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OLIVÉRio: A Brazilian Twist

Inspired by the novel by Charles Dickens

Book and lyrics by
KAREN ZACARÍAS

Music by
DEBORAH WICKS LA PUMA

Dramatic Publishing Company
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Book and lyrics by KAREN ZACARÍAS
Music by DEBORAH WICKS LA PUMA

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(OLIVÉRIO: A BRAZILIAN TWIST)

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OLIVÉRio: A Brazilian Twist was commissioned by and premiered at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts on Jan. 30, 2016.

CAST:

Oli Felicia Curry
Iemanja.....Rayanne Gonzales
Falcão Sasha Olinick
Zé Esquiva Arturo Soria
Nancí Erika Rose
Rosa Maria..... Donna Migliaccio
Sykes James Konicek
Oli Understudy.....Sakile Lyles
Falcão/Zé Esquiva/Sykes Understudy Ben Lurye
Iemanja/Nancí/Rosa Maria Understudy.....Natasha Gallop

PRODUCTION STAFF:

Director Juliette Carrillo
Assistant Director..... Harry Poster
Dramaturg Ken Cerniglia
Music Director Richard Miller
Choreography..... Sonia Pessoa
Capoeira Coach..... Efraim Silva
Scenic Designer Luciana Stecconi
Lighting Designer Colin K. Bills
Costume Designer.....Ivania Stack
Sound Designer..... Christopher Baine
Properties Artisan..... Tim Jones
Production Stage Manager.....Taryn Friend

OLIVÉRio: A Brazilian Twist

CHARACTERS

DIRECTOR/IEMANJA: goddess of the sea, also plays JUDGE.

ACTOR 1/ROSA MARIA: a fearful, rich woman.

ACTOR 2/FALCÃO: a charismatic con man.

ACTOR 3/SYKES: a smooth-talking, crooked, unredeemable policeman.

ACTOR 4/NANCI: a world-weary young woman.

ACTOR 5/ZÉ ESQUIVA: a crafty, sly, clever boy.

KID/OLI: a pure, innocent, kind and smart little girl.

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Chapter 5:	<i>Darkness Sets In</i>	The favela
Chapter 6:	<i>Justice Is (De)Served</i>	The courthouse
Chapter 7:	<i>A Vida Boa</i>	The apartment
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OLIVÉRio: A Brazilian Twist

PROLOGUE: DICKENS (RE)BOOTED

(The theatre. ACTORS 1-5 walk in.)

ACTOR 1. Uh-oh

ACTOR 2. What's the matter?

ACTOR 3. Guys—

ACTOR 4. What in the world is going on?

ACTOR 2. This isn't your costume.

ACTOR 3. That isn't yours.

ACTOR 5. What? Why do you always look at me? Oh wow.

ACTOR 1. Is this another prank?

ACTOR 3. Did you bleach our clothes?

ACTOR 5. Me? She does the laundry!

ACTOR 4. I'm sorry. I didn't do this.

ACTOR 1. Oh no. Look at the set!

ACTOR 3. That is not our set.

ACTOR 5. Oh look! Banana trees ...

ACTOR 4. The director! I'm sure she will explain everything.

DIRECTOR *(entering)*. All right, troupe. Wait a second ...
What is this?

ACTORS 1-5. Don't you know?

DIRECTOR. No! This isn't London!

ACTOR 5. It looks like ... Brazil.

ACTORS 1-5. Brazil?

(The musicians walk onstage to their places, or the ACTORS hear chords of music.)

DIRECTOR. Music?

ACTOR 1. Are we doing a musical now?

ACTOR 3. I won't dance.

ACTOR 2. I don't sing.

DIRECTOR. This is supposed to be *Oliver Twist*!

ACTORS 1-5. Exactly!

DIRECTOR. *Oliver Twist* takes place in London in the 1800s.

ACTORS 1-5. We know.

DIRECTOR. Our costumes are coats and hats and gloves.

ACTORS 1-5. We know.

DIRECTOR. What happened?

ACTORS 1-5. We don't know.

DIRECTOR. This is a disaster! Wait, where's the kid?

ACTOR 1. Oh, the little boy?

DIRECTOR. Yes, the boy who plays Oliver!

ACTOR 3. The little twerp told me he had to go to the orthodontist.

DIRECTOR. What? We have a show ... we have a ... *(She looks out and sees them for first time. Gasps.)* an audience.

Oh my. Who let the audience in already? *(To the audience.)*

Hello. Due to circumstances beyond my control, our reader's theatre performance of Charles Dickens' classic *Oliver Twist* will be cancelled. We have the wrong set. The wrong costumes. And no Oliver.

ACTOR 4. We worked so hard on this play. And now, nothing.

ACTOR 5. I knew this job was too good to be true.

ACTOR 1. This is nerve-wracking.

DIRECTOR. Actors.

ACTOR 3. This is why I hate children's theatre.

DIRECTOR. Actors.

ACTOR 2. Does this mean I won't get paid?

DIRECTOR. Actors! Stop whining. It's not my fault we can't do this play!

KID (*from the audience*). Excuse me? Excuse me! Why can't you do the play?

DIRECTOR. We don't have anyone to play Oliver.

KID. I can be Oliver.

ACTORS 1-5. You?

ACTOR 2. Can you act?

KID. I can play.

DIRECTOR. This is not fun and games!

ACTOR 4. I bet she can do it.

ACTOR 3. She can't play Oliver, she's a girl!

KID. Girls can do anything.

ACTOR 2. And if we cancel, we will have to give the ticket money back.

ACTOR 1. But can we still tell the story?

KID (*joining them onstage*). You know the story.

ACTOR 3. We can't improvise a musical. It's impossible.

KID. Sometimes the impossible is possible, don't you think?

DIRECTOR. I wish we didn't have to cancel, but *Oliver Twist* is the story of a poor orphan boy growing up in industrial England.

KID. People grow up poor in lots of places—

ACTOR 5. And there are lots of poor kids in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

ACTOR 1. I love how you say that.

ACTOR 5. Rio is a perfect setting. There are very rich people and really poor people. There are lots of street children trying to survive. But all people, rich or poor, all come together on the beach.

KID. I love the beach!

ACTORS 1-5. The beach ...

DIRECTOR. I love the beach too ...

ACTOR 5. *A praia.*

ALL. *A praia.*

ACTOR 5. And these costumes are what people wear on New Year's Eve in Rio. That night, people come to the beach, dressed in white to honor Iemanja.

(#a: "Iemanja")

(The ocean is created.)

KID. Who is that?

ACTOR 5. Iemanja is the goddess of the sea: the mother goddess. People ask her to grant wishes. She's very important in Brazil.

DIRECTOR. She's in charge?

KID. Just like you. You should play the goddess.

DIRECTOR. Me as Iemanja?

ACTOR 4. You like to give, and take away, and give again.

ACTOR 1. You run cold on the ends and warm in between.

ACTOR 2. You can gently bob a white sail—

ACTOR 3. Then crash, rage and wail—At your whim—

ACTOR 5. You're moody that way ...

KID. If you're open to the world ...

ALL (*except DIRECTOR*). The world opens up to you.

DIRECTOR. OK, let's do this!

CHAPTER ONE: NEW YEAR'S EVE

(The beach.)

(#1: “New Year’s Eve”)

DIRECTOR *(cont’d)*. Welcome to *OLIVÉRio: A Brazilian Twist!*

(KID exits to become OLI. The DIRECTOR has transformed into IEMANJA. The song starts to take over the bodies of the actors ... Brazil comes to life. A favela in the background, large apartments closer in, the beach. The floor is the swirly mosaic stone design of the Copacabana sidewalks.)

ACTOR 4.

SEE THE MOUNTAINS STANDING TALL

ACTOR 3.

A FAMOUS STATUE CALMLY WATCHES OVER ALL

ACTOR 1.

AND CRAWLING DOWN THE SIDES ARE WILD
JUNGLE FORESTS
IT’S NATURE’S OWN FLORIST

ACTOR 3.

AND REACHING UP TO MEET THEM ARE THE
SLUMS

IEMANJA.

THEY’RE CALLED?

ENSEMBLE.

FAVELAS

ACTOR 5.

THEY ARE COMMUNITIES.

ENSEMBLE.

NOSSA FAVELA

ACTOR 5.

A PRETTY WORD FOR SLUM IN PORTUGUESE

ACTOR 4.

NO, THEY DON'T HAVE MONEY TO CHOOSE
BUT THEIR HOMES ARE RICH WITH VIEWS

ACTOR 3.

AND SMALL AND SINEWY PASSAGEWAYS

IEMANJA.

AND COMING CLOSER IS THE STREET

ENSEMBLE.

A RÚA

IEMANJA.

HIGH RISE APARTMENTS LOOKING OVER ALL
WHO MEET

ENSEMBLE.

AH

IEMANJA.

COLD AIR CONDITIONING AND
DOORMEN AND WAITERS
AND FAST ELEVATORS
MOSAIC COBBLESTONES THAT LINE THE SAND
IT'S—

ENSEMBLE.
ZONA SUL

IEMANJA.
THE PLACE THE RICH CAN PLAY

ENSEMBLE.
EN ZONA SUL

IEMANJA.
IF YOU'VE GOT THE MONEY IT'S WHERE YOU
STAY
COPACABANA'S QUITE A PRICE
AND IPANEMA COSTS YOU TWICE
'CAUSE LIFE IS EASIER WITH REAIS

ENSEMBLE.
THEN FINALLY WE REACH THE HEART OF RIO

IEMANJA.
THE GOLDEN SAND
MY DOOR STEP: HOT AND BRIGHT

ENSEMBLE.
A PRAIA
THE BEACH
THE LOVE OF EVERY CARIOCA
HERE YOU'LL FIND BOTH RICH AND POOR

IEMANJA.
I WAVE AT THEM ALONG THE SHORE
Chapter one: New Year's Eve on the beach of Rio de Janeiro! And it's a party all for Iemanja. That's *me*! Every year, humans come asking for wishes.

ENSEMBLE.

COMING DRESSED IN WHITE
IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT
GODDESS OF THE SEA
PLEASE LISTEN TO ME

IEMANJA. But no matter what I do, humans always want: more.

ENSEMBLE.

PLEASE LISTEN TO MY PLEA!

(Music shifts to a percussive beat.)

FALCÃO.

I WANT MONEY
LOTS OF MONEY
HOW, I DO NOT CARE
GIVE ME MONEY
I NEED MONEY
TO COUNT, BUT NOT TO SHARE

ROSA MARIA.

I NEED SOMEONE I CAN COUNT ON
TO COOK AND CLEAN EACH DAY
A SERVANT TO DO MY HOUSEWORK
SO MY WORRIES FLOAT AWAY

ZÉ ESQUIVA.

LET ME FLOAT
LET ME GLIDE
THROUGH THE CROWDS AS I OUGHT
IF I STEAL THIS AND THAT
LET ME NOT GET CAUGHT

NANCI.

I AM LOST
UPON AN OPEN SHORE
GIVE ME A CHANCE
TO HOPE FOR SOMETHING MORE

SYKES.

DON'T LEAVE MY LIFE TO CHANCE
I'VE GOT TO HAVE THE POWER
GIVE ME THE CONTROL
TO MAKE ALL OTHERS COWER

FALCÃO (*overlapping with others*).

I WANT MONEY
LOTS OF MONEY
HOW, I DO NOT CARE
GIVE ME MONEY
I NEED MONEY
TO COUNT, BUT NOT TO SHARE ...

ROSA MARIA (*overlapping with others*).

I NEED SOMEONE I CAN COUNT ON
TO COOK AND CLEAN EACH DAY
A SERVANT TO DO MY HOUSEWORK
SO MY WORRIES FLOAT AWAY ...

ZÉ ESQUIVA (*overlapping with others*).

LET ME FLOAT
LET ME GLIDE
THROUGH THE CROWDS AS I OUGHT
IF I STEAL THIS AND THAT
LET ME NOT GET CAUGHT ...

NANCI (*overlapping with others*).

I AM LOST
UPON AN OPEN SHORE
GIVE ME A CHANCE
TO HOPE FOR SOMETHING MORE ...

SYKES (*overlapping with others*).

DON'T LEAVE MY LIFE TO CHANCE
I'VE GOT TO HAVE THE POWER
GIVE ME THE CONTROL
TO MAKE ALL OTHERS COWER ...

IEMANJA.

ENOUGH!

I CAN'T STAND TO HEAR YOU MOAN AND PLEAD
CRYING AND BEGGING

FOR THINGS YOU DON'T NEED

THAT'S NO WAY TO HONOR ME

I WILL SEND A WAVE

I WILL CRASH THE BEACH

WASH YOU ALL AWAY

THERE'S NO PLACE I CANNOT REACH

(Thunder and lightning. The ENSEMBLE retreats, ominously singing her theme. IEMANJA is having a meltdown. OLI enters.)

IEMANJA *(cont'd)*.

I WILL TWIST AND TURN

I WILL TWIST AND TURN

TWIST AND TURN

TWIST AND TURN

TWIST AND TURN

TWIST AND TURN

TWIST AND TURN ...

(OLI taps IEMANJA on the shoulder. The music stops abruptly.)

OLI. Excuse me?

IEMANJA. Arghh. I'm storming! What do you want?

OLI. But I'm not upset. And you are. So maybe I can help you.

IEMANJA. Who are you?

OLI. I'm Oliver ... rio. Oliverio. Esperanca Oliverio!

ENSEMBLE *(ad-lib)*. Clever! Very nice!, etc.

IEMANJA. Ah, Esperanca. Hope.

OLI. But people call me Oli.

IEMANJA. Where are your parents?

OLI. My parents are dead. I came by myself from all the way over there.

IEMANJA. An orphan coming all that way? Alone?

OLI. Well, first, I was sent to an ... orphanage. This is the interesting scar I got there from the beatings. Then I went to a ... workhouse, where my little hands sewed for fourteen hours a day. This is my thumb that got pricked every day. It's so strong now. Then I lived with an undertaker. This is a wrapped cinnamon candy he used to eat, but I was never allowed to try.

IEMANJA. Humans!

OLI. I'm a lucky girl with a piece of candy in my pocket. I'm saving it for a rainy day.

IEMANJA. How can you stand it?

OLI. Lots of kids do what I do. I see them: Crossing mountains, rivers, and deserts ... taking buses and trains ... to get here. Rio is a city of possibility with the biggest celebration in the world: *Carnaval*.

IEMANJA. *Carnaval!* That's a long time to survive on the streets alone.

OLI. But I made it here ... tonight ... to see Iemanja. Have you heard of her?

IEMANJA. I hear she's great. Is there something you want

from Iemanja? Sometimes she grants wishes.

OLI. There is one thing I want more than anything.