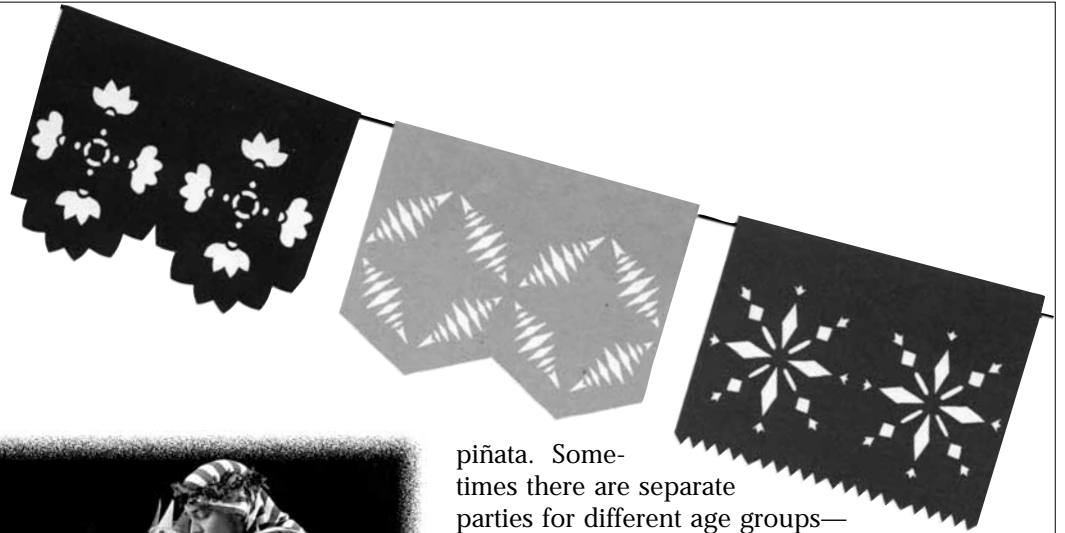


The 2004 cast of 'La Posada Mágica' featured from left: Crissy Guerrero, Mauricio Mendoza, Denise Blasor, Sol Castillo, Carla Jimenez, Tiffany Ellen Solano, Miguel Najera, Kevin Sifuentes, Lorenzo Martinez and Marcos Loya.

all the musicians. Singing or chanting special *posada* songs, they all walk slowly along, each person carrying a lighted candle. When the procession reaches the house chosen for that evening, it divides into two groups, one representing the holy pilgrims, the other the innkeepers.

The pilgrims line up behind the angel and the children bearing the figures of the Holy Family, and they file through the house until they arrive at a closed door, behind which the innkeepers have stationed themselves. The pilgrims knock on the door and call out in song, asking for shelter. A chorus of voices on the other side asks: "Who knocks at my door so late in the night?"

The pilgrims respond. "In the name of Heaven I beg you for lodging—my beloved wife can no longer travel, and she is weary." But the response is a stony,



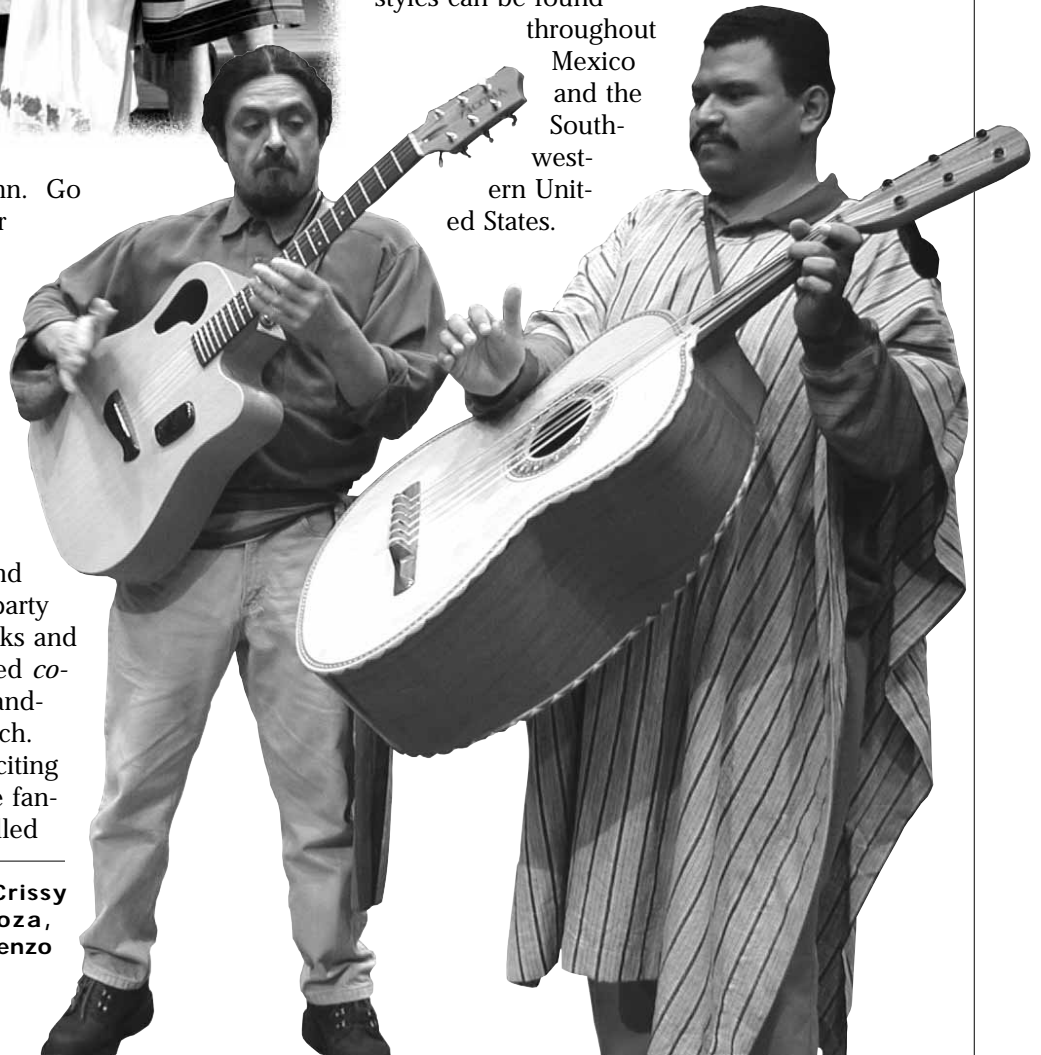
piñata. Sometimes there are separate parties for different age groups—one for teenagers and another for the younger children. In Mexico City, especially, so many posadas are held that active partygoers can manage to attend four or five in one evening... and the festivities often go on until dawn.

Over time, posadas have been tailored by their respective communities, so that a remarkable variety of posada styles can be found

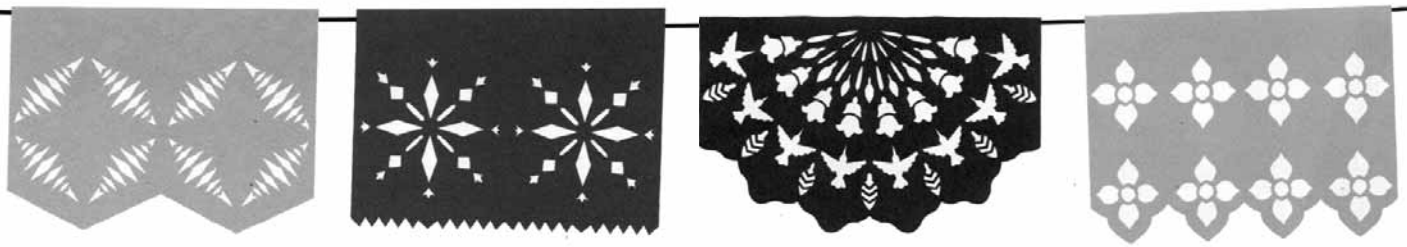
throughout  
Mexico  
and the  
South-  
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ed States.

hardhearted refusal. “This is no inn. Go away!” After repeated requests for shelter, the pilgrims explain who they are and that Mary will soon give birth to the Son of God. The innkeepers relent and welcome the exhausted travelers: “Enter, Holy pilgrims. Come into our humble dwelling and into our hearts. The night is one of joy, for here beneath our roof we shelter the Mother of God.”

Everyone enters the room and kneels in prayer, after which the party moves out to the patio for fireworks and fun. Small baskets of sweets, called *colaciones*, are offered along with sandwiches, cookies and a fruited punch. And then it’s time for the most exciting moment of all, the breaking of the fancifully decorated candy and nut-filled



**Denise Blasor, Carla Jimenez, Crissy Guerrero and Mauricio Mendoza, above and Marcos Loya and Lorenzo Martinez, at right.**



# The Magic of the Celebration

## The Christmas Candle

"It begins with one simple candle—  
so full of golden light"

— *La Posada Mágica*

**A**fter Gracie reluctantly joins her church's posada, she sets about trying to extinguish not only the candle that has been lit in her honor, but all those that represent the other members of her group. With each flame she blows out, another character disappears until Gracie is left lost and alone.

The tradition of candles at Christmastime began in medieval Europe, where a very large Christmas candle was burned until the Twelfth Night in remembrance of the arrival of the Wise Men to Bethlehem. In Victorian times, candles represented good will toward those less fortunate. They were placed in windows from December 25 to January 6 to welcome any passersby needing shelter and food.

Some people believe that flames from burning candles frighten away evil spirits during the darkest days of the year. In Norway, candles that burn out on Christmas Eve are thought to bring bad luck for the family. Another ancient tradition suggests that placing a candle in the window symbolically lights the way of the Holy Family as it provides a welcome for friends, neighbors and holiday guests.



## Poinsettias

**A** favorite flower for the posada celebration is the poinsettia, with its beautiful red star shape. The legend of the poinsettia relates the story of a girl named Maria and her little brother Pablo. They were very poor but always looked forward to the Christmas festival each year, when a large Nativity scene was set up in the village church and the days leading up to Christmas were filled with *posadas*. But the two children were saddened because they had no money to buy presents. They especially wished to give something to the church, but they had nothing.

One Christmas Eve, Maria and Pablo set out for church to attend Midnight Mass. On their way they picked some weeds growing along the roadside to present as their gift to the church. They were mercilessly teased by the other children when they arrived with their humble offering, but Maria and Pablo knew they had given everything they had. As they began to place the weeds around the Nativity scene, the green top leaves turned into bright red petals. Soon the manger was surrounded by the bright red, star-shaped flowers and everyone in the church believed they were witnessing a true Christmas miracle. Since that day, these beautiful flowers that bloom during the Christmas season have been known as *Flores de Noche Buena* or "Flowers of the Holy Night."

*Nochebuena*, the Mexican name of the flower English-speakers call poinsettia, was discovered in Taxco and the valleys surrounding Cuernavaca. Known by the Aztecs in their native Nahuatl language as *cuetlaxochitl*, it is believed that they brought the plant from the tropical climate of Cuernavaca to their Aztec highlands for cultivation in

special nurseries. Prized for the curative properties of the milk that dripped from the leaves, stems and flowers when cut, the plant also produced pigment from the red leaves used to dye cotton fibers.

The poinsettia plant was brought from Mexico to America by Dr. Joel Roberto Poinsett (1770-1851), who served as U.S. ambassador to Mexico following that country's independence from Spain. Poinsett fell in love with the *nochebuena* plant when he first saw it adorning the churches of Taxco in 1823. He sent specimens back to the States to decorate his mansion in South Carolina one Christmas, and upon his return home several years later, he was astonished to find the entire town of Charleston growing the festive red flower.

## Papel Picado

**P**aper cutting has been a folk art ever since paper was invented in 105 A.D. by Ts'ai Lun, an official in the court of Ho Ti, emperor of Cathay. The humble nature of its origins and the anonymity of its practice has caused paper cutting to be ignored as an art form, though artists, artisans and collectors are becoming increasingly aware of this valuable folk heritage.

In Mexico, the technique is called *papel picado*, which means "pierced paper." After the Spanish Conquest of Mexico, *papel de China* (tissue paper) was introduced and became the material of choice for Christian holiday decorations. Paperwork was apparently among the imports that poured in from the Orient via the annual Pacific treasure fleet that traveled between the Far East and Acapulco, laden with such exotic goods as silver, ivory, spices and porcelain. Once the craft arrived in Mexico, it became the basis for many important and widespread folk art forms.

In Mexico, the art of paper-cutting goes back to pre-Columbian times, when bark paper (made by women from bark collected by men in the spring) was

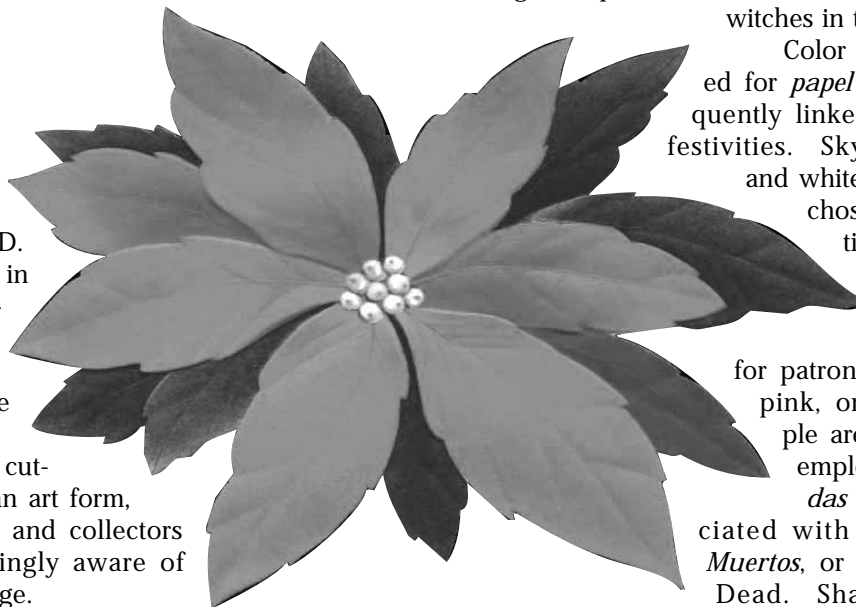
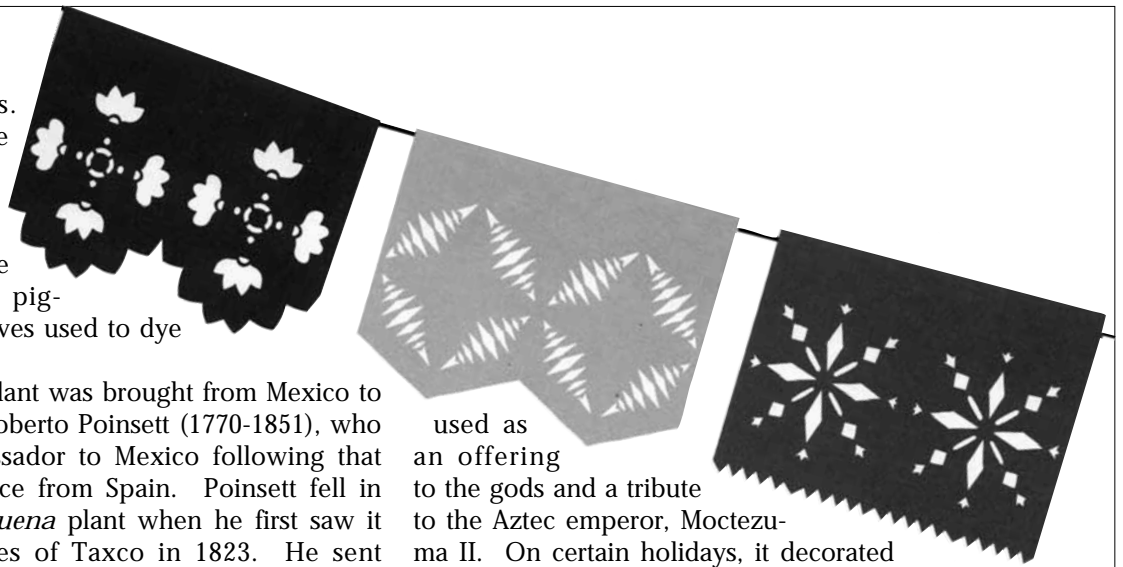
used as an offering to the gods and a tribute to the Aztec emperor, Moctezuma II. On certain holidays, it decorated the idols in temples and palaces, and priests embodying the gods and the cosmos wore elaborate costumes of colored paper. Cutouts of dark paper were made to represent evil spirits, while white paper represented good spirits and was used by healers and witches in their rituals.

Color schemes selected for *papel picado* are frequently linked with specific festivities. Sky blue or pink and white are commonly chosen for celebrations in honor of the Virgin Mary, yellow and white for patron saints. Vibrant pink, orange and purple are the key tones employed for *ofrendas* (offerings) associated with *El Día de los Muertos*, or the Day of the Dead. Shades of purple

are also widely used at Easter. The colors of the Mexican flag—red, white and green—are set aside for venerating the nation's patroness, *La Virgen de Guadalupe*, as well as for commemorating Independence Day, September 16. Rainbow hues are appropriate for Christmas and non-religious festivities.

Cut from colored tissue paper (or plastic) to simulate lace, *papel picado* can be seen today hanging from Day of the Dead altars and decorating graves during November. Also during Christmas, *papel picado* decorates indoor and outdoor festivities in Mexico.

Visit the online *Playgoer's Guide to La Posada Mágica* at [www.scr.org](http://www.scr.org) to read more about these and other Mexican holiday traditions.



# Sing Along with the Posada

## *'Vamos A Pie'*

Vamos a pie caminando  
Caminando, caminando  
Una posada Buscando  
Buscando para El.

Velas prendidas alumbran  
La noche más santa de Dios  
Este camino termina  
En oración.

Vamos con fe caminando  
Caminando, caminando  
Los angeles saben cuando  
Saben cuando llegará.

A la posada más linda  
Llena de luz y amor  
En esta noche veremos  
Al Redentor.

Vamos a pie caminando  
Caminando, caminando  
Una posada buscando  
Buscando buscando.

## *'Este Canto Mio'*

Este canto mío canto con pasión  
Por el Niño Dios quien es mi salvación  
Si mi voz al cielo no alcanza  
Es porque le falta esperanza

Gloria gloria gloria al Señor  
Eschuchame y hazme el favor  
Quiero ver el Rey de la humanidad  
En la Noche Buena de la Navidad.

Mucho gusto siento en mi corazón  
Cada vez que canto, santa es mi canción  
Ya se acerca el momento de  
El Nacimiento de la Nueva Fe.

Gloria gloria gloria al Señor  
Eschuchame y hazme el favor  
Quiero ver el Rey de la humanidad  
En la Noche Buena de la Navidad.

## *'We go on foot'*

We go on foot  
Walking, walking  
Searching for a posada  
Searching for Him

Burning candles shine on  
God's holiest night  
This path ends  
With a prayer

We walk along in faith  
Walking, walking  
The angels know when  
They know when He will arrive

To the most beautiful posada  
Filled with light and love  
On this night we will see  
The savior

We go on foot  
Walking, walking  
Searching for a posada  
Searching, searching

## *'My Song'*

I sing my song with passion  
For baby Jesus, my salvation  
If my voice won't reach heaven  
It is because it lacks hope

Glory, glory, glory to the Lord  
Listen to me, do me a favor  
I want to see the King of humanity  
On Christmas' holy night

I feel pleasure in my heart  
Every time I sing, holy is my song  
The moment is near  
The birth of a new faith

Glory, glory, glory to the Lord  
Listen to me, do me a favor  
I want to see the King of humanity  
On Christmas' holy night

Words by Octavio Solis; music by Marcos Loya  
Translation by Santiago Uceda

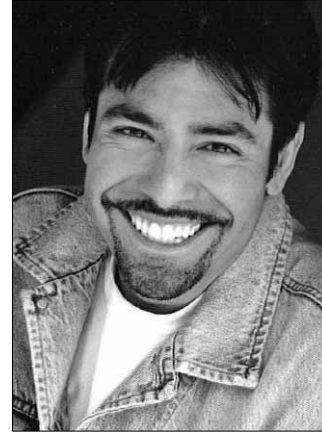




CHRISTINE AVILA  
*Caridad/Widow*



DENISE BLASOR  
*Consuelo/Widow*



DANNY BOLERO  
*Papi/Jose Cruz*

## Artist Biographies

**\*CHRISTINE AVILA** (*Caridad/Widow*) was a member of the original cast of *La Posada Mágica* at SCR and *Zoot Suit* at the Mark Taper Forum. Regionally, she has appeared at the Padua Hills Playwrights Festival, San Jose Repertory, La Jolla Playhouse, Colorado Springs Shakespeare, Pasadena Shakespeare Co. and the Bilingual Foundation for the Arts. Some of her favorite roles are Antonio in *The Merchant of Venice* at the Los Angeles Women's Shakespeare Company; Spider Woman in Murray Mednick's *The Coyote Cycle* (Jugoslavia); Cassandra in Steven Berkoff's *Agamemnon*; Hermione in *A Winter's Tale*; Suzanne in *Figaro Gets A Divorce*; and Lola in *Dogeaters*. Her screen credits include "House," "The West Wing," *Liar*,

*Liar*, "American Family" and numerous commercials. Her awards include several *Drama-Logue* awards, Teacher of the Year (UCLA Extension) and two citations from the City of Los Angeles (SIPA & Fred C. Nelles School for Boys). She is a seven-time participant at the Sundance Playwrights Festival. Ms. Avila is a founding member of We Tell Stories, The Classical Theatre Lab and was an Associate Artist at the former LATC. She graduated from UCLA and studied with Sandy Meisner at the Neighborhood Playhouse, New York. She was a student of Tad Danielewski, Los Angeles and is a student and associated teacher at the Steve Eastin Studios.

**\*DENISE BLASOR** (*Consuelo/*

*Widow*) returns to SCR for her tenth appearance in *La Posada Mágica*. This year she performed in the world premiere of *Los Muertos* by Timothy McNeil, directed by David Fofi, at the Elephant Theatre; and in the West Coast premiere of *Electricidad* by Luis Alfaro, directed by Lisa Peterson, at the Mark Taper Forum. She appeared in *Ten Tiny Love Stories* by Rodrigo Garcia, directed by Luis Alfaro and performed in and directed *The Wide, Wide Sea* at Bilingual Foundation of the Arts and NoHo Festival. She has performed at the Los Angeles Theatre Center as the Bride in *Blood Wedding*, directed by Margarita Galban and as Yerma in *Yerma* and as Martirio in *House of Bernarda Alba* with Carmen Zapata. She played



SOL CASTILLO  
*Refugio/Buzzard*



CRISSEY GUERRERO  
*Mom/Mariluz*



MARCOS LOYA  
*Musician/Ensemble*

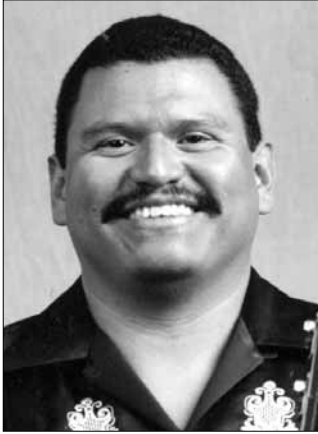
Jenny in *The Threepenny Opera*, directed by Angelina Reaux, and was part of Ron Sossi's Odyssey Theatre adaptation of *Faust*. She was Artistic Director of Los Angeles Diversified Theater Company, where she performed and adapted *The Three Sisters*. She designed and appeared in the Ovation Award-nominated production of *He Who Gets Slapped* with Bud Cort and performed and produced the original musical production of *Caderas*. Other stage credits include leading roles in the world premieres of *House of the Spirits* at LATC; Cervantes' *Interludes* at Stages, directed by Florinel Fatulescu; *Made in Lanus*, directed by Lillian Garrett at The Old Globe; and *Accelerando* by Lisa Loomer. She played Juana in *The False Chronicle of Juana La Loca* at the Festival Cervantino in Mexico and has performed in Europe and Puerto Rico. Film credits include *The Disappearance of Garcia Lorca* with Andy Garcia; *Univers'l*, directed by Ana Nicholas; *Noriega, God's Favorite* with Bob Hoskins, directed by Roger Spottiswoode; *Team America: World Police*

and the soon-to-be-released *Happy Feet* with Robin Williams. Ms. Blasor is a proud member of Actor's Equity.

**\*DANNY BOLERO** (*Papi/Jose Cruz*) was born in East LA, and is very happy to return to South Coast Repertory. A graduate of the American Center for Music Theater, he has recently taken on the challenge of '60s Doo Wop, becoming one of the newest members in the revival of the band Cannibal and the Headhunters. His theatrical credits span from Broadway to regional, as well touring the world from Bali to Venice as a production singer for Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines. On Broadway he appeared in *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* starring Michael Damian and in the first national tour with Sam Harris. Regional theatre credits include *Man of La Mancha* (tour) with Robert Goulet; *Bark* at the Coast Playhouse; *The Fantasticks* (El Gallo) at the Arizona Theater Company; Cesar Chavez in Ed Begley's *Cesar and Ruben* at the El Portal Theater, St. Edwards University (new work-

shop); *Selena* (Abraham) at the Doolittle Theater; *Lalo* at the Mark Taper Forum; *World Goes Round* at the Rubicon (Robby Nomination); *Paloma* at Casa Sousa; *Pacific Overtures* (Manjiro); *Mystery of Edwin Droid* (John Jasper, Inland Empire Award); *Beggars Holiday* with the late, great Carl Anderson; and Guido in *Nine* and Che in *Evita*, for both of which he received the Los Angeles *Drama-Logue* Award. Television appearances include "The Mullets" (recurring), "Beverly Hills, 90210," "Ally McBeal," "Los Alvarez" (pilot) and "Malcolm in the Middle." Mr. Bolero can next be seen as Che in *Evita* for the Lawrence Welk Resort in Escondido, January 2006. As always for Mom and Dad.

**\*SOL CASTILLO** (*Refugio/Buzzard*) returns to SCR for his sixth season in *La Posada Mágica*. He was also seen at SCR in the world premiere of *The Hollow Lands*, the Theatre for Young Audiences production of *Sideways Stories from Wayside School* and the Pacific Playwrights Festival workshops of *Sea of Tranquility* and *Refer-*



LORENZO MARTINEZ  
*Musician/Ensemble*



MIGUEL NAJERA  
*Horacio*



KEVIN SIFUENTES  
*Eli/Bones/Lauro*

ences to Salvador Dali Make Me Hot. At San Diego Repertory he appeared in *Zoot Suit*, *The Imaginary Invalid* and *Barrio Hollywood*. Other theatre credits include the national tour of *Veteranos: A Tribute*, *West Side Story*, *Bye Bye Birdie* and *Talking to Yellow Roses*. Mr. Castillo was seen in Showtime's "Resurrection Blvd." and Valor Production's *Who's James Cagney?* Mr. Castillo dedicates his performance to his lovely wife, terrific daughter, and gives his thanks to them and the audience. Mr. Castillo is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

**\*CRISSY GUERRERO** (*Mom/Mariluz*) is happy to be returning home to *La Posada Mágica*. This is her third season as Mariluz. She was previously seen at SCR in the role of Gracie for four seasons. She has spent seven years touring the world singing and dancing as Priscillita with El Vez, the Mexican Elvis. She has also been seen on "Late Night with Conan O'Brien," HBO's U.S. Comedy Arts Festival, The Toyota Comedy Festival, and at Largo and the Roxy starring in the critically

acclaimed musical *White Trash Wins Lotto*. Ms. Guerrero appeared as Jasmine in *Black Butterfly*, *Jaguar Girl*, *Piñata Woman and Other Superhero Girls Like Me* at the Mark Taper Forum. Concurrently, she worked as First Assistant Editor and Producer of bonus materials on the Kids in the Hall documentary *Same Guys, New Dresses* and as Associate Producer and co-star of "Dave Foley's The True Meaning of Christmas" specials which air annually in Canada. She has most recently starred in "The Tribute" (a show she co-wrote and produced) at the Steve Allen Theater in Hollywood. However, her proudest accomplishment is her far-too-adorable daughter Alina, who first appeared on this stage in her mother's belly. Ms. Guerrero is a proud member of Actor's Equity.

**MARCOS LOYA** (*Composer/Musical Director/Ensemble*) is an accomplished musician and composer and a master of acoustic guitar. He is also adept on *requinto*, *jarrana*, *cuatro*, 12-string, mandolin, electric gui-

tar and various indigenous folk instruments. Currently, Mr. Loya is a Visiting Artist at California State University, Dominguez Hills, where he will be teaching a course on Chicana/o Latina/o music beginning in January 2006. He will release a CD titled *Always from the Heart* in 2006. His debut CD, *Love is the Reason*, garnered an Independent Contemporary Jazz Album of the Year nomination. In 1996 he composed the score for the "American Playhouse" film adaptation of Tomas Rivera's *and the earth did not swallow him (y no se lo trago la tierra)*. His music is featured in the films *Deep Cover*, *The Waterdance*, *A Million to Juan*, *Old Gringo*, *Vibes*, *Stand and Deliver*, *Born in East LA*, *Hold Me*, *Kiss Me*, *Thrill Me* and *Kiss Me a Killer* (for which he received a nomination for the Independent Spirit Award) and was featured in Director Robert Rodriguez' *Once Upon a Time in Mexico*, a sequel to *Desperado*. He scored and/or composed music for several plays, including the Los Angeles Theater Center productions of *La Victima*, *August 29* (*Drama-Logue Award*, Best



TIFFANY ELLEN SOLANO  
*Gracie*

Original Music), *Stone Wedding* (Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award nomination), and most recently the Southwestern tour of *Veteranos (A Legacy of Valor)*. His television work includes the musical scores for the PBS productions "Dreams of Flying," "Elders," "Between Friends" and "Los Pinateros." His music can be heard in the "Mangas" episode of the PBS series "Foto Novela" for which he also composed the theme. He served as musical director for Univision's long-running "El Show de Paul Rodriguez;" the Buenavista/ Disney "Navidad en las Americas" special; the ABC special "Latin Nights;" and NBC's "Vida Awards." Mr. Loya has performed and/or toured with a variety of performers including Placido Domingo, Linda Ronstadt (with the Houston Symphony Orchestra), Celia Cruz, Tito Puente, Lalo Guerrero, Chick Corea, Chaka Khan, Gerald Albright, Hugh Masekela, Keiko Matsui, Phillip Bailey, Stephen Stills, Vicki Carr, Luis Enrique and Jose Feliciano. With Madonna, he recorded "La Isla Bonita" and appeared in the video. He can be seen per-

forming solo, with his acoustic ensemble Trio Los Cinco, or with the Marcos Loya Latin Jazz Band. He dedicates his performance to the memory of his father, Arthur Loya, whose courage and love remain a constant source of inspiration.

**LORENZO MARTINEZ** (*Musician/ Ensemble*) was raised with the rich, culturally diverse music of Los Angeles and has traveled and performed throughout the Southwest. He represented Chicano music in Paris with Lalo Guerrero and Flaco Jimenez. His education includes Music Theory and Instrumental Studies at Cerritos College and UCLA's Ethno Musicology program with emphasis in Mariachi music. His vast musical experience includes Tex-Mex, *conjuntos*, *orquesta* styles, mariachi, zydeco, jump blues, jazz, *jarocho*, *huasteco*, *nueva cancion*, *trio romantico*, early California and Chicano *movimiento* music. Other groups Mr. Martinez has performed with include Hermanos Baca and Lil Joe y La Familia. He was part of the Mariachi concert *Las Tres Voces de Oro*, backing Lucha Villa, Lola Beltran and Miguel Aceves Mejia. He performed with the UCLA Mariachi under the direction of Nati Cano of Los Comperos, and in the Universal film *Who Will Sing the Songs* starring Freddie Fender and Vicki Carr. He performed and recorded with Los Perros del Pueblo Nuevo and Trio Los Cinco with Marcos Loya, Mundo Armijo and Ray Islas. The group performed *Dia de Los Muertos* and *La Virgen del Tepeyac* by Luis Valdez at the Japan Theatre, the opening ceremony of Luis Valdez' *Bandido* at the Mark Taper Forum and with Culture Clash in *La Carpa* at the Mark

Taper Forum. Most recently he toured with The Four Brown Hats theatre production of *Veteranos, A Legacy of Valor*.

**\*MIGUEL NAJERA** (*Horacio*). "I always look forward to doing *La Posada Magica*. This will be my fourth year and hopefully I'll be Horacio for many years to come." A multi-talented artist, Mr. Najera is a writer and director as well as an actor. His recently completed documentary, *Dancing on the Edge*, won The Outstanding Documentary Award in Canada. Founder of an independent film company, Ce Acatl Productions, he wrote and directed CAP's award-winning short film *Libertad*, which screened to critical acclaim on WGBH Boston as part of its Latino film series. His acting career has spanned 25 years in film, television and theatre. He has an MFA in Film, Theatre, and Television Directing from the California Institute of the Arts, received his BA in Drama from San Francisco State University and attended the American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco.

**\*KEVIN SIFUENTES** (*Eli/Bones/Lauro*) returns to SCR for his fourth season of *La Posada Magica*. Earlier this year he was seen in James Lujan's *Kino and Teresa* with Native Voices at the Autry and also completed the 2005 National Tour of the critically acclaimed *By The Hand Of The Father*, which has aired on PBS' "Austin City Limits." Theatre credits include productions with the Mark Taper Forum, the Los Angeles Theatre Center, San Jose Repertory and Cornerstone Theater Company, to name a few. Film credits include *29 Palms*, *Native Aspect Ratio*, *Independence*

*Day, Steel, Street Corner Justice, And The Earth Did Not Swallow Him* and *Hearts of Stone*. His numerous television credits include "ER" and recurring roles on "Resurrection Blvd." and "The New Rockford Files." Mr. Sifuentes gives special thanks to his family and friends for their love, support, insight and funny stories. He is a proud member of Actors' Equity.

**\*TIFFANY ELLEN SOLANO** (*Gracie*) is pleased to be returning to SCR to bring to life Octavio Solis' beautiful character, a role that garnered her the Young Artist's Award for "Most Outstanding Young Performer in Live Theatre." *La Posada Mágica* is very dear to her heart and she is thrilled to be reuniting with the talented cast and crew whom she genuinely loves and considers family. Ms. Solano has spent most of her life on stage, beginning in musical theatre, and later performing in straight plays and Shakespeare. She portrayed Ginya in *Nine Armenians* at the Mark Taper Forum and Denver Center Theatre, played Miranda in *The Tempest* at the Los Angeles Theatre Center and received critical acclaim for her depiction of Anne in *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Other performances include lead roles in *David and Lisa*, *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, *West Side Story*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Under the Gaslight*. Most recently, she can be seen performing at Disney's California Adventure 2000 seat Hyperion Theatre as Jasmine in *Aladdin - A Musical Spectacular*. Though her heart is truly in the theatre, she also enjoys film and music work. She is a proud member of Actors' Equi-

ty, SAG, AFTRA and AGVA. Film credits include commercials, television guest spots, industrials, interactive videos and independent films. She sends her love to all of her family and friends and hopes that Gracie's spirit touches your heart half as deeply as it has hers.

#### PLAYWRIGHT, DIRECTOR & DESIGNERS

**OCTAVIO SOLIS** (*Playwright/Director*) is a playwright and director living in San Francisco. His works *Man of the Flesh*, *Prospect*, *El Paso Blue*, *Santos & Santos*, *La Posada Mágica*, *El Otro*, *Dreamlandia*, *Bethlehem*, *Gibraltar* and *The Seven Visions of Encarnacion* have been mounted at theatres nationwide. *Burning Dreams*, co-written with Julie Hebert and Gina Leishman, was produced by San Diego Repertory; and his collaborative project with Erik Ehn, *Shiner*, was mounted by Undermain Theatre in Dallas. His most recent project was *The Ballad of Panchito and Lucy*, a musical comedy written for Campo Santo and performed in San Francisco. Solis has received an NEA Playwriting Fellowship, two playwriting grants from The Kennedy Center, the Will Glickman Playwright Award, the 1998 TCG/NEA Theatre Artists in Residence Grant, the 1998 McKnight Fellowship grant from The Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis and the 2000-2001 National Theatre Artists Residency Grant. His DV feature film *Prospect* has just screened at the Film Arts Festival in San Francisco. Solis is a member of the Dramatists Guild and an alum of New Dramatists.

**MARCOS LOYA** (*Composer/Musical Director*) See biography on page P-11.

**CHRISTOPHER ACEBO** (*Scenic Design*) designed *Habeas Corpus* last season; the world premieres of *The Beard of Avon*, *Hold Please* and *California Scenarios* and the West Coast premiere of *The Countess* at SCR. Recent productions include the world premieres of *The Clean House* at Yale Repertory Theatre, *Electricidad* at The Goodman Theatre and *Living Out* and *Chavez Ravine* at the Mark Taper Forum. Other regional design work includes productions for the Guthrie Theater, La Jolla Playhouse, The Goodman Theatre, Denver Center Theatre Company, The Children's Theatre Company of Minneapolis, Portland Center Stage, East West Players, Great Lakes Theater Festival, The Kennedy Center, Missouri Repertory, among others. Upcoming productions at Berkeley Rep, Oregon Shakespeare Festival and La Jolla Playhouse. Mr. Acebo is an ensemble member of Cornerstone Theater Company in Los Angeles. He received his MFA in design at the University of California, San Diego and is a past recipient of the NEA/TCG fellowship for designers. He is a member of the faculty at Cal State University, Los Angeles.

**SHIGERU YAJI** (*Costume Design*) has designed costumes for over 50 SCR productions including most recently *Habeas Corpus*, *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *Lovers and Executioners* and *Major Barbara*. His other recent work has been seen at Yale Repertory Theatre, Cornerstone Theater Company, San Jose Repertory Theatre and

the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, as well as the current Broadway-bound, national touring production of Cathy Rigby's *Peter Pan*, for which he previously received an Emmy Award nomination. He is the recipient of numerous awards and recognitions including six Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Awards and a Bay Area Theatre Critics Circle Award. Mr. Yaji is a member of the United Scenic Artists Local 829 and the UC Irvine Drama Department faculty.

**LONNIE RAFAEL ALCARAZ** (*Lighting Design*) is an Associate Professor at UC Irvine and a professional Lighting Designer. He has designed at various regional theatre houses, such as SCR, Berkeley Repertory, Sierra Repertory, the Arena Stage in Washington, DC and Utah Shakespearean Festival. In addition to his eleven seasons with *La Posada Mágica*, shows at SCR include *Bunicula*, *The Hoboken Chicken Emergency*, *Play Strindberg*, *Dimly Perceived Threats to the System*, *Sidney Bechet Killed a Man* (for which he received a *Drama-Logue* Award), *BAFO*, *Later Life* and *Three Viewings* and he will be designing *Man From Nebraska* later in the season. He designed Culture Clash's *The Birds* at both SCR and Berkeley Repertory, along with their national touring show, *Radio Mambo*, which has been seen in Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco, Arizona, New York, Seattle and Washington, DC. Recent design experience includes *I Ask You*, *Farewell to Manzanar* and *Waking Up In Lost Hills* with Cornerstone Theater Company; Utah Shakespearean Festival's 2004 summer and 2003 fall seasons of

shows; *My Fair Lady*, *Forever Plaid*, *Morning's at Seven*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *Comedy of Errors* and *The Importance of Being Earnest*. He also was a designer for Universal Studios, Japan, where he designed the live shows Terminator 2 in 3D, and Monster Makeup, the attractions Jurassic Park the Ride and Snoopy Studios, along with exterior architectural facades throughout the park. He is a member of the United Scenic Artist/IATSE - Local 829.

**LINDA KOSTALIK** (*Choreographer*) is a newly retired Professor from the Theatre Arts and Dance Department at Cal State Los Angeles and has worked extensively with the award-winning Los Angeles County High School of the Arts as choreographer for the Musical Theatre Ensemble. Her career as dancer, choreographer, and educator spanned 40 years. She continues to choreograph productions for professional theatres such as SCR, Playwrights Horizons, The Goodman Theatre, the International City Theatre and others. "Professor K" has directed Grammy nominee Bobby Rodriguez in *A Latin Jazz Christmas Show* and is currently working on a new musical review *The Tribute* with Crissy Guerrero and Dave Foley. She continues work in videography and design. As always, it is a pleasure to be back with the SCR family. Happy Holidays!

\***JAMIE A. TUCKER** (*Stage Manager*) completed his MFA in Dance, specializing in Stage Management, at UCI in 1994. Earlier this season he stage managed *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and *Bunicula* and last season *A View from the Bridge*, *The Clean House*, *The Retreat*

from Moscow and assisted on *A Naked Girl on the Appian Way*. Previously he stage managed *Anna in the Tropics*, *Lovers and Executioners*, *Intimate Exchanges* and *Mr. Marmalade*. He also stage managed the world premiere of Richard Greenberg's *The Violet Hour*, the West Coast premiere of Horton Foote's *The Carpetbagger's Children*, *Relatively Speaking* and the world premiere of Rolin Jones' *The Intelligent Design of Jenny Chow*. He worked as SCR's stage manager for the Second Stage productions of *The Dazzle*, *True West*, *Play Strindberg*, the world premiere of *But Not for Me* and the Pacific Playwrights Festival workshop production of *Landlocked*. He has stage managed three seasons of *La Posada Mágica*. He has worked as assistant stage manager on the Mainstage productions of *New England*, *Our Town* and *Arca-dia* and the Second Stage productions of *BAFO* and *Three Days of Rain*. Mr. Tucker has worked at the Long Beach Civic Light Opera on *No, No, Nanette*, *Can Can*, *A Chorus Line*, *The King and I* and *Man of La Mancha*. If you can't find him in the theatre, he is likely to be on the diamond, or riding in paradiseridehawaii, Hawaii's bike ride to stop AIDS.

**DAVID EMMES** (*Producing Artistic Director*) is co-founder of SCR. He has received numerous awards for productions he has directed during his SCR career, including a Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle Award for the direction of George Bernard Shaw's *The Philanderer*. He directed the world premieres of Amy Freed's *Safe in Hell*, *The Beard of Avon* and *Freedomland*, Thomas Babe's *Great Day*

*in the Morning*, Keith Reddin's *Rum and Coke* and *But Not for Me* and Neal Bell's *Cold Sweat*; the American premiere of Terry Johnson's *Unsuitable for Adults*; the West Coast premieres of C.P. Taylor's *Good* and Harry Kondoleon's *Christmas on Mars*; and the Southland premiere of *Top Girls* (at SCR and the Westwood Playhouse). Other productions include the West Coast premieres of *Three Viewings* by Jeffrey Hatcher, *The Secret Rapture* by David Hare and *New England* by Richard Nelson; and *Arcadia* by Tom Stoppard, *The Importance of Being Earnest* by Oscar Wilde, Ayckbourn's *Woman in Mind* and *You Never Can Tell* by George Bernard Shaw, which he restaged for the Singapore Festival of Arts. His producing responsibilities involve the overall coordination of SCR's programs and projects. He has served as a theatre panelist and onsite evaluator for the National Endowment for the Arts, on the Executive Committee of the League of Resident Theatres, and as a panelist for the California Arts Council. After attending Orange Coast College, he received his BA and MA from San Francisco State University, and his PhD in theatre and film from USC.

**MARTIN BENSON** (*Artistic Director*), co-founder of SCR with his colleague David Emmes, has directed nearly one third of the plays produced here. He has distinguished himself in the staging of contemporary work, including William Nicholson's

*The Retreat from Moscow*, Horton Foote's *The Carpetbagger's Children* and the world premiere of *Getting Frankie Married—and Afterwards*, the critically acclaimed California premiere of Nicholson's *Shadowlands*, the Southern California premiere of Michael Healey's *The Drawer Boy*, and the West Coast premieres of Peter Hedges' *Good As New* and Martin McDonagh's *The Lonesome West*. He has won accolades for his direction of five major works by George Bernard Shaw, including the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle (LADCC) Award-winners *Major Barbara*, *Misalliance* and *Heartbreak House*. Among the numerous world premieres he has directed are Tom Strellich's *BAFO* and Margaret Edson's Pulitzer Prize-winning *Wit*, which he also directed at Seattle Repertory Theatre and the Alley Theatre in Houston. He has directed American classics including *Ah, Wilderness!*, *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *A Delicate Balance* and *A View from the Bridge*. Mr. Benson has been honored with the *Drama-Logue* Award for his direction of 21 productions and received LADCC Distinguished Achievement in Directing awards an unparalleled seven times for the three Shaw productions, John Millington Synge's *Playboy of the Western World*, Arthur Miller's *The Crucible*, Sally Nemeth's *Holy Days* and *Wit*. He also directed the film version of *Holy Days* using the original SCR cast. Along with Emmes, he accepted SCR's 1988 Tony Award for Outstand-

ing Resident Professional Theatre and won the 1995 Theatre LA Ovation Award for Lifetime Achievement. Mr. Benson received his BA in Theatre from San Francisco State University.

**PAULA TOMEI** (*Managing Director*) is responsible for the overall administration of South Coast Repertory and has been Managing Director since 1994. A member of the SCR staff since 1979, she has served in a number of administrative capacities including Subscriptions Manager, Business Manager and General Manager. She is the immediate past President of the Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national service organization for the professional not-for-profit theater and serves as a member of the Board. In addition, she has served as Treasurer of TCG, Vice President of the League of Resident Theatres (LORT) and has been a member of the LORT Negotiating Committee for industry-wide union agreements. She represents SCR at national conferences of TCG and LORT; is a theatre panelist and site visitor for the National Endowment for the Arts and the California Arts Council; served on the Advisory Committee for the Arts Administration Certificate Program at the University of California, Irvine; and has been a guest lecturer in the graduate school of business at Stanford and U.C. Irvine. She graduated from the University of California, Irvine with a degree in Economics and pursued an additional course of study in theatre and dance.



The Actors and Stage Managers employed in this production are members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.



The Scenic, Costume, Lighting and Sound Designers in LORT theatres are represented by United Scenic Artists Local USA-829, IATSE.



The Director is a member of the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Inc., an independent national labor union.