

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

La Lengua Teatro en Español and BRAVA! present:

Virtual performed reading: “*Beben*” by Guillermo Calderón

-Play never seen in the US before!-

Saturday, October 17, 2020

5PM (PDT)/8PM (EDT) *in the 31st anniversary of Loma Prieta earthquake*

LIVE-STREAMING ON FACEBOOK: [La Lengua Theater](https://www.brava.org/all-events/2020/10/17/beben)

ONE SHOW ONLY A performed reading in Spanish with English subtitles.

Running time: 80 minutes, no intermission.

TICKETS: Tickets are \$15 suggested donation (with a pay-what-you-can option). Proceeds from ticket sales go to the artists behind the work as well as to Brava!, making it possible for this, and other works, to have a future once Brava Theater Center reopens. If you are viewing with two or more people, please consider adjusting your ticket price accordingly.

<https://www.brava.org/all-events/2020/10/17/beben>

WARNING: This play contains language and violence. PG-13.

LOCATION: ONLINE

To view the Live Stream, all you have to do is LIKE La Lengua Teatro en Español on Facebook and then tune in to the page 5 min before of the time of the event: [La Lengua Theater](https://www.brava.org/all-events/2020/10/17/beben)

La Lengua Teatro en Español is fiscally sponsored by Brava! for Women in the Arts.

La Lengua Teatro en Español is a resident theater company at BRAVA! for Women in the Arts.

La Lengua Teatro en Español has been awarded by TBA Theater Bay Area with a CA\$H Performs grant.

ABOUT THE PLAY

BEBEN (German: quake. To tremble.)

‘A captivating play’
La Tercera

‘A fearless and daring genius. An earthquake that succumbs all our mental structures’
HiedraFM

‘Between idealization and disenchantment, freedom and morality, rationality and feelings’
Biobio Chile

'Calderón has succeeded in designing a little "pessimistic comedy" [...] - a quasi-romantic diffusion of horror'

Nachtkritik.de

Four volunteers from an international NGO join a camp to help the victims of a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami that hit Chile in 2010. The crisis forces the four to confront the social and political effects of trauma, the role of religion, and the desperate need of the state and government relief that arises during natural disasters like these when everyone must adjust to a new normal.

Written by the prominent Chilean playwright Guillermo Calderón, *BEBEN* is based on a story called "Earthquake in Chile" by Heinrich Von Kleist about a similar earthquake in Chile in 1647. When the NGO volunteers confess to Anna -the leader of the volunteer corps- that they have told Von Kleist's particularly cruel story to the children in the camp, all are forced to reflect on the motivations of their behavior.

This contemporary piece questions what change looks like in today's politically and ecologically fragile society. If the map around us changes after a natural disaster, shouldn't the way we treat each other change, also? Maybe not.

BEBEN was commissioned to Calderón by the Düsseldorfer Schauspielhaus. It was originally written in Spanish and translated to German by Hedda Kage.

Due there is no English version of the play, *BEBEN* has not been premiered in the US yet. Although we can't call it a US Premiere because it is an exceptional production, we are excited to be the first ones in making this piece accessible to English speaking audiences.

Cast: Zulema Clares, Elena Estér, Valeria Llana, Gerardo Gudiño

Director: Leyma López

Creative Team: Virginia Blanco, Paul S. Flores, Deborah Cortez, Roberto Varela

Sound Design: David Molina

Graphic Design/ Art: Adela Fornés

English translation: Benoît Monin

ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT

Guillermo Calderón is a playwright and director. In Chile, he wrote and directed *Neva*, *Diciembre*, *Clase*, *Villa*, *Discurso*, and *Escuela*. He has been invited to premiere *Beben* and *Kuss* in Düsseldorf, as well as to mount English versions of *Neva*, *Villa*, and *Discurso* for the Public Theater in New York, the Center Stage in Los Angeles, and the Edinburgh International Festival, among others. His productions have been presented in more than 25 countries. In January 2017 he premiered *Goldrausch* at the Theater Basel in Switzerland and he presented his latest work *B*, at the Royal Court Theater in London. In film he co-wrote the films *Violeta went to heaven*, directed by Andrés Wood, and *El Club*, by Pablo Larraín, winner of the Silver Bear Grand Jury Prize of the Berlin Film Festival and recognized with the Fénix and Platinum Awards for Best Screenplay. As a screenwriter for *Neruda*, a film directed by Pablo Larraín, he was nominated for the Platinum Awards in the Best Screenplay category. On television, stands out his work as a scriptwriter in the series *Ecos del Desierto* (Chilean channel CHV).

ABOUT LA LENGUA THEATER

Founded in 2019 by Virginia Blanco, La Lengua Teatro en Español/La Lengua Theater is an emerging company that creates spaces for theater in Spanish, sharing its immense diversity and wealth, in order to empower the Spanish-speaking community in the San Francisco Bay Area. Its previous productions

are performed readings of *Anna in the Tropics* by Nilo Cruz, and a virtual live-streaming of *Death and the Maiden* by Ariel Dorfman.

La Lengua has just launched a segment of curatorship called 'La Lengua Te Muestra' (*La Lengua Shows You*) where they invite other companies and independent artists to perform as guests. Learn more about us at www.lalengua.org.

ABOUT ARTISTS-IN-RESIDENCE AT BRAVA!

BRAVA! fosters the artistic expression of women, people of color, LGBTQIA community, and other underrepresented artists. Through its residency program, BRAVA! supports the professional development and creative work of directors, actors, dancers, musicians, visual artists, and designers, providing space for creation, assistance with grant writing and fiscal sponsorship, and the support of BRAVA!'s marketing and technical staff. In return, these artists continue to generate excellent art, mentor youth in BRAVA!'s education programs, and contribute to the artistic life of the 24th Street corridor in San Francisco.

CAST & CREW BIOS

ELENA ESTÉR (Maria/ Maddalena) is thrilled to return to La Lengua after being Conchita in our inaugural staged reading of *Ana en el Trópico*. She is an indigenous Andean woman who happened to be born in NYC. She was last seen on stage as Yinoelle in the world premiere of *Don't Eat the Mangos* by Ricardo Pérez González directed by David Mendizábal at the Magic Theatre. Other favorite roles: Olivia in the TBA Recommended production of *Ageless* (Quantum Dragon Theatre), Carla in Custom Made Theatre's *In the Heights*, and Veronica in *The Motherfucker with the Hat*. She recently won Best Actress at a film festival for her leading role in an independent film that is currently on Amazon Prime. Elena studies dance and is also a champion salsa dancer/instructor who has performed internationally. Passionate about languages and traveling, this multi-lingual actress is reacquiring her native language Quechua and also speaks Spanish, English, Portuguese, French, basic Mandarin, and just beginning German.

ZULEMA CLARES (Anna/ Immacolata) was born in Cuba and holds a degree in Theater Techniques and Choral Direction from Cuba's National Arts School. She has worked in theater, film, and television as an actress, playwright, and director. In 1996 she co-founded Argos Theater of Cuba and soon after she became one of the most acclaimed actresses of the Cuban stage for her work in classics like Strindberg, Brecht, and Calderon de la Barca. She also worked as a teacher at Cuba's National Arts School and made her debut as a theatrical director in 2001 with *Thanks Grandma*, which she also wrote and starred in. Her film credits include the leading roles of *The Nights of Constantinople*, *Three Times Two* (Silver Zenith First Fiction Feature Film, Montreal 2004), and *Long Distance* (2008). Since 2006 Clares works as a leading actress at the Spanish Repertory Theater in NYC. Her credits include: *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *Life is a Dream*, *As Five Years Pass*, *Love in the Time of Cholera*, *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *Cold Air*, *Miss 744890*, *Valor*, *Agravio y Mujer*, *No one writes to the Colonel*, *La Celestina*, *Filomena Marturano a Caribbean Marriage*, among others. She won the Best Actress Award 2001 Camaguey Theater Festival in Cuba and was a consecutive recipient of HOLA and ACE awards in NYC (2006-2019). Other awards include CODOCUL, LATA, ATI.

VALERIA LLLANEZA (Karin/ Annunziata) She is originally from Buenos Aires. After she finished her BFA in Dramatic Arts at Universidad del Salvador (Buenos Aires, Argentina), she started working in the industry with distinguished directors such as Julio Chávez, Rubén Viani, Stella Maris Closas, Marcelo Katz as well as touring; national and international. She attended The American Musical and Dramatic Academy of New York receiving a high-level degree in Musical Theatre. Since then, she has been working as a leading performer in numerous productions held at some of the world's most renowned art venues and festivals in New York. Recent credits include *Aunt Malvina*, *Retablillo*, *Crying is allowed*, *Aquel Cabaret de Berlín*, *Rapiña: four short stories of love and predation*, *A Tango for Tita*, *Falling Angel*, *Let's Broadway! Cabaret Series*, *Pool Scum*, *This is Us*, *Trickeration*, *Barbie Live*, *las aventuras de las princesas*, *Maté a un tipo*, *Obras cortas de Julio Chávez*, *Solas pero no tanto*, *Me amas ¿Me*

amas? ¿¡Me amas?!, among others. Nominated to the 2019 ATI Awards in New York for her performance in *It's a Woman Thing (The story of a friendship)*. Follow her on Instagram: [@llanezavaleria](#)

GERARDO GUDIÑO (Willi/ Salvatore) is an Argentine-born, New York-based stage actor. He has a Bachelor's degree in Theatre from the National University of Córdoba (Argentina) where he was awarded the University Prize. He studied acting at the Lee Strasberg Theater Institute of New York with a grant from Argentina. He is part of the Repertorio Español's company of actors since 2001 where he played main roles in plays such as *Chronicle of a death foretold*, *Bloodwedding*, *Life is a dream*, *Yerma*, *Doña Flor and Her Two Husbands*, *The Phantom Lady*, *Don Quixote*, *The Shoemaker's Prodigious Wife*, *The Laurels of Apollo*, *The Great Semíramis*, *Aunt Julia and the Scriptwriter* and *Blind Spot*, among others. At IATI theatre he performed in *The Guest and the Void*, *The Dinner*, and *Lirio's Flower*; and directed *Hard to Believe* and *Face the Music*. Other theatre directions include *My last night with Rubén Blades*; *The Therapy*, *Tic-Tac-Toe*, *the Threesome*; and *Masks Off*. He has won five ACE, three HOLA, and one ATI Awards.

LEYMA LÓPEZ (Director) is a Cuban-American Stage director based in New York City. She holds a Pedagogy and Theater Direction degree from the Superior Institute of the Arts in Havana. As a director, she founded the group Rompecalle in Cuba, a theatrical research and development project focused on classical texts. López is currently Resident Director at the Spanish Repertory Theatre in NYC. She received the Van Lier Award for Young Directors in 2012 and her credits with the company include *Aire Frío*; *Valor, Agravio y Mujer*; *Filomena Marturano, un Matrimonio a la Caribeña*; *La Celestina*; *La Paz Perpetua*; among others. In 2014, Leyma founded her theater group Teatro Columna, which she is currently directing and has received awards at different festivals such as the NY Commissioner of Dominican Culture (Best Production, Acting and Direction in 2016 for *La Boda*) and The Hispanic Federation's Latinx LGBTQ Arts Festival FUERZA-fest (Best Theater Director in 2018, for *El Gos*) to mention just a few. López has also been nominated and awarded by other prestigious theater institutions such as HOLA, ATI, LATA, and the Association of Latin Entertainment of Critics of New York (ACE) for outstanding direction in Classical Theater, Drama and Comedy. She has also collaborated with companies such as Pregones/ PRTT, ID Studio, Two River Theater, and Teátrica. From 2012-2019 Leyma has directed more than fifteen shows and several staged readings.

VIRGINIA BLANCO (Stage Manager/ Co-producer/ Artistic Director) Actor and theater-maker. Originally from Argentina, she was a founding member of Drakma Grupo Teatral. Back in her country, she has performed in both classic and contemporary plays. Regional credits include Orinda Starlight Village Players, (Ex Ubuntu) Oakland Theater Project, Shelton Theatre, TheatreFirst, Theatre of Yugen, and The Cutting Ball Theater, along with several staged readings with Brava Studio Sessions and 3 Girls Theatre. She was Paulina in the live-streamed performed reading of *La Muerte y la Doncella (Death and the Maiden)* at La Lengua. Her local acting training is from Studio ACT, BerkREP Theatre School, and Shakespeare & Company. Virginia was nominated by BroadwayWorld SF for Best Leading Actress in a Play for the role of Young Woman in *Knives in Hens* at Anton's Well Theater Company (2019). She studied Communications at Universidad de Buenos Aires and has worked as a journalist and editor for several written media platforms. Virginia is the founder of La Lengua and an Artist in Residence at BRAVA! for Women in the Arts. virginiablanca.com

PAUL FLORES (Subtitles Operator/ Co-producer/ Company Member) Writer and Producer. He started making spoken word as a Youth Speaks y Los Delicados founding member in 1996. In 2001 he debuted in Cuba, while he was working at Centro Cultural La Peña, and since then he has been performing frequently in La Habana, México, and El Salvador. His work approaches immigrant stories with all their complexity, from violence -forced migration, gang life, the war, incarceration, divided families- until cross-generational relationships and the struggle to preserve cultural values. His most recent shows were *On the Hill: I Am Alex Nieto* (which gathered San Franciscan communities that had been divided by gentrification and police violence), and *Tenemos Iré/We Have Iré*, premiered in 2019 at Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, San Francisco. Flores is an associated Theater Professor at the University of San Francisco. <http://paulsflores.art/>

DEBORAH CORTEZ (Social Media Manager/ Company Member) was born in Argentina but spent most of her youth in Peru. Deborah relocated to the US in late 1998. Her theatre work goes back to 1996 with her debut on the Stage in *Peter Pan*, playing Captain Hook's ship keeper. Deborah is a Bay Area actress, singer, producer, and director. She's worked in many plays as well as films and commercials. Some of her recent works are Josefa (*Convoy 31000*), Lucy (*Strange Ladies*), Theseus (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Olivia (*Twelfth Night*), Jean (*Dead Man Cell Phone*), and many more. Film credits include *No Quiero Verte*, *One Long Day*, *Drops of Sunshine*, *Drunk Theatre*, among others. Deborah's Producing credits are *Drunk Theatre -Bread and Butter* and *Titus Andronicus* with Theatre Lunatico, in which she is now a Core Member. More about Deborah: deborahcortez.com

ROBERTO VAREA (Sound Operator/ Company Member) He directed the first two shows of La Lengua: *Ana en el Trópico* and *La Muerte y la Doncella*. His creative work includes directing world premieres of works by Migdalia Cruz, José Rivera, and Cherríe Moraga, as well as founding community-based companies such as El Teatro Jornalero! and Secos & Mojados. His research work focuses on live performance as a means of resistance and peacebuilding in the context of social conflict and state violence. His writing includes the two-volume anthology *Acting Together-Performance* and the *Creative Transformation of Conflict*, and publications in numerous journals in the US, Cuba, and the UK among others. He teaches at the University of San Francisco, where he is founding faculty of the Performing Arts & Social Justice and Critical Diversity Studies Programs, and he directs the Latin American Studies Program and the Center for Latinx Studies in the Americas (CELASA).

ADELA FORNÉS (Art/ Graphic Design) Visual artist and actress. She was one of La Lengua's first generation of artists playing Marela in our inaugural staged reading of *Anna in the Tropics*. Originally from Spain started her studies in Fine Arts at a very young age. In 2013 she moved to San Francisco where she obtained her MFA in Acting at the Academy of Art University. Her recent credits include Karen in *Dinner with Friends* by Donald Margulies; Irma in *Memoria del Silencio en el País de la Eterna Primavera* by Linda M. Girón which premiered at the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts, in San Francisco; as Ensemble in the production of *One Googol and One* by Aidaa Peerzada at the Brava Theater, among other projects and collaborations. She is thrilled to be part of this project and would love to thank her family and close friends for the unconditional love and support.

[instagram.com/adela_h_f](https://www.instagram.com/adela_h_f)

BENOÎT MONIN (English Translation) is an actor and improviser who co-founded improv duo Chatterbox as well as La Compagnie Carmina, which performs French theater with English supertitles. A company member with Oakland Theater Project and RagTag Improv, Benoît has also performed with Stanford Rep, Theater Rhinoceros, Half Moon Bay Shakespeare, Ragged Wing Ensemble, Shelton Theater, Inferno Theatre, Generation Theater, and Coastal Rep. He was nominated for Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role (TBA Awards, 2018) and Best Featured Actor in a Play (Broadway World SF, 2019), Benoît trained with BATS Improv, American Conservatory Theater, and Shakespeare & Company. www.benoitmonin.com

DAVID R. MOLINA (Sound Design) Designer, composer, multi-instrumentalist, sound artist, music producer, and instrument inventor. He has created music for all the performing arts, multimedia installations, film, and radio, nationally and internationally for the past 24 years, *La Muerte y la Doncella* (our previous production) among them. He has won several awards. His instruments and collaborations were featured at SFMOMA, The Broad Museum (L.A.), Oakland Museum of California, McLoughlin Gallery, SOMArts. Band collaborations: TAU (Berlin), Emanative (UK), El Paso (Peru). His bands are Impuritan, Ghosts and Strings, and Transient. www.drmsound.com.

LA LENGUA ONLINE: CONNECT, FOLLOW, AND SUPPORT US!

Website: www.lalengua.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lalenguatheater/>

Instagram: @lalenguatheater

Youtube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4F-VukNCntrur_fv4gQllg

Twitter: @lalenguatheater