The Magic Kite

By José Cruz González
Inspired by the artwork of Rosalia Torres Weiner
Directed by Adam Burke

About the Play
Tito’s family reels when Papa is unexpectedly sent back to Mexico…then Tito remembers that he knows how to build a magic flying kite. This world premiere play with music and puppets is an inspirational story of how a family leans on love and hope during a difficult time.

About the Playwright
José Cruz González is a foremost voice in theatre for youth whose plays address themes, often through imaginary lands and extraordinary characters, faced by children in their everyday lives. Born to migrant workers in Calexico, California in 1957, González learned at a young age how to tap into the vast world of his imagination. From his grandfather he learned the power of storytelling. He spent summers, afternoons and weekends working in the fields, so it is no surprise that his plays are strongly tied to the natural world. His use of magical realism has become one of his trademarks. This story of The Magic Kite was commissioned specifically for Children’s Theatre of Charlotte.

About Rosalia Torres Weiner
Rosalia Torres-Weiner is an artist, muralist and community leader living and working in Charlotte, NC. Born in Mexico City, Mexico, she came to the U.S. in 1985. After working in the hospitality industry, she gradually turned to a career as an artist. She is presently working on the “Papalote Project,” a multi-faceted arts and education program to raise awareness of the plight of children who have suffered the loss of a parent to deportation. Her artwork and the Papalote Project inspired the story The Magic Kite.
The Magic Kite is a world premiere play incorporating music and puppets. It is an inspirational story of how a family leans on love and hope during a difficult time. Although the family in this story is dealing specifically with deportation, the idea of separation in families is a universal struggle that affects all types of families. Stories such as The Magic Kite remind us of strength found in memories, hope and our own ability to believe.

Characters / Puppets

Tito: an 8 year old boy
Milagro (la Millie): a 5 year old girl, Tito’s younger sister
Roberto: Tito and Milagro’s father
Esperanza: Tito and Milagro’s mother
Canicas: the family cat
Jamal: Tito’s best friend
El Sol: the Sun
La Luna: the Moon
El Coyote: the coyote
La Mariposa: a monarch butterfly

Questions for Discussion

1. What was the mood of the story at the beginning of the play? What events happen that change the mood?
2. If Tito and his family were originally from Mexico, why do you think they decided to move to the United States?
   The mother explains, “The risk was great coming here and we came for a better life. In our country there was no future for you.” What do you think she means by that statement?
3. When Roberto leaves, Tito becomes the man of the house: Yo soy el hombre de la casa. What responsibilities does Tito absorb in this role? How is their daily life different now that Roberto is away?
4. Discuss the friendship between Tito and Jamal. What things do they have in common, and what are some of the things that make them different?
5. How does Tito discover the kite can fly? What memory triggers Tito’s first flight?
6. When Tito first tries to fly to his father, he encounters a barrier. He decides he needs even more “believing”. Who does he convince to come along with him?
7. What happens at the end of the play? Is it a happy ending? Hopeful? If you could write a “next chapter” of The Magic Kite, what would it be?
8. Why do you think the playwright and director incorporated puppets into the play? Which was your favorite?
9. Have you known anyone who has been separated from their family for any reason? What are some ways to bring comfort to friends who might be going through a difficult time?

Vocabulary Enrichment

demonstrate - to show, to describe by doing
impressive - amazing, showing great skill
majestic - grand, beautiful; often a word that describes amazing natural beauty such as mountains
deported - forced to leave a country
immigrant - a person who leaves one country and settles in another
permission - allowing someone to do something; in the context of the story, the word refers to the family being allowed (having permission) to live in the United States
illegal - an unfriendly term for immigrants who are in a country without permission
papalote - kite
abuelo - grandparent
gracias - thank you
muy bien - very good

y ahi esta - right here
sube sube - up up
La comida esta lista - The food is ready
Damas y cabelleros - Ladies and Gentlemen
flores - flowers
Salud! - bless you (after a sneeze)
un rebozo - shawl
Como te llamas - What is your name?
magia - magic
Estoy listo! - I’m ready!
Pobrecitos - “Poor little children”
Yo soy el hombre de la casa - man of the house
Me entiendes? - Do you understand?
mijo - son
mija - daughter

Common Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy: SL2: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media; RL7: Make connections between the text of a story or drama and a visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.
Recommended Reading

Chavela and the Magic Bubble by Monica Brown
The Cazuela that the Farm Maiden Stirred by Samatha R. Vamos
Pancho Rabbit and the Coyote by Duncan Tonatiuh
How Tia Lola Saved the Summer by Julia Alvarez
Lupita's First Dance by Lupe Ruiz-Flores
Esperanza Rising by Pam Munoz Ryan
Napi by Antonio Ramirez
Julio's Magic by Arthur Dorros

In conjunction with the production of The Magic Kite, playwright and author José Cruz González and artist Rosalia Torres-Weiner are collaborating to develop a picture book of the story, scheduled to be published in the spring of 2016.

Music

Accordion and Guitar are two of the featured instruments used in the music of The Magic Kite.

An accordion is a boxed-shaped instrument with keys like a piano and “bellows” that move in and out, forcing air through the instrument to produce its sound.

A guitar is an instrument with a long neck and strings (usually six). It is held against the front of the body with one hand playing notes by pressing down on the frets of the neck and the other hand strumming the strings. Both the guitar and accordion are traditional instruments in Mexican culture.

Geography: Mexico

- Mexico is divided into 31 states and one federal district. Locate Mexico on a detailed classroom map. Identify the U.S. states that border Mexico as well as the Mexican states that border the U.S.
- Based on its location, describe what the landscape and climate might be like in Mexico.

North Carolina Essential Standards in Social Studies: G.1.2: Use globes and maps to locate land and water features.
The Papalote Project

The Papalote Project is a multidisciplinary arts initiative launched in the Charlotte area in 2012. The program, originated by local artist and advocate Rosalia Torres-Weiner, encourages children who are affected by deportation to express their feelings through the creation of colorful kites personalized with messages.

The Papalote Project has included a workshop facilitated at Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church and an exhibit at the Levine Museum of the New South. As a tribute to a deported relative, the kites incorporate a remnant of clothing that they left behind. The concept of the art installation is to simulate the kites in flight conveying that by attaching their emotions to the kites, they are released, and the children can begin to heal within a caring community.

“I am compelled by stories of my culture, my experiences and all that surrounds me. My art is the vehicle where I can share those influences and stories. The bold, bright, vibrant colors that have become the staple of my art are part of the narrative where those stories take a voice and a stage of their own. I use my creativity to express myself, and, equally important, to educate and give voice to untold narratives.”

-Rosalia Torres-Weiner

Meet the Company

Leslie Ann Giles is in her 10th season touring with Children’s Theatre of Charlotte! She is originally from Anderson, SC, and graduated from Winthrop University with a BA in Theatre Performance. She spent a year as an acting apprentice at Round House Theatre in MD before calling CTC her home. She won the 2011 MTA award for Outstanding Lead Actor (female) for her work with Stephen Seay Productions, and has been nominated several times for her roles with CTC. “Thank you to my ever supportive family, to Michael and Girlie for all their love, and to our wonderful audiences for making my dream a reality!” FOLLOW OUR ADVENTURES ON THE ROAD VIA TWITTER! @CTCTouring

Veda Covington is thrilled to be one of the newest members of the Resident Touring Company for the 2015-16 season. It has been a remarkable journey for her to make it to this level in her artistic career. Previous Children’s Theatre of Charlotte credits include; Balloonacy & Don’t Tell Me I Can’t Fly. Veda truly has a passion for performing, and believes that this opportunity will continue to help polish those skills that define her craft. She would like to thank those that have taken part in this process thus far, and is looking forward to the lasting impressions our company will make on the lives of each of our audiences.

Scott A. Miller is in his 4th season with CTC. He has been featured in The Emperor’s New Clothes, Interrupting Vanessa, Mike Mulligan, Spelling 2-5-5, A Commedia Christmas Carol, Hansel and Gretel, Too Many Frogs, The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, and Tales of Edgar Allan Poe, among others. Scott has also been on stage with many Charlotte theatre companies such as Actor’s Theatre of Charlotte, CAST, Queen City Theatre Company, Three Bone Theatre, and the Charlotte Shakespeare Festival. Originally from Newport, NY, Scott couldn’t be happier to call himself a transplant here and share his love of theatre with children and families of Charlotte and beyond!

Rahsheem Shabazz is best known for his role in the feature film Blood Done Sign My Name (Student #1) and the CBS television series Under the Dome (Jones). He has done numerous stage plays which include: Othello (Iago), A Raisin’ in the Sun (Walter Lee), Fame (Goody), A Soldiers Story (Private Anthony Smalls) and Stick Fly (Kent Levy). Rahsheem has been performing since he was 3 years old in New York City where he was born and raised. He is extremely excited to be back on the stage and performing with the Resident Touring Company.

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