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Dramatic Publishing

A woman in a traditional Mexican folk costume, featuring a red and white blouse and a large, ornate red skirt with intricate lace patterns, is captured in a dance pose. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. In the background, a large, stylized skeleton figure is visible, holding a red rose. The overall scene is set against a dark background, creating a dramatic and festive atmosphere.

Perdida

*Book and lyrics by
Kathleen Cahill*

*Music by
Deborah Wicks La Puma*

“A fantastic update of an ancient story. ... The music was gorgeous and lush, almost operatic in scope but featuring traditional Spanish influences and syncopated rhythms.”

—DCMetroTheaterArts

Perdida

Musical. Book and lyrics by Kathleen Cahill.

Music by Deborah Wicks La Puma.

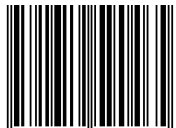
*Cast: 4m., 3w., 3 either gender. Perdida (the lost one) is an emotional tale full of spirits and magic set in pre-revolutionary Mexico when all-powerful dons ruled like kings. Inspired by Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, *Perdida* tells a story of passion, jealousy and redemption.*

*The Spirit of Time narrates a tale that takes place over a span of 18 years and also on a single night, *el Dia de los Muertos*, the Day of the Dead, when the groundless jealousy of a powerful don destroys a happy family. Only through the vision and courage of an abandoned child, *Perdida*, is all that was lost finally found again. **Area staging.***

Approximate running time: 105 minutes. Code: PM2.

Cover: Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., featuring (l-r) Ciaran Farley and Inez Dominguez del Corral. Photo: Chris Maddaloni. Cover design: Jeanette Alig-Sergel.

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DEBORAH WICKS LA PUMA



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Book and lyrics by KATHLEEN CAHILL
Music by DEBORAH WICKS LA PUMA

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(PERDIDA)

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Perdida received its first workshop in 1999 at TheatreWorks in Palo Alto, Calif. From 2001-2002 it received staged readings and dramaturgical development at Signature Theatre in Arlington, Va., and was showcased at the John F. Kennedy Center’s Page-to-Stage festival. In November 2014, it was produced at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C.

Cast:

TimeCiaran Farley
 Leopoldo Bobby Gallagher
 Doña Gabriela Dillon Greenberg
 Arturo J.P. Sisneros
 Gonzalo Seth Rosenke
 Carlota Maddy Belknap
 Perdida Inés Dominguez del Corral
 Rafael Phillip Da Costa
 Spirit of Life Angeleaza Anderson
 Spirit of Death Kira Burri
 Company Perdida Understudy Brianne Anderson

Production:

Director/Choreographer Elena Velasco
 Scenic/Lighting Designer Tom Donahue
 Costume Designer Kendra Rai
 Musical Director Amanda Bono
 Rehearsal Pianist Jonathan Kirby
 Lighting Designer Tom Donahue
 Fight Choreographer Robb Hunter
 Technical Director Mark J. Wujcik
 Executive Producer Patrick Tuite
 Producer Eleanor Holdridge
 Stage Manager Kelsey Murphy
 Assitant Stage Manager Emma Heck
 Wardrobe Tori Boutin, Madelyn Roura
 Light Board Operator John Paul Odle

Perdida

CHARACTERS

SPIRIT OF TIME: a balladeer, leader of the Conjunto.

LEOPOLDO: a wealthy landowner, mid-30s but ages to become an old man.

DOÑA GABRIELA: Leopoldos' wife, a great beauty, a great soul, 20s.

ARTURO: Leopoldo's best friend, also a wealthy landowner, mid-30s.

RAFAEL: ARTURO's handsome and spoiled son, a Romeo, about 20.

GONZALO: a servant, mid-40s.

CARLOTA: Gonzalo's wife, servant to Doña Gabriela, 40.

PERDIDA: a beautiful and brilliant girl of 18.

CONJUNTO: the onstage band and vocal ensemble: guitar, vihuela, guitarron, percussion/recorder, 2 violins, trumpet, harp.

DANCING SPIRITS

SETTING: A long time ago in Mexico.

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Perdida

ACT I

(A cemetery.

An eerie darkness. A rhythmic pulse. Primitive flute and drums.

Fantastic colored masks hang in the air like faces without bodies. The SPIRIT OF TIME appears. He raises his arms and the members of the CONJUNTO [band] climb out from behind the headstones. They are esqueletos [skeletons].)

(#1: “Song of Perdida”)

CONJUNTO.

WE HAVE COME TO TELL THE STORY OF PERDIDA
BORN BESIDE A GRAVE
UPON A STORMY NIGHT
NAMED FOR WHAT IS LOST
LITTLE PERDIDA
SHE MUST FIND HER WAY
AT ANY COST
THERE’S A MYSTERY TO POBRE PERDIDA
WHO WAS BORN TO THE RICH AND WELL BRED
IN A MOMENT WHEN THE SPRITS WERE LIST’NING
FOR SHE WAS BORN ON THE DAY OF THE DEAD

TIME. *Es El Día de los Muertos.* The Day of the Dead. A party in a cemetery. A night when the present welcomes the past, the living and the dead dance in each others arms, dust speaks and bones sing. And nothing is forgotten. Tonight the spirits fill every space ...

(Two DANCING SPIRITS with tails appear, masked.)

TIME *(cont'd)*. And I, Spirit of Time, who can start your heart beating and stop it when I choose ... Tonight, I am your friend. For tonight we are all together, all the possibilities, all the wishes, all the secrets. All on this one night.

WE ARE DANCING WITH THE DEAD
WE ARE DANCING IN THE LIGHT
COME JOIN THE SPIRITS EVERYWHERE
COME AND DANCE WITH THEM TONIGHT

CONJUNTO.

WE ARE DANCING WITH THE DEAD
WE ARE DANCING IN THE LIGHT
COME JOIN THE SPIRITS EVERYWHERE
COME AND DANCE WITH THEM TONIGHT

(The people of the play step out from behind TIME: LEOPOLDO and DOÑA GABRIELA; ARTURO and RAFAEL; GONZALO and CARLOTA; finally, PERDIDA, who wears a golden amulet around her neck. Everyone is masked.)

TIME.

WE ARE ON THE WHEEL OF LIFE
IT HAS MADE US WHAT WE ARE
AND ALL OUR LIFE IS BUT A DREAM
AS WE CIRCLE 'ROUND A STAR

ALL.

WE ARE ON THE WHEEL OF LIFE
IT HAS MADE US WHAT WE ARE
AND ALL OUR LIFE IS BUT A DREAM
AS WE CIRCLE 'ROUND A STAR

(Everyone dances. PERDIDA and RAFAEL are flirting.)

WOMEN.

DANCE WITH THE ANGELS
THE ONES THAT YOU ADORE

MEN.

BAILA CON LOS MUERTOS
THE ONES WHO ARE NO MORE

WOMEN.

DANCE WITH THE ANGELS
WHO WAIT FOR US ABOVE

MEN.

BAILA CON LOS MUERTOS
AND GIVE THEM ALL YOUR LOVE

*(The SPIRITS gesture towards PERDIDA, and her amulet
lights up.)*

ALL.

WE HAVE COME TO TELL THE STORY OF PERDIDA
BORN BESIDE A GRAVE
UPON A STORMY NIGHT
NAMED FOR WHAT IS LOST
LITTLE PERDIDA
SHE MUST FIND HER WAY
AT ANY COST

THERE'S A MYSTERY TO POBRE PERDIDA
AND A FAM'LY DISTORTED BY SINS
BUT TO TELL YOU ALL THE REST OF THE STORY
WE MUST GO BACK WHERE THE STORY BEGINS

CONJUNTO.

PERDIDA
PERDIDA

ALL.

PERDIDA

(PERDIDA and RAFAEL disappear.)

TIME. I give you Perdida's father, Leopoldo Villanueva Azcarraga-Ballesteros.

(LEOPOLDO steps forward and removes his mask.)

TIME *(cont'd)*. A man who has everything. Wealth, power and a beautiful wife—Perdida's mother, Doña Maria Gabriela Hernandez-Ponce Altamirano de Villaueva-Ballesteros.

(GABRIELA steps forward and removes her mask. She is pregnant. She is wearing the golden amulet.

LEOPOLDO goes to GABRIELA. She takes his arm. They are deeply in love.)

TIME *(cont'd)*. And his good and true friend visiting from the other side of the Rio Grande—Don Jorge Arturo Francoestrada Gonzalez-Luna.

(ARTURO steps forward. He removes his mask.)

TIME *(cont'd)*. Intelligent and loyal servants—Gonzalo, a simple man, an ordinary man, under the eye of the sun, as ordinary as snow in Mexico.

(GONZALO steps forward and removes his mask.)

TIME *(cont'd)*. And his wife Carlota, who is said to be *un poquito hechizera*—a woman who talks with the spirits.

(CARLOTA steps forward and removes her mask. It is the mask of an old woman. But we see now that she's young. She is the only one who sees the SPIRITS.)

GABRIELA. The baby kicked me!

CARLOTA. She's strong.

LEOPOLDO. She?

CARLOTA. Your daughter.

LEOPOLDO. My son.

GABRIELA. Carlota can see into the future. She can see the invisible.

(In a vision, CARLOTA sees PERDIDA dancing alone in a beam of light.)

LEOPOLDO. Peasant superstitions, Gabriela.

CARLOTA. I see her beautiful as a rose ... dancing in a garden. And—

(The SPIRITS start to torment PERDIDA, who struggles as they take her away. CARLOTA doesn't want to say what she sees.)

LEOPOLDO. What else, Carlota? Nothing more to say? No more predictions?

CARLOTA. ... No, *Señor*.

LEOPOLDO. So you don't see anything, after all?

(GONZALO pushes the wine jug on his wife.)

GONZALO. She sees that you need more wine!

LEOPOLDO. I guess we will just have to wait for what the future brings.

ARTURO. A toast then. To both of you. And to your beloved son. Or daughter.

LEOPOLDO. And to your *amigo*. You have brought us good luck.

GABRIELA. Friendship and love make all things possible.

CARLOTA (*aside to GONZALO*). They could not conceive until his visit ...

GONZALO (*pause*). So?

CARLOTA (*aside to GONZALO*). He's been here for nine months.

GONZALO (*little pause*). So? He lost his wife. He doesn't want to go home to an empty bed.

LEOPOLDO (*joking to ARTURO*). As long as my child doesn't look like you, eh.

GABRIELA. ¡Esposo!

(They all laugh.)

LEOPOLDO (*to ARTURO*). Did you see the necklace I gave my wife? It's pure gold. I brought the finest jeweler in the world here to design it.

ARTURO. A beautiful necklace worn by a beautiful woman.

GABRIELA. And when our daughter is born, I will give it to her, who is made of love. Arturo, you should have brought your little boy with you. We wanted so much to meet Rafael.

ARTURO. My wife sacrificed her life to give me my son ... and I've never known what to do with him.

CARLOTA (*aside to GONZALO*). He resents his son.

GONZALO. Is that your business?

LEOPOLDO. You should marry again, Arturo. A mother for your son, and happiness for you.

ARTURO. I couldn't go through that again.

LEOPOLDO. Gabriela will convince you to marry again. It's impossible to resist her.

(ARTURO smiles at GABRIELA; she returns it. LEOPOLDO notices the moment between them. There is the briefest moment of awkwardness. GABRIELA goes to LEOPOLDO.)

LEOPOLDO (*cont'd*). In the meantime, I drink to your thick stubborn head.

GABRIELA. And your tender heart.

ARTURO. And to you, Gabriela. May you—May you— (*He stops.*)

LEOPOLDO. *¿Que?*

ARTURO. *Nada.* (*Raises his glass.*) *¡Salud!*

ALL. *¡Salud!*

LEOPOLDO. More wine! Gonzalo!

GABRIELA. Come Carlota, let's see about that beautiful cake you made for us.

(GABRIELA and CARLOTA exit.)

ARTURO. Things were a lot different when we were young men, eh Leo? Before wives, and children.

LEOPOLDO. You mean when we chased the girls, and we didn't give a thought to the future ...

(#2: “Every Lovely Girl”)

LEOPOLDO (*cont'd*).

EVERY LOVELY GIRL
IS THE GIRL OF YOUR LIFE
WHEN SHE LOOKS AT YOU
IT'S A PAIN LIKE A KNIFE
EVERY LOVELY GIRL
LEAVES A SPOT ON YOUR HEART AS YOU
WAVE GOODBYE
THOUGH SHE'LL CRY
YOU'VE GOT YOUR EYE ON
THE NEXT LOVELY GIRL

ARTURO.

EVERY LOVELY GIRL
HAS A GLOW OF HER OWN
EVERY LOVELY GIRL
IS LIKE NO GIRL YOU'VE KNOWN
EVERY LOVELY GIRL
IS A PROMISE OF ECSTASY
CURLED IN BED
TWO MAKES THREE
THEN YOU UNCURL
TO THE NEXT LOVELY GIRL

LEOPOLDO & ARTURO.

HERE'S TO BEAUTIES
THAT WE LOVED BY THE SEA
HERE'S TO BEAUTIES
THAT WE LOVED 'NEATH A TREE
HERE'S TO BEAUTIES
THAT WE'LL NEVER FORGET

ARTURO.

AND TO ALL THE ONES

CONJUNTO.

¡EPAH!

LEOPOLDO.

THAT WE NEVER MET

CONJUNTO.

¡EPAH!

ARTURO.

HERE'S TO ALL THE GIRLS

CONJUNTO.

¡EPAH!

LEOPOLDO & ARTURO.
THAT WE NEVER MET

LEOPOLDO. But then you met Elena and I met Gabriela and everything changed.

WHEN YOU MEET A GIRL
WHO PUTS ALL GIRLS TO SHAME
WHEN YOU LOOK AT HER
YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT THE SAME
WHEN SHE LOOKS AT YOU
THERE'S JUST ONE THING TO DO
YOU'RE ALL THROUGH
CHASING THE GIRLS
FIN'LY YOU FOUND HER
YOUR OWN LOVELY GIRL

CONJUNTO.
HERE'S TO BEAUTIES
THAT WE LOVED BY THE SEA
HERE'S TO BEAUTIES
THAT WE LOVED 'NEATH A TREE
HERE'S TO BEAUTIES
THAT WERE TENDER AND SWEET

ARTURO (*counterpoint*).
SHE WAS ALL THE WORLD TO ME
HOW COULD SHE LEAVE ME ALL ALONE?

LEOPOLDO (*counterpoint*).
WHEN YOU MEET A GIRL
WHO PUTS ALL GIRLS TO SHAME
WHEN YOU LOOK AT HER
YOU KNOW YOU'RE NOT THE SAME
WHEN SHE LOOKS AT YOU
THERE'S JUST ONE THING TO DO

CONJUNTO.

AND TO ALL THE ONES

LEOPOLDO.

¡EPAH!

CONJUNTO.

THAT WE'LL NEVER MEET

LEOPOLDO.

¡EPAH!

CONJUNTO.

AND TO THE FUN

LEOPOLDO.

¡EPAH!

LEOPOLDO & CONJUNTO.

THAT WE LEFT UNDONE
AND TO DAYS GONE PAST
THAT WENT BY SO FAST

(LEOPOLDO sits down. ARTURO remains standing. One of the SPIRITS enters with more wine. He pours the wine and stands beside LEOPOLDO as if waiting for orders.)

ARTURO. Leopoldo ...

LEOPOLDO. Why so formal all of a sudden? Sit down, *amigo*.

ARTURO. You know that your friendship means more to me than I can say.

LEOPOLDO. Now sit down, relax. I'll fill your glass.

(The SPIRIT pours.)

LEOPOLDO (*cont'd*). My wife will be very unhappy with me if I don't attend to your comfort and happiness.

ARTURO. She has made me feel more than welcome.

LEOPOLDO. Will you sit down, Arturo?

ARTURO. Thank you for your hospitality.

LEOPOLDO. Thank me when you go, not now.

ARTURO. I am going now.

LEOPOLDO. You're staying until our child is born.

ARTURO. I can't do that.

LEOPOLDO. I insist.

ARTURO. I said I can't stay.

LEOPOLDO. What is this sudden change? I don't understand.

ARTURO. I have my reasons. Don't press me.

(LEOPOLDO feels insulted. The SPIRIT looks at him.)

LEOPOLDO (*to the SPIRIT*). Don't press him?

(The SPIRIT shakes his head sympathetically.)

LEOPOLDO (*cont'd*). He can't stay. That's all he says. He gives no reasons?

(The SPIRIT offers a supportive glass of wine, which LEOPOLDO takes.)

LEOPOLDO (*cont'd*). What am I supposed to think?

(GABRIELA and CARLOTA return with a big cake.)

GABRIELA. Here we are. Was there ever such a cake!

LEOPOLDO (*to GABRIELA*). Take it away. He's leaving.

GABRIELA. Leaving?