



Sweet Goats & Blueberry Señoritas
by Richard Blanco and Vanessa Garcia

Beatriz..... Vanessa Elise[^]
 Tio EmeGilbert Cruz*
 Jazmine..... Abigail Killeen*
 Blake..... Toussaint Jeanlouis*
 Georgette Kathy McCafferty*
 MaynardCorey Gagne
 MarilynMichelle Rios*

Director..... Sally Wood
 Assistant Director, Assistant Dramaturg, Stage Directions....Macey Downs

Run Time
 1 Hour and 40 Minutes
 No Intermission

About the Play

Sweet Goats and Blueberry Señoritas follows Beatriz, a Cuban-American baker in Maine trying to figure out whether she should stay in Maine with the wonderful community she’s developed, or reunite with her estranged mother in Miami. Along the way we meet the lovely people that make up Beatriz’s community as she tries to cook up the recipes of her childhood with the raw ingredients of Maine.

*Member of AEA, appearing through permission from Theatre Authority.
[^]Equity Membership Candidate



Richard Blanco (Playwright) was born in Madrid, his family had recently arrived as exiles from Cuba. Forty-five days later, the family immigrated once more to New York City, and eventually settled in Miami. Only a few weeks old, Blanco already belonged to three countries, a foreshadowing of the negotiations of cultural identity, community, and belonging that would shape his life and continue to inform his work. As a poet, memoirist, and essayist, Blanco is a sought-after speaker who captivates audiences around the nation and the world

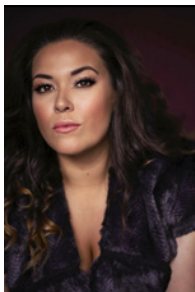
with his dynamic storytelling and powerful readings. Advocating for diversity, LGBTQ rights, immigration, arts education, cultural exchange, and other important issues of our time, Blanco routinely speaks at a variety of venues and functions, including fundraisers and galas, professional development conferences, middle and high schools, universities, commencement ceremonies, writing conferences, and literary festivals. In 2013, Blanco was selected by President Obama as the fifth inaugural poet in U.S. history. He stands as the first Latino, immigrant, and gay person to serve in such a role. His latest book of poems, *How to Love a Country* (Beacon Press, 2019), both interrogates the American narrative, past and present, and celebrates the still unkept promise of its ideals. The Academy of American Poets chose Blanco to serve as its first Education Ambassador. He has also served as artist-in-residence at Colby College, and has taught at Georgetown University, Wesleyan University, American University, and many literary centers throughout the country. A builder of cities as well as poems, Blanco holds degrees in civil engineering and creative writing from Florida International University. In addition, he has received honorary doctorates from Macalester College, the University of Rhode Island, the University of Southern Maine, and Colby College.



Vanessa Garcia (Playwright) is a multidisciplinary writer and creator working as a screenwriter, novelist, playwright, and journalist. She has written for Sesame Street, Caillou, and is a consultant on Dora the Explorer. Her debut novel, *White Light*, was published in 2015, to critical acclaim. Named one of the Best Books of 2015 by NPR, it also won an International Latino Book Award. Her plays have been produced in Edinburgh, Miami, Amsterdam, Los Angeles, New York, and other cities around the world. These include the immersive

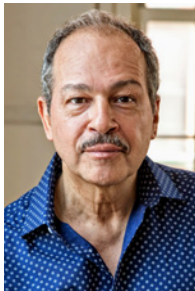
hit, *Amparo* (“Miami’s Hottest Ticket,” according to People en Español); *The Cuban Spring* (a full-length Carbonell Award nominee for Best New Play, 2015), *The Crocodile’s Bite* (a short included in numerous anthologies such as Smith & Kraus’ Best Ten Minute Plays of 2016; the City Theatre Anthology 2015; and the Writer’s Digest Annual Award Anthology, 2015), and *Freak!*, a short play for Young Adults (anthologized in The Applause Acting Series’ *5 Minute Plays For Teens*). As a journalist,

feature writer, and essayist, her pieces have appeared in *The LA Times*, *The Miami Herald*, *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, *Narrative.ly*, *American Theatre Magazine*, *The Huffington Post*, *ESPN*, and numerous other publications. She holds a PhD from the University of California Irvine in English (with a focus in Creative Nonfiction), an MFA from the University of Miami (in fiction), and a BA from Barnard College, Columbia University (English and Art History). Her newly commissioned and autobiographical radio play, *Ich Bin Ein Berliner* about the fall of the Berlin Wall and her relationship to Cuba premieres in April of 2021.

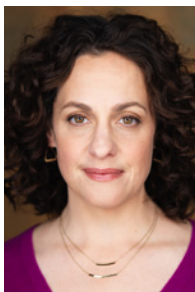


Vanessa Elise (Beatriz) is a multi-disciplinary artist that holds a BFA in Theatre from New World School of the Arts. Some previous stage credits include: *Miami Motel Stories: MiMo* (The Commissioner), *Miami Motel Stories: Little Havana* (Vivian), *Real Women Have Curves* (Carmen), *Wrongful Death...* (Death), *Collective Rage* (Betty 3), *Waiting for Waiting for Godot* (Laura), *Clark Gable Slept Here* (Estella), and *Church* (Reverend Vanessa). Her original one woman show, *Noise: An Interruption* (Amaya), was chosen to perform in NY's

United Solo Theatre Festival off-Broadway on Theatre Row in November 2015. Elise was honored with a Silver Palm for Outstanding New Talent and a Carbonell nomination for Best Supporting Actress for her work in *Wrongful Death...* and *Clark Gable...* @VanessaElise7



Gilbert Cruz (Tio Eme) Happy to be back at Portland stage even if it is virtually. In New York City, he has been seen at the following theaters: Intar Theater, HERE space, Classical Theater of Harlem, ROUNDABOUT theater, Ensemble Studio Theater. Regional: many theaters around the country; this past summer at Barrington stage. TV/Film: Will be seen as Dr Ebersole in episodes of *The Walking Dead: World Beyond* this upcoming season.



Abigail Killeen (Jazmin) is an Affiliate Artist at Portland Stage and is delighted to be part of this exciting project. Other shows at PSC include *The Clean House* (Lane, also with Michelle Rios), *Babette's Feast* (Martine, Off-Broadway transfer, NY Mag Critic's Pick), *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Blanche), *Love/Sick* (Meg/Celia/Sam, also directed by Sally Wood), and *A Christmas Carol* (Ghosts/Mrs. Cratchit), along with a number of Little Fests, From Aways, and other festivals of new work. For PSC's Studio Series she co-produced and performed in

the solo show *The Amish Project*. Other Portland-based work: *Sofonisba* (Sofonisba, Dramatic Rep, also directed by Sally Wood); *The May Queen* (Jennifer), *Death by Design* (Sorel) and *Next Fall* (Holly) at Good

Theater; *Uncle Vanya* (Yelena) and *Nina* (Helen) at The Theater Project; and *Macbeth* (Lady Macbeth) with Fenix. New York credits include *The Merchant of Venice* and *Everything That Rises Must Converge* with Compagnia de' Colombari, the NY International Fringe (Moritz von Stuelpenagel, dir.) and *Naked Angels* (David Dalton, dir.) Film: *America's Hidden Stories*, *Wayfair*, *Showers of Happiness*. Abigail is a Professor of Theater and chair of the Department of Theater and Dance at Bowdoin College.



Toussaint Jeanlouis (Blake) Actor, Writer, Director, Dancer, Musician, and Fitness Professional. Last seen as King Pentheus in the Bacchae on tour with SITI Company and as Cordell in the Pulitzer Prize winning *Hot Wing King* by Katori Hall at Signature Theatre. He earned his BA in Acting from Arizona State University and MFA in Acting/Performance from California Institute of The Arts.



Kathy McCafferty (Georgette "Georgie") recent roles include Anna in Year One, Sally in Talley's Folly, Blanche in *A Streetcar Named Desire*, Leontine in John Cleese's *Bang Bang!*, and Regina in *The Little Foxes*. Broadway Tour: *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Off-Broadway: Lincoln Center Theater, 59E59 Theaters. Regional credits include: The Williamstown Theatre Festival, Palm Beach Dramaworks, Huntington Theatre Company, Ahmanson Theatre, Arkansas Rep, Portland Stage, Boise Contemporary Theatre, Cincinnati

Playhouse in the Park, Bay Street Theatre, Rep. Theatre of St. Louis, and others. TV/ Film: *Little America*, *House of Cards*, *30 Rock*, *Law & Order: CI*, *Law & Order: SVU*, *Dates Like This*, and *The Onion News*.



Corey Gagne (Maynard) trained at Mountview Theater Conservatory (now Mountview Academy) in London, and has appeared on stages in London, New York, Philadelphia, Austin, and Portland. Recent credits include Sam in *The Flick* (Dramatic Repertory Company), Major Carey in *Ben Butler* (Portland Stage), Hank in *False Flag* (Dramatic Repertory Company), Kenny in *Detroit* (The Theater Project), Mr. Burns in *Mr. Burns, A Post-Electric Play* (Mad Horse Theater Company), Blount in *Roles of a Lifetime* (Luminous Productions), Kent in *King Lear*

(Luminous Productions), Hortensio in *The Taming of the Shrew* (Bare Portland), Jack in *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Portland Stage), Bernard in *A Number* (Dramatic Repertory Company), and Cecil in *Equivocation* (Dramatic Repertory Company).



Michelle Rios (Marilyn) credits include the Tony-Award nominated Broadway productions of *The Capeman*, *The Sound of Music*, *Man of La Mancha*, and the Tony Award Winner for Best Musical *In the Heights*. Regional credits include: INTAR, NYS&F, La MaMa, ETC., The Public Theatre, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, Portland Stage, Workshop West, The Citadel Theatre, Vancouver Playhouse, etc. Film and TV credits include *Law & Order*, *Guiding Light*, *Third Watch*, *Dirt*, *Frontera*, *Dead Again in Tombstone*, *Come True*, *The Raven Steals the*

Light, *Schmigadoon!* etc. Ms. Rios has worked alongside of Lin Manuel Miranda, Uzo Aduba, Paul Simon, Cecily Strong, Jaime Camil, Marc Anthony, and Academy Award nominee Ed Harris, among others. In 2018, she received a Helen Hayes Award nomination for her portrayal of "Abuela Claudia" in the US Spanish premiere of *In the Heights* at Gala Hispanic Theatre. www.mmrios.com

Sally Wood (Director) Has worked as an actor, fight choreographer, teaching artist and director. In Maine, Sally's directing credits include AIRE Theater, Bates College, The University of New England, The Theater at Monmouth, The Good Theater, Bowdoin College and Fenix Theater Company. No stranger to Portland Stage, Sally has most recently directed *Talley's Folly*.

Macey Downs (Assistant Director, Dramaturg, Stage Directions) is a Directing & Dramaturgy Apprentice at Portland Stage with a passion for new play development. This season at Portland Stage, Macey assistant directed Jade King Carroll's production of *Perseverance* by Callie Kimball. She was also previously the assistant director to Kevin R. Free for *Where We Stand* by Donnetta Lavinia Grays. She earned her BA at Bard College as a double major in Theater & Performance and Sociology with Gender Studies. Macey completed a senior project in directing in 2020 with the premiere of a new play titled *this is the knot in my stomach* by Phil Carroll, which she is directing again at NY Winterfest in November 2021. Previously she assistant directed Whitney White's musical adaptation of *Three Sisters* at Bard College, was a directing apprentice at Vassar & New York Stage and Film's Powerhouse Theater, and served as the Artistic Director of Bard College's Old Gym theater. She has also directed scenes or productions of the following plays: *Eurydice*, *The Wolves*, *Bluebird*, *Richard III*, *Being Norwegian*, and *Fun Home*.

Special Thanks

We would like to thank Caleb Scott, Anita Stewart, Mical Hutson, Cody Brackett, and Todd Brian Backus for making this reading tonight possible.

