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Latina/o Theatre Commons
National Convening of Latino/a Theatre-Makers at Emerson College
October 31-November 2, 2013

The first large-scale formal gathering of the Latina/o theatre community since 1986

(BOSTON – Oct. 7, 2013) The Latina/o Theatre Commons, a new national advocacy initiative, will host an historical convening of 75 Latina/o actors, directors, producers, playwrights, designers, and scholars representing all regions of the United States. They will gather to explore the history, current challenges, opportunities, and visions for Latina/o theatre-makers in the 21st century. This National Convening, to be held Oct. 31 to Nov. 2, 2013 at the Jackie Liebergott Black Box Theatre in the Emerson / Paramount Center (559 Washington St., Boston, Mass.), will be the first gathering of its kind since 1986. Over the course of the convening, those gathered will seek to advance the state of Latina/o theatre-making through sharing artistic, organizing, and institutional wisdom. Strategies will be identified to seed collaborations and strengthen the burgeoning network of Latina/o theatre artists. For the full convening schedule and more information, go [here](#).

The convening will bring together *veteranos* alongside emerging artists, and independent as well as organizationally affiliated practitioners and scholars, representing the diversity of the Latina/o experience from across the country. Participants represent the multifaceted community, tracing their roots to many nations, some Spanish speaking and non-Spanish speaking, identifying on the queer spectrum, and embracing Native or African heritages as well. They will be champions and advocates for Latina/o work who provide insight, resources, and inspiration to in their respective regions and disciplines.

The Latina/o Theatre Commons is supported by HowlRound, which is committed to modeling a commons-based approach to advancing the health and impact of the not-for-profit theatre. HowlRound designs and develops online knowledge platforms and in-person gatherings that promote peer-to-peer participation, organizational collaboration, field-wide research, and new teaching practices to illuminate the breadth, diversity, and impact of a commons-based approach to theatre practice.

“A group of eight Latina/o theatre-makers came together in May 2012 and the idea for the Latina/o Theatre Commons was born, said Polly Carl, Director of HowlRound. “That group of eight partnered with other Latina/o theater communities from around the country and created a dedicated steering committee of over thirty practitioners who have worked tirelessly to make this National Convening possible. HowlRound is honored to host this historical gathering, and we're eager to see what comes next, as this is clearly just the beginning.”

In partnership with HowlRound, the Latina/o Theatre Commons recently launched [Café Onda](#), an online gathering place featuring regular content by and for Latina/o theatre-makers located on HowlRound. Rooted in a commons-based approach, Café Onda is a shared knowledge platform that features essays and promotes discourse within the Latina/o theatre community curated by stage director Tlaloc Rivas, Assistant Professor of Theater, The University of Iowa, and co-chair of the Latino Theatre Commons Steering Committee.

"The Latina/o Theatre Commons National Convening is an extraordinary start to what we hope will be the first of many ongoing conversations about the vibrant, multifaceted and culturally diverse field of U.S. Latina/o theater at the start of the 21st century," says playwright Anne García-Romero, co-chair of the Latina/o Theatre Commons Steering Committee and Assistant Professor of Theatre at the University of Notre Dame.

For those interested in participating virtually, [HowlRound TV](#) will livestream the convening and provide opportunities for interaction via Twitter using #cafeonda and #newplay. Satellite sites will be organized in Los Angeles, Dallas, Miami, New York City, and Chicago that will interface directly with the convening participants in Boston through Skype video conferencing on Nov. 2, 2013.

The National Convening is made possible through the generous support of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. Other supporters include Emerson College, Ford Foundation, The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs, University sponsorships, and individual donors.

Future Convenings

In Fall 2014, the Latina/o Theatre Commons is organizing a National *Encuentro*, a series of productions by Latino/a theatre companies from across the United States, at the [Los Angeles Theatre Center](#) (LATC) curated by José Luis Valenzuela, Artistic Director of LATC and Professor of Theatre at UCLA. In Summer 2015, [The Theatre School at DePaul University](#) in collaboration with the Latino Theatre Commons will host a festival of new Latina/o theatrical work, spearheaded by Lisa Portes, Head of Directing at DePaul University. The festival will serve as a third national gathering which will continue to explore the progress of the Latina/o Theatre Commons and investigate new theatrical works." Like the *Encuentro*, this gathering will be open to artists, scholars, and advocates from across the country.

The Latina/o Theatre Commons Steering Committee:

- Christopher Acebo, Designer; Associate Artistic Director, [Oregon Shakespeare Festival](#)
- Luis Alfaro, Playwright; Assistant Professor, [USC](#); former Director of Latino Theatre Initiative, [Mark Taper](#)
- Kevin Becerra, Artistic Engagement Manager, [ArtsEmerson: The World on Stage](#)
- Juliette Carrillo, Director, former Artistic Director of Hispanic Playwrights Project at [South Coast Repertory](#)
- Anne García-Romero*, Playwright; Assistant Professor, [University of Notre Dame](#)
- Abel Lopez, Associate Artistic Director, [Gala Hispanic Theater](#)
- Jacob Padrón, Director; Associate Producer, [Steppenwolf Theatre Company](#)
- Richard Perez, Managing Director & Asst. Professor, [Hope College and Summer Rep](#), [Chicago Dramatists](#)
- Lisa Portes, Director; Head of MFA in Directing, [DePaul University](#)
- Tlaloc Rivas*, Director; Assistant Professor of Theater, [The University of Iowa](#)
- Anthony Rodriguez, Artistic Director, [Aurora Theater Company](#)
- Diane Rodriguez, Associate Producer [Center Theatre Group](#) & [TCG](#) Board President
- Mario Ernesto Sanchez, Artistic Director, [Teatro Avante, International Hispanic Theater Festival](#)
- Olga Sanchez, Artistic Director, [Milagro](#)
- Kinan Valdez, Artistic Director, [El Teatro Campesino](#)
- Clyde Valentin, Executive Director, [Hip Hop Theater Fest](#), [TCG](#) Board Member & Director, Arts + Urbanism Initiative, [SMU/Meadows School of the Arts](#)
- José Luis Valenzuela, Director; Artistic Director, [Los Angeles Theatre Center](#), Professor of Theatre, [UCLA](#)
- Patricia Ybarra, Director; Associate Professor, [Brown University](#), President-Elect of [ATHE](#)
- Karen Zacarías, Playwright; Resident Playwright, [Arena Stage](#)

* Indicates committee co-chair

The Latina/o Theatre Commons Advisory Committee:

- Mica Cole, Former Executive Director, [Free Street Theater](#)
- Olga Garay-English, [Director of Cultural Affairs, City of Los Angeles](#)
- Michael Garcés, Artistic Director, [Cornerstone Theater Company](#)
- Nancy Garcia, Managing Director, [Colectivo El Pozo](#), [ALTA](#)
- Ricardo Gutierrez, Artistic Director, [Teatro Vista](#)
- Brian Herrera, Assistant Professor of Theatre, [Princeton University](#)
- Jorge Huerta, Professor Emeritus, [UC San Diego](#)
- Tiffany Ana Lopez, Dramaturg; Professor of Theatre, [UC Riverside](#)
- Ricky Martinez, Artistic Director, [New Theatre](#)
- Chantal Rodriguez, Dramaturg, Professor & Program Director, [Los Angeles Theatre Center](#)
- Octavio Solis, Playwright, Director & Dramaturg
- Antonio Sonera, Producing Artistic Director, [Badass Theatre Company](#) & Artistic Associate, [Milagro](#)

