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312.443.5151 or [Press@GoodmanTheatre.org](mailto:Press@GoodmanTheatre.org) **September 8, 2023**

IMAGES: [Goodman Theatre Press Room](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dgvqh9vsa0momjd/AAD9OgCsDJhW7yxsXXvyDQeOa?dl=0)

**GET READY FOR THEATER OFF THE TOP ROPE!**

***LUCHA TEOTL*, ONE OF THE “TOP 10 THEATER PRODUCTIONS FOR FALL 2023” (*CHICAGO TRIBUNE*),**

**STARTS SEPTEMBER 29, PRODUCED AS PART OF CHICAGO LATINO THEATER ALLIANCE’S *DESTINOS* FESTIVAL**

**\*\*\***[**VIDEO AND PHOTO RELEASE**](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/dgvqh9vsa0momjd/AAD9OgCsDJhW7yxsXXvyDQeOa?dl=0)**: A FIRST-LOOK AT THE WRESTLING RING AND REHEARSAL WITH JOEY IBANEZ, PALOMA “STARR” VARGAS AND MORE AMONG THE 17-MEMBER CAST OF TRAINED PROFESSIONAL WRESTLERS\*\*\***

(Chicago, IL) Will the forces of light prevail over darkness? Masked luchadores representing Aztec gods vie for domination in *LUCHA TEOTL*—a no-holds-barred, 90-minute thrill ride about family, honor, tradition and redemption, written and directed by **Christopher Llewyn Ramirez** and **Jeff Colangelo**. A full-sized professional wrestling ring and a 15-foot-high Aztec calendar set the stage for the heart-pumping action, transforming the Goodman’s 350-seat flexible Owen Theatre into an immersive space that encourages audience participation. Conceived by Prism Movement Theatreand produced in partnership with **Chicago Latino Theater Alliance** (CLATA) as part of the 2023 *Destinos* Festival, *LUCHA TEOTL* appears September 29 – October 29, 2023 in the 350-seat Owen Theatre; opening night is Monday, October 9. Tickets ($25 –$70, subject to change) are available at GoodmanTheatre.org/Lucha or by phone at 312-443-3800. The Goodman is grateful for the support Bank of America (Contributing Sponsor) and The Elizabeth Morse Charitable Trust (Lead Funder of IDEAA Programming).

“Get ready to cheer, boo and go wild for some high-flying action, because this show is a roller coaster from the moment it begins,” said co-creator **Jeff Colangelo**. “With an incredible ensemble of actors, circus performers and pro-wrestlers, we aim to transport our audiences into the world of lucha wrestling from the moment they walk into the space—and create an experience unlike anything Chicago has ever seen.”

Co-creator **Christopher Llewyn Ramirez** added, “Chicago is one of the pro-wrestling capitals in the United States—so it's no surprise that the Goodman’s casting team found the unbelievable artists needed to bring *LUCHA TEOTL* to life. We could not be more excited to celebrate Latinidad, theater and pro-wrestling—all under the same roof!”

The cast for the Chicago premiere production is led by **Joey Ibanez** as third-generation luchador wrestler Huitzi and **Paloma “Starr” Vargas** (Huitzi’s mentor Coyol), joined by **Isabella Abel-Suarez** (Camera Operator), **Ramón Camín** (Comentarista 1), **Rinska Carrasco** (Comentarista 2), **Natalia Christabelle** (Centeotl/Itzla), **Jean Claudio** (El Referee), **Isabel Espin** (Toci), **Jamey Feshold** (Opotchli/Xochi), **Molly Hernández** (Quetzacoatl/Techalotl), **Cisco Lopez** (Camera Operator), **Victor Maraña** (Maestro de Ceremonia) and **Luis** **“Aski” Palomino** (Tezca/Xolotl/Macuil) and **Alexandrya Salazar** (Toci). Understudies for this production include **Isabella Abel-Suarez**, **Jamey Feshold**, **Micah Figueroa**, **Cisco Lopez**, **Tatiana Lucia Gantt** and **Vernon Mina**.

The creative team includes **Valen-Marie Santos** (Assistant Direction), **Luis “Aski” Palomino** (Wrestling Coordination); **William Carlos Angulo** (Choreography); **Anna Louizos** (Set Design); **Nicole Alvarez** (Costume Design); **Jason Lynch** (Lighting Design); **Karen Wallace** (Assistant Lighting Design); **Michael Huey** (Sound Design); **Brandon Reed** (Associate Soung Design); **Mike Commendatore** and **Rasean** **Davonté Johnson** (Projection Design); **Parker Molacek** (Assistant Projection Design).

Casting is by **Lauren Port**, CSA. **Kaitlin Kitzmiller** is the Production Stage Manager.

**Christopher Llewyn Ramirez** is an actor and director from Dallas, TX and a recent Chicago transplant. Since 2017, Ramirez served as one of the eight resident acting company members at the Dallas Theater Center and is now looking forward to his journey in Chicago! Past directing credits include *Luchadora!* (Cara Mia Theatre); *LUCHA TEOTL* (Prism Movement Theatre) and *Little Shop of Horrors*(Junior Players and University of Texas at Dallas). Assistant directing credits include *A Christmas Carol* (Dallas Theater Center); *RENT*and *Dogfight*(Junior Players). Stage credits: *American Mariachi* (Goodman Theatre); *Native Gardens*;*Into the Woods*; *In the Heights*; *Twelfth Night*; *Sweat*; *White Rabbit Red Rabbit*; *Hair*, *Hood: The Robin Hood Musical Adventure*(Dallas Theater Center); *Stede Bonnet a F\*cking Pirate Musical*and *Hands on a Hardbody* (Theatre Three); *The Great Distance Home, Elliot, A Soldiers Fugue*(WaterTower Theatre); *Empathitrax* (Second Thought Theatre); *An Octoroon* (Stage West); *It Shoulda Been You, Titanic* (Uptown Players); *Zoot Suit, blu, Crystal City 1969*(Cara Mía Theatre Co.); *The Winter’s Tale, Pericles,*(Shakespeare Dallas). Ramirez received his BFA in Theatre Performance from Baylor University. @chrisllewynramirez

**Jeff Colangelo** is a director, writer and fight coordinator from Dallas, TX . Since 2014, Colangelo served as one of the premiere fight directors in Dallas Texas, choreographing fights and movement for companies like Sea World, Dallas Theater Center, the Atlanta Aquarium, Dallas Children's Theater and the Dallas Opera. His work has even been seen on American Theater Magazine. Since 2017 he has also served as the artistic director of Prism Movement Theater, producing over 14 original productions with the company. Previous directing credits include: *LUCHA TEOTL*, *Everything Will Be Fine* (Prism Movement Theater); *Latinadad Festival 2021-22*, *Gog and Magog,* *Two Clown Trapped in Hell* (Cara Mia Theater). Assistant directing credits include *Cirque Joyeux 2019-22* and a very *Merry Cirque 2021-22* (Gaylord Hotel/Lone Star Circus). Colangelo graduated from Southern Methodist University in 2013 with a degree in Theater Studies. @jeffcolangelo

**ABOUT THE COMPANY (in alphabetical order)**

***For images, bios and additional information about the artists, visit the*** [***Play Detail Page***](https://www.goodmantheatre.org/show/lucha-teotl/)***.***

*LUCHA TEOTL*

By Christopher Llewyn Ramirez and Jeff Colangelo

Directed by Jeff Colangelo and Christopher Llewyn Ramirez

September 29 – October 29, 2023

Camera Operator……Isabella Abel-Suarez

Comentarista 1…… Ramón Camín

Comentarista 2……Rinska Carrasco

Centeotl/Itzla...... Natalia Christabelle

El Referee.......Jean Claudio

Toci…Isabel Espin

Opotchli/Xochi...... Jamey Feshold

Quetzacoatl/Techalotl..... Molly Hernández

Huitzi.....Joey Ibanez

Maestro de Ceremonia......Victor Maraña

Camera Operator.....Cisco Lopez

Tezca/Xolotl/Macuil........Luis “Aski” Palomino

Toci...... Alexandrya Salazar

Coyol…. Paloma “Starr” Vargas

Understudies for this production include Isabella Abel-Suarez, Jamey Feshold, Micah Figueroa, Cisco Lopez, Tatiana Lucia Gantt and Vernon Mina.

Assistant Direction by Valen-Marie Santos  
Wrestling Coordination by Luis “Aski” Palomino  
Choreography by William Carlos Angulo  
Set Design by Anna Louizos  
Costume Design by Nicole Alvarez   
Lighting Design by Jason Lynch  
Assistant Lighting Designer: Karen Wallace  
Sound Design by Michael Huey   
Associate Sound Design by Brandon Reed  
Projection Design by Mike Commendatore and Rasean Davonté Johnson   
Assistant Projection Design by Parker Molacek  
  
Line Production by Jonathan L. Green. Casting is by Lauren Port, CSA. Kaitlin Kitzmiller is the Production Stage Manager.

**ENHANCED AND ACCESSIBLE PERFORMANCES**

*Visit Goodman theatre.org/Access for more information about Goodman Theatre’s accessibility efforts.*

ASL-Interpreted: Friday, October 27 at 7:30pm – An American Sign Language interpreter signs the action/text as played.

Touch Tour and Audio-Described Performance: Saturday, October 28, 12:30pm Touch Tour; 2pm performance – The action/text is audibly enhanced for patrons via headset.

Spanish Subtitles: Saturday October 28 at 7:30pm.

Open-Captioned: Sunday, October 29 at 2pm – An LED sign presents dialogue in sync with the performance.

**ABOUT PRODUCING PARTNERS**

The **Chicago Latino Theater Alliance** is a leading advocate organization for Latino theater in Chicago. Supporting the development of emerging and established Latine playwrights, actors, directors and theater professionals is central to our mission. Our goal is to cultivate a vibrant and inclusive theater community that celebrates and promotes the richness and diversity of our *Latinidad*. We believe together we can build a stronger and more sustainable Latine theater community. CLATA has two signature programs: *Destinos, the Chicago International Latino Theater Festival*, an annual, citywide festival showcasing Chicago’s Latine theater artists and companies alongside top Latine artists from the U.S. and Latin America. Our second signature program is *Inicios: Chicago Latine Playwright Festival*, an annual festival dedicated to showcasing and promoting Chicagoland area Latine playwrights.

Chicago’s theater since 1925, **Goodman Theatre** is a not-for-profit arts and community organization in the heart of the Loop, distinguished by the excellence and scope of its artistic programming and community engagement. Led by Artistic Director **Susan V. Booth** and Executive Director/CEO **Roche Schulfer**, the theater’s artistic priorities include new play development (more than 150 world or American premieres), large scale musical theater works and reimagined classics. Artists and productions have earner two Pulitzer Prizes, 22 Tony Awards and more than 160 Jeff Awards, among other accolades.

The Goodman is the first theater in the world to produce all 10 plays in August Wilson’s “American Century Cycle.” Its longtime annual holiday tradition *A Christmas Carol*, now in its fifth decade, has created a new generation of theatergoers in Chicago. The Goodman also frequently serves as a production and program partner with national and international companies and Chicago’s Off-Loop theaters.

Using the tools of theatrical practice, the Goodman’s Education and Engagement programs aim to develop generations of citizens who understand and empathize with cultures and stories of diverse voices. The Goodman’s Alice Rapoport Center for Education and Engagement is the home of these programs, which are offered for Chicago youth—85% of whom come from underserved communities—schools and life-long learners.

Goodman Theatre was built on the traditional homelands of the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa and Potawatomi Nations. We recognize that many other Nations consider the area we now call Chicago as their traditional homeland—including the Myaamia, Ho-Chunk, Menominee, Sac and Fox, Peoria, Kaskaskia, Wea, Kickapoo and Mascouten—and remains home to many Native peoples today. While we believe that our city’s vast diversity should be reflected on the stages of its largest theater, we acknowledge that our efforts have largely overlooked the voices of our Native peoples. This omission has added to the isolation, erasure and harm that Indigenous communities have faced for hundreds of years. We have begun a more deliberate journey towards celebrating Native American stories and welcoming Indigenous communities.

Goodman Theatre was founded by William O. Goodman and his family in honor of their son Kenneth, an important figure in Chicago’s cultural renaissance in the early 1900s. The Goodman family’s legacy lives on through the continued work and dedication of Kenneth’s family, including Albert Ivar Goodman, who with his late mother, Edith-Marie Appleton, contributed the necessary funds for the creation on the new Goodman center in 2000.

**Julie Danis** is Chair of Goodman Theatre’s Board of Trustees, **Lorrayne Weiss** is Women’s Board President and **Kelli Garcia** is President of the Scenemakers Board for young professionals.

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