

UNI INTERPRETERS THEATRE
presents

Carne viva in Postville:

Stories of *Madres & Monarchs*

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY
Jennifer Cooley & Karen Mitchell

Free
Admission!

October 13, 15, 20, 21, 22

Special showing on October 14 at 8:00pm
for the Midwest Costume Society of America 7:30pm • Lang 040

www.uni.edu/interptheatre

The UNI Interpreters Theatre is funded by the Department of Communication Studies,
the College of Business, Arts and Sciences and the Office of the President

The Cost of Characters

Danielle Brunson, a freshman majoring in Elementary Education and Spanish from Muscatine, Iowa, plays the role of **Esperanza**.

Erin Hilker, M.A. student in Spanish from Colfax, Iowa, plays the role of **Della, a pro-immigration marcher, a factory worker, and a dancer**.

Allison Krois, a senior majoring in Communication and Theatre Education from West Des Moines, Iowa, plays the role of **Alejandra**.

Blanca Martínez, a senior majoring in Electronic Media from San Antonio, Texas/Guanajuato Mexico, plays the role of **Aurora**.

Claudia Rodríguez, a senior majoring in TESOL and Spanish, from Seattle, Washington/Guadalajara, Mexico, plays the role of **Raquel**.

Mariia Sherstinova, M.A. student in German from St. Petersburg, Russia, plays the role of **Christina**.

The Chorus

Araceli Castañeda, a freshman criminology major from San Antonio, Texas, plays the role of **a factory worker, pro-immigration marcher and a dancer**.

Koro Castillo, a 2nd grader at Price Lab School, plays the role of **a pro-immigration marcher**.

Nicholas Chizek, M.A. student in Spanish from Toledo, Iowa, plays an **ICE agent, an anti-immigration protestor, a line manager and a dancer**.

Jorge De León, M.A. student in Performance Studies from Rancho Cucamonga, California, plays the roles of **Ángel, a pro-immigration marcher and a dancer**.

Elizabeth Duckworth, M.A. student in Spanish from Waverly, Iowa and Mexico City, Mexico, plays the roles of **a factory worker, a pro-immigration marcher, a line manager and dancer**.

Emily Eisenman, M.A. student in Performance Studies, from Clinton, Iowa, plays the role of **Jane Rawlings, reporter**.

Edgar Espinoza, a junior majoring in Spanish from Burlington, Iowa, plays the roles of **Andrés, a pro-immigration marcher, Edgar the Postville Bakery owner, a factory worker and a dancer**.

Joshua Hamzehee, an adjunct instructor in Communication Studies from Hacienda Heights, California, plays the role of **an anti-immigration protestor, the plant manager and a dancer**.

Paige Howe, a freshman English Major from Central City, Iowa, plays the roles of *an ICE agent, an anti-immigration protestor, Janet the Postville Bakery owner, a factory worker and a dancer.*

Thomas Leigh, M.A. student in Performance Studies from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, plays the roles of *an ICE agent, an anti-immigration protestor, a border patrol agent, a factory worker, and a dancer.*

Evan Shares, a junior majoring in Political Communication and Global Studies/Human Rights from Gilbertville, Iowa, plays the roles of *a factory worker, a pro-immigration marcher, a plant representative, a line manager and a dancer.*

Carne Viva: A Tapestry of Voices Emerges from Silence and Violence



Carne viva are two words in Spanish that together can be translated various ways. Taken literally, they refer to live flesh, like an open wound. In this way they can allude to the slow process of recovery after a traumatic event. The words draw up images of enduring pain. In addition, they can be read to refer to fresh meat and in the context of human relations, to the image of a new conquest. They can also draw our thoughts to the context of a slaughterhouse, where working conditions involve constant contact with carcasses and blood, and the value of human life is not superior to the lives of the animals processed on the line; both cattle and humans are vehicles for profit. Finally, the words refer to human beings with vibrant lives whose stories will be told as this performance unfolds.

On May 12, 2008, approximately 900 police agents (federal, state and local authorities, helicopter pilots, and others) were on the ground in Postville, Iowa to stage what was at the time the largest workplace immigration raid in U.S. history. Given that the total population of Postville was just over 2,000, there was nearly one agent for every two Postville residents. By the end of the day, 389 workers had been detained at the Agriprocessors kosher meatpacking plant. Most detainees were herded into buses and transported to the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo, where they were caged in the very stalls that were typically reserved for cattle and hogs, and then "fast-tracked" in legal proceedings that, like the raid itself, were unique to U.S. history. Such legal proceedings have since been declared unconstitutional. Some of the detained workers, primarily women, were released by the evening of May 12. They were tagged with GPS tracking devices to limit their mobility and told that they could not work and could not leave Iowa, but were "free" to care for their children.

Continued on page 3...

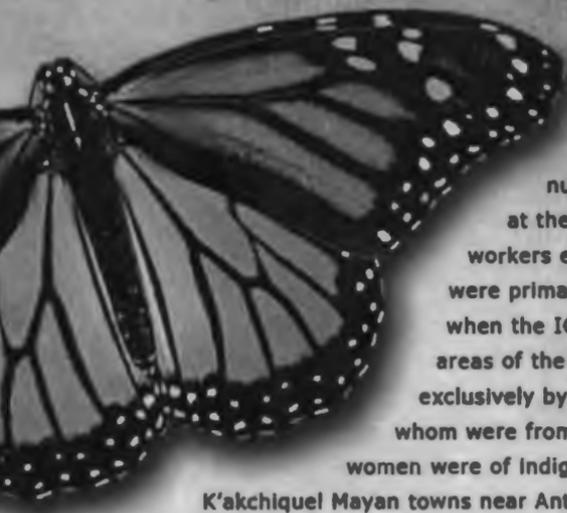
...continued from page 2

The events represented in *Carne viva* occur over the course of 5 months, from May 12, 2008 to Oct. 12, 2008. These months correspond to the sentences laid out for the majority of detained workers at Agriprocessors. These were traumatic days both in Postville and in Guatemala, in villages dotted across the Western Highlands that sent workers to the plant. The detained spouses and significant others of many Guatemalan women in Postville were in the process of being deported, but the women often had no idea in what jail or even in what state prisoners were housed. During those five months family members in Guatemala would have no source of income from remittances and little or no word about the status of their loved ones and their possible return.

The large number of Guatemalan workers as a subset of those detained at Agriprocessors (297 out of 389) must draw our focus to the specific context of Guatemala, a country inscribed in centuries of struggle and ethnic violence against indigenous people that ultimately play into contemporary issues related to immigration and the global labor market.

The most appropriate words to describe the troubled history of Guatemala, and in particular the 36 years of civil war that plagued the country from 1960 to 1996, are violence and silence. The Civil War is often referred to in Guatemala as *La Violencia*. More than 200,000 people perished in the war, the vast majority of whom were indigenous Maya. Conservative estimates suggest 83% of victims were indigenous, which establishes grounds to rank this among one of the most systematic examples of genocide in recent history. In addition to massacres of Mayans and targeted killings of intellectuals, priests, social workers, union organizers, etc., this war is especially infamous for its brutality. Military forces descended upon indigenous villages with a slash and burn policy. Family members were tortured, mutilated, immolated, raped, dismembered, etc., all before the eyes of loved ones. However, the most common reaction to this brutality was silence. The recognition and punishment of war crimes has been slow to unfold. A general sense of impunity reigns and may in fact link widespread contemporary gang violence and organized crime to Guatemala's shadowy past.

This historical information from Guatemala's recent past helps to explain, in part, how a culture of fear and silence was so easy to breed in the context of an Iowan meatpacking plant and the community that harbored its secrets for so many years before the 2008 ICE raid.



As we turn to the events unveiled in the play, it is important to note the significant numbers of women employed at the plant. Although the first workers employed at Agriprocessors were primarily men, by the year 2008 when the ICE raid occurred, some areas of the plant were staffed almost exclusively by women, the majority of whom were from Guatemala. Most of the women were of indigenous descent or grew up in K'akchiquel Mayan towns near Antigua. Limited access to

education and to the formal workforce are key factors that impact Guatemalan women's migration. The women's perception of life in Postville was certainly colored by their upbringing in a war-torn, poverty-stricken country with exceptionally high rates of infant mortality and malnourishment among children. These challenges, faced by many families every day in Guatemala, are coupled with shocking rates of violent crime against women, who suffer severely limited cultural and legal protections as victims.

The women whose stories led to the creation of this play actively sought to break the silence that has enveloped their suffering for so many generations, and to create new vehicles for their self-representation. Interestingly, one of their innovations, a strong vehicle for personal expression, was the creation of traditional indigenous items, and in particular, woven goods. *Carne viva* highlights scenes from the lives of a few women who, in the aftermath of the Postville raid, banded together to form a cooperative that produced a wide variety of typical Guatemalan products, such as woven items, dolls, magnets, caps, scarves, aprons, toys, bags, etc. Their collaboration offered emotional and economic support during the months following the raid. In addition to these visual means of expression, the play also includes excerpts from legal testimonies that recount workplace abuses.

The performances enacted here are the visual, physical and verbal embodiment of real-life stories collected by Jennifer Cooley during 3 years of ethnographic study with Guatemalan families in and around Postville and in communities in Guatemala, but they also float freely as the stories of a collective group of people whose lives are emblematic of the challenges migrants face in the U.S. in general at the start of the 21st century. This work is dedicated to all migrants who leave their home in search of a better life.

Acknowledgements

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The artists whose time and expertise
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Interpreters Theatre Upcoming Events

Interpreters Theatre Tenth Anniversary Spotlight Performance Hour November 4 - 7:30 pm

Join us as we celebrate 10 years of performance in Lang 040. Featured performers will include present students and faculty, as well as alumni and other guests. The Spotlight is not to be missed!

La Boule Grande de Masquerade November 5 - 7:30 pm

"I believe in my mask-- The man I made up is me I believe in my dance-- And my destiny" ~Sam Shepard ~

You are cordially invited to a Grand Masquerade Ball celebrating the 10th Anniversary of Lang Hall 040 and the SAVE Forum Actors. Enjoy a special evening of cocktails, music, and revelry on Saturday, November 5, 2011, in the Georgian Room, UNI Commons, 23rd Street Cedar Falls, IA. Admission is \$5.00. A cash bar will also be available.

"Town Hall: Part One A Sojourn and TEAM theatre residency November 7, 8, 9 and 10

Town Hall is a residency at the University of Northern Iowa with artists from *Sojourn Theatre Company* and New York City's *The TEAM* to create a joint project centered round the 2012 Iowa Caucus. The first part of the residency includes a visit to campus November 7 to 10 for participatory workshops. Times for workshops will be announced closer to the date. The company will return to Iowa the week of the IOWA Caucus. A public performance is tentatively scheduled for 7:30 on February 9.

Debate Team Showcase December 6 - 7:00 pm, Curtain

Be sure to save this date for an opportunity to watch the UNI Debate Team in action. The debate team will work with a topic yet to be decided. This is a great opportunity to see how debate works in a special audience friendly format designed for those not familiar with competitive collegiate debate.

"Town Hall: Part Two Date To Be Announced

The week of the IOWA Caucus, *Sojourn Theatre Company* and *The TEAM* return to UNI for part two of *Town Hall*. Incorporating narratives from the worlds of public discourse and public policy, local models of civic and Congressional debate, and original participatory strategies for civic dialogue, the performance will explore results of the caucus research, presented by the guest performers and UNI students.

Brother Wolf

Script by Preston Lane, Music by Laurelyn Dosselt Produced by arrangement with Playscripts, Inc Directed by Emily Eisenman and Paul J. Siddens III, Ph.D.

March 29, 30 and 31 - 7:30 pm, Curtain

Blending folklore, myth, bluegrass music and mountain religion, *Brother Wolf* is an Appalachian adventure tale based on the story of *Beowulf*. High in the mountains of North Carolina, a family is threatened by a demon named *Grin Dell*. When a preacher named *Brother Wolf* arrives to lend a hand, the death of the demon sets off a cycle of revenge that can only be stopped by learning to forgive.

UNI SAVE Forum Actor Showcase Directed by Amanda Jean Nolte April 11 and 12 7:30 pm, Curtain

Come explore the complexities of relationships and the power of bystander intervention with the SAVE Forum Actors. This performance allows for your own thoughts about gender stereotypes, consent and the role of violence in our community to be highlighted through audience participation. Come prepared to challenge and be challenged! Can engagement in a shared learning experience change the climate of our campus environment? Let's see!

* Additional sponsors for the *Town Hall* residency include: SAVE Forum Actors; the College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences; the Department of Communication Studies; the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences; and the American Democracy Project.

All performances are FREE (unless stated otherwise) and are located in Lang 040, at the University of Northern Iowa.

Production Staff

Producer and Artistic Director: Karen S. Mitchell, Ph.D.

Writers/Directors: Jennifer Cooley, Ph.D., Karen S. Mitchell, Ph.D.

Producer/Scenery and Lighting Designer/Technical Director: Paul J. Siddens III, Ph.D.

Projection Screen Design: Ken Paschke, Paul J. Siddens III, Ph.D. and Philippa Siddens

Multi-Media Slides Designer/Stage Manager: Dylan Freking

Costume/Props Mistress/Assistant Stage Manager: Sofia Sellger

Lighting Operator: Elise Fahrenkrug

Audio/Media Operator: Lauren Perez

Projection Screen Construction Crew: Philippa Siddens, Toni Wilson-Wood,
Elise Fahrenkrug, Allison Krois

Projection Screen Rigging Crew: Ken Paschke, Paul J. Siddens III, Ph.D. and Dylan Freking

Scenery Construction and Paint Crew: Dylan Freking, Rhiannon Vice, Ryan Boley,
Elise Fahrenkrug, Lauren Perez

Set Change Crew: The Cast

Costume Coordinators: Jennifer Cooley and Karen Mitchell

Hair and Make-up Design: Allison Krois

Properties Crew: The Cast

Electronic Engineer: Ken Paschke

House Manager/Graduate Production Assistant: Emily Eisenman

Graphic Designer: Jessica Walstrom

Photographer: Travis Biggs, Biggs Photography

Interim Head, Department of Communication Studies: Christopher Martin, Ph.D.

Head, Department of Languages and Literatures: Jeffrey Copeland, Ph.D.

Dean, College of Humanities, Arts and Sciences: Joel Haack, Ph.D.

* * Please turn off all cell phones, beepers and other electronic devices. * *

* No photography is allowed during this production. *

A talk-back with the creators and cast will follow the performance