

“Celestina”



Fernando de Rojas

Direction: José Luis Gómez

Teatro de La Abadía and Compañía Nacional de Teatro
Clásico

Celestina is a pagan priestess who practises in the midst of the confessional absolutism of Spain in the time of Fernando de Rojas.

This bearded old woman makes up a poetic and mythical figure who transcends the realm of gender identity.

The passionate affair between Melibea and Calisto grows due to the power of witchcraft, an undisputed practice and belief in the society in which "La Celestina" is set.

The contention between impetuous love and sexual desire make this masterpiece throb with corrosive vigour.

The work presents a simple plot, but tells a story that is marvellously down-to-earth and linguistically beautiful.

It also encapsulates the dark background of violence against Jews, Moors and free spirits that casts a long shadow over Spain's history.

This unexpected struggle of egos culminates in the most sublime lament in Spanish literature.

Nobody has portrayed the common man with such psychological depth as Fernando de Rojas.

Celestina is a procuress in the Moorish tradition, one who envelops the stage with the voice of the south.

José Luis Gómez and Brenda Escobedo, April 2016

Team

<u>Direction:</u>	José Luis Gómez
<u>Adaptation for the stage:</u>	José Luis Gómez and Brenda Escobedo
<u>Director's assistants:</u>	Carlota Ferrer and Andrea Delicado
<u>Stage setting:</u>	Alejandro Andújar and José Luis Gómez
<u>Costumes:</u>	Alejandro Andújar and Carmen Mancebo
<u>Characterisation:</u>	Lupe Montero and Sara Álvarez
<u>Lighting:</u>	Juan Gómez-Cornejo
<u>Music:</u>	Eduardo Aguirre de Cárcer
<u>Background sound:</u>	Based on fieldwork carried out by José María Sicilia
<u>Cast:</u>	Marta Belmonte, Diana Bernedo, Miguel Cubero, Palmira Ferrer, José Luis Gómez, Chete Lera, Nerea Moreno, Inma Nieto, Raúl Prieto, José Luis Torrijo
<u>A production by:</u>	Teatro de La Abadía and Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico

Link to complete recording:
<https://vimeo.com/181956449>
Password: abICE2014

Introduction

After his re-encounter with Cervantes' *Interludes* to celebrate the Twentieth Anniversary of La Abadía and the exciting project known as “Cómicos de la lengua” (Actors of the Tongue) implemented by the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE), the man of theatre and academic, José Luis Gómez, now tackles one of the greatest spoken texts in the Spanish language, *Celestina*. **“A crucial work for the development and blossoming of our literature and language”**, in the words of Juan Goytisolo.

In addition to the stage direction, Gómez takes on the role of the old procuress.

This is a story of love and death par excellence, a tale of youth and old age, of the clash between the comfortably off and the poorer classes, all set within a society obsessed with “purity of blood”, one in which a viciously corrupt climate reigns supreme.

This extensive play, referred to as a “comedy” in its original version although later extended and re-christened as a “tragic-comedy”, presents the raunchy ups-and-downs in the relationships between Calisto, of noble lineage, and Melibea, of high and extremely pure blood, the sole heiress of Pleberio, as well as her servants and the “wicked and cunning woman”, Celestina.

One of the peculiar characteristics of *Celestina*, as pointed out by Francisco Rico, is that the author, Fernando de Rojas, does not follow the usual custom of applying a humorous register to the characters of low social status, but grants them an in-depth treatment that was quite unprecedented until a much later period in Western literature.

Another of the appealing aspects of *Celestina* resides in its curious hybrid format, somewhere between a narrative and a play, not to mention the treasure-trove of traditional proverbs it contains and, of course, the beauty of its language.

“If it were not for *Don Quixote*, we would be dealing with the most important work of fiction in Spanish literature”

Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo



Point of Departure

Juan Goytisolo believes that *Celestina* was the first text of its age that was written without the protective arch of divinity. The only laws that govern the realm of noise and fury that constitutes this text are the **sovereignty of sexual pleasure and the power of money**. Subject to unfettered egotism and operating within a realm in which established values have become a question of commerce, the characters in *La Celestina* only seek immediate profit.

Viewed from this perspective of pessimism and clarity, we believe that *Celestina*, the tragi-comedy by Fernando de Rojas, is extraordinarily relevant today. The importance of restaging a classic work — as the National Classical Theatre Company (CNTC) does each season— is not solely based on re-experiencing the history of our theatre tradition, but listening to the development of our language, revisiting the changes we have undergone and making up for our social conflicts. It is not simply an exercise in theatrical historiography, but a question of **reliving a magical experience in which a text from the past is able to talk to us about the present... and better than any other work too**. This magical dimension can be found in *Celestina*.

The tragic sensation that this work has projected to the present day does not reside so much in the tale of unlucky love between two young lovers Calisto and Melibea, but (to paraphrase José Antonio Maravall) in the **profound drama of Man battling against estrangement**, a process that has been witnessed since the Renaissance down to the present day. Individualism in the modern era has awakened Man's desire to become the master of his own destiny, to ensure a degree of autonomy in his personal life, and this is what Rojas' characters strive to achieve. I would venture that it is only now that the consequences of this excessively individualistic behaviour have been reaped.

Celestina weaves a plot in which customs, relationships and feelings are equally important to all —masters and servants, prostitutes and ladies, parents and children, matchmakers and gentlemen, men and women, young and old— without subjecting

human profundity to any social condition. And it is through this dimension achieved by the characters that the play becomes a **complex urban intrigue** in which tensions, interests and complicities circulate throughout the city streets, entwining the public and private spheres. *Celestina* is a tragi-comedy that embodies all human experience relating to society. And this society presents two sides of the same coin: Pleberio and Celestina.

On the one hand, Pleberio believes in a world based on order; he believes in the man of law and reason and a society of elevated values and virtue. On the other, Celestina places her trust in chaos; she knows how egotistical Man is and just how

strong his whimsical desire can be. She believes in a society based on vice and commerce. The two sides of this society are reflected in words: for Pleberio, words

“*Celestina* is a twilight of literary gods and an illuminating dawn of other deities”

Américo Castro



bring us freedom, cleanse and elevate the human soul; for Celestina words shackle us, hurt us and drag us down to the realm of base instinct. Dramatically, the same words depict two opposing worlds. A modern staging of *Celestina* must make this double dimension visible.

This work is a play that is written on stage. **The dramatic action takes place in movement: meandering, whispering, doubting, working.** The plot thickens whilst all of the characters, irrespective of their social status, are given voice, time and space to show their most profoundly human dimension. The theatrical intrigue takes the form of its own movement. In order to show the play's true dimension the stage director simply needs to know how to weave desires with an enchanted yarn; he simply needs to act as a matchmaker, a “celestina”.

José Luis Gómez, Summer 2015

“This maiden is bait on the hook, meat set
out for the vultures, and those who come will pay dearly
for their share”

Pármeno in “Celestina”



What the critics said...

"Impressively characterised, Gómez has created his role with care and delicacy"
ABC

"José Luis Gómez stars in, directs and stages a version of *Celestina* that has an excellent cast. (...) The great challenge, and high stakes too: to play Celestina. (...) Gómez's acting tour de force is undeniable, and that's no surprise"

El País - Babelia

"The most laudable aspect is the intricate work of an actor who focuses on every gestural detail, not to mention feminine expressiveness, of a somewhat gruff, not to mention coarse, character. (...) The most attractive dimension of such an ambitious project is the linguistic exercise, the language dissertation applied to the stage. With regard to the diction and vocalisation of such an intricate text, the entire cast passes the test with honours. And I believe this is where Gómez's mastery truly shines through"

El Mundo



"Contrary to what normally happens, the result has far exceeded the expectation generated. And not only due to the stature of José Luis Gómez, who creates a majestic and unforgettable Celestina, but because of the whole cast, which manages to achieve absolute perfection"

diariocrítico.com

"And what a pleasure, by the way, what great work from La Abadía, from the great José Luis Gómez, who tackles this superb and extremely complex text. (...) The stage, alive, crackling like the embers of a fire for an

auto-de-fe; the verse, pure presentiment, based on a text that has been closely pored over; the characters, like souls captured by the devil; the actors, and Don José Luis, a majestic procuress, one who plumbs the depths like an anchor, giant with a capital 'g', with her Picasso-like dud eye and silvery tongue clamouring in the middle of a sandy desert"

Diario La Rioja

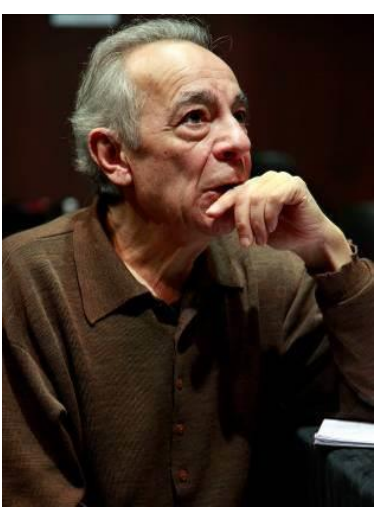
"There are numerous moments of theatrical splendour in this staging, whilst the switch-overs are well worked, the text flows with clarity and pace and there are some truly brilliant scenes (the banquet scene or the scene in Areúsa's house)"

El Heraldo de Aragón

"Managing to bring this fascinating cathedral of words, this marvel of the our language to the stage with such clarity and brilliance; extracting this play from the novel without losing any of its beauty, whilst making it resound with well-paced, attentive, delicate and lively verse due to the great performances of the entire cast... these are just some of the many achievements of this *Celestina* created by José Luis Gómez"

El Periódico de Aragón

José Luis Gómez



A man of theatre who has received numerous distinctions throughout his career—including the Spanish **National Theatre Award**— and a **member of the Royal Spanish Academy**. José Luis Gómez is the founding director of La Abadía.

As an actor and stage director he **trained** in Germany at the Institute of Dramatic Art of Westphalia and subsequently in Paris (under Jacques Lecoq).

Upon his return to Spain, his first projects included the following: *A Report to an Academy* by Kafka; *Kaspar* by Handke; and *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* by Brecht.

After he won an award in **Cannes** for his lead performance in the film, *Pascual Duarte* by Ricardo Franco, he worked with filmmakers such as Armiñán, Bollaín, Brassó, Camino, Chávarri, Gutiérrez Aragón, De la Iglesia, Losey, Miró, Saura and Suárez.

In 1978 he assumed **direction of the Centro Dramático Nacional (CDN)** alongside Nuria Espert and Ramón Tamayo and, two years later, of the **Teatro Español**. His stage productions from this period include the following: *La velada en Benicarló* (*Evening in Benicarló*) by Manuel Azaña and *La vida es sueño* (*Life's a Dream*) by Calderón de la Barca.

His appearance as the lead in *Oedipus Rex*, directed by Stravros Doufexis, and *Juicio al padre* (*Trial of the Father*) by Kafka marked his return to his private vocation. He also directed and produced *Bodas de sangre* (*Blood Weddings*) by Lorca, *¡Ay, Carmela!* and *Lope de Aguirre, traidor* (*Lope de Aguirre, Traitor*) by Sanchis Sinisterra and, returning to the CDN, *Azaña, una pasión española* (*Azaña, a Spanish Passion*).

In 1992 he directed *Life's a Dream* at the Théâtre de l'Odéon and, the following year, *Carmen* at the Opéra de la Bastille, both in Paris.

Since then he has focused all his energies on the conception, management and direction of the **Teatro de La Abadía**, where all of the preoccupations that have characterised his career have come together: the importance of words and the body, our legacy and the search for new languages, creation and ongoing training.

His most recent **productions include the following**:

- *Celestina* by Fernando de Rojas (as an actor and director, La Abadía / Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico);
- *Interludes* by Miguel de Cervantes (stage direction, La Abadía);
- The conception and direction of the program “Cómicos de la lengua” (RAE)
- *The Little Prince* by Saint-Exupéry, directed by Roberto Ciulli (as an actor, La Abadía);
- *Grooming* by Paco Bezerra (stage direction, La Abadía);
- *La piel que habito* (*The Skin I Live In*), a film by Pedro Almodóvar;
- *Endgame* by Beckett, directed by Krystian Lupa (as an actor, La Abadía);
- *Todo lo que tú quieras* (*Anything You Want*), a film by Achero Mañas;
- *Los abrazos rotos* (*Broken Embraces*), a film by Pedro Almodóvar;
- *Simon Boccanegra* by Verdi (direction, Liceu / Grand Théâtre in Geneva);
- *La paz perpetua* (*Perpetual Peace*) by Juan Mayorga (direction, Centro Dramático Nacional / La Abadía);
- *Play Strindberg* by Dürrenmatt, directed by Georges Lavaudant (as an actor, La Abadía);
- *Goya's Ghosts*, a film by Milos Forman;
- *A Report to an Academy* by Kafka (as an actor and director, La Abadía).

In addition to the **awards** already mentioned, he has been presented the following, amongst others: the Spanish Culture Ministry's Gold Medal for Merit in the Fine Arts; the Croix de Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres, granted by the Minister of Culture of the French Republic; and the Knight's Cross of the Order of Merit of the German Federal Republic, granted by the President of the German Federal Republic.

Team

Brenda Escobedo (stage adaptation alongside J.L. Gómez)

Brenda Escobedo Aymerich (Mexico D.F. 1978). Writer and playwright. She graduated in philology (Latin American Literature) at the Universidad Iberoamericana, specialising in dramatic literature. She has a Master's Degree in the History of the Theatre from the University of Alcalá.

She has worked as a Senior lecturer in Drama Theory, Isabelline Theatre, European Literature of the Twentieth Century and Latin American Literature at Universidad Iberoamericana (México D.F.).

Since 2011 she has worked with the Teatro de La Abadía producing scripts and pieces for the theatre. She was a playwright and coordinator on the project known as "Cómicos de la lengua," directed by the academic, José Luis Gómez, which marked the Third Centenary of the Spanish Royal Academy (RAE).

Alejandro Andújar

(Stage setting, alongside J.L. Gómez, and costumes, alongside Carmen Mancebo)

A Fine Arts Graduate from the Complutense University in Madrid and Graduate in Stage Design from the Royal Higher School for the Dramatic Arts. Recipient of a certificate of Research Proficiency from the Architecture School at the Polytechnic University of Madrid. Recipient of grants from the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Munich, the José Estruch Foundation, the Union of Theatres of Europe (UTE) and Patrimonio Nacional, Palacio Real, Sastrería Histórica.



At La Abadía he has designed the stage sets and costumes for the following productions: *En la luna (On the Moon)*, text and direction by Alfredo Sanzol; *Oedipus Rex* by Sophocles, also directed by Sanzol; and the stage concert by Luis Delgado, *El jardín secreto (The secret Garden)*. He was responsible for the costume design in *The Caretaker* by Harold Pinter (staging by Carles Alfaro).

With José Luis Gómez he worked on the opera *Simon Boccanegra* (Gran Teatre del Liceu / Grand Théâtre in Geneva) and *La paz perpetua (Perpetual Peace)* by Juan Mayorga (Centro Dramático Nacional).

Amongst his work for the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico we might highlight *Life's a Dream* and *La verdad sospechosa (Suspect Truth)*, both directed by Helena Pimenta.

He has also worked with directors such as Josep Maria Flotats, Lluís Pasqual, Juan Carlos Pérez de la Fuente and, on a frequent basis, Gerardo Vera.

Lupe Montero and Sara Álvarez (characterisation)

Montero has worked in hairdressing, hairpiece design and make-up at the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico (from 1991 to 1999) and the Teatro Real (between 1999 and the present day). In the cinema she has worked on films such as *Truman, Palmeras en la nieve (Palm Trees in the Snow)* and the forthcoming Pedro Almodóvar film *Silencio (Silence)*, as well as on Spanish television series such as *Turno de oficio* and *Los misterios de Laura (The Mysteries of Laura)*. She also imparts classes on hairdressing and the history of hairdressing at the Centro de Tecnología Teatral.

Álvarez has also worked on the characterisation team at the Teatro Real and has created numerous make-up and hair designs for national theatre companies and private production companies, working alongside directors such as Miguel del Arco, Andrés Lima, Tomaž Pandur, Mariano de Paco, Juan Carlos Pérez de la Fuente, Eduardo Vasco and Gerardo Vera. She has also worked on collaborative projects within the fields of advertising, photography and television.

Juan Gómez-Cornejo (Lighting)

He has worked with Teatro de La Abadía since it was founded on different productions alongside José Luis Gómez —*Grooming* by Paco Bezerra, *Tableau of Avarice, Lust and Death* by Valle-Inclán, *Interludes* by Cervantes— as well on productions by guest directors (*Faust, Twelfth Night* and *Santiago de Cuba y cierra España*).

Among his most recent work, we might mention the following productions: *Platonov*, directed by Gerardo Vera for Centro Dramático Nacional; *Hamlet* and *Fall of the Gods* for Las Naves del Matadero Madrid; *Medea* for the Festival of Mérida, directed by Tomâz Pandur; *Woyzeck*, directed by Gerardo Vera for Centro Dramático Nacional; *All My Sons* by Arthur Miller, directed by Claudio Tolcachir; *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* for the Staatsballet in Berlin, directed by Tomâz Pandur; *A Streetcar Named Desire* by Tennessee Williams, directed by Mario Gas; *The Magic Flute* by Mozart, directed by Sergio Renán for the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires; and a long list of other works.

Eduardo Aguirre de Cárcer (Music)

For many years he has worked with and formed part of groups devoted to historical music, such as Los Músicos de Urueña, Malebolge Consort, La Reverencia, Locus Musicus, Veneranda Dies, Hexacordo, and the historical dance company, Esquivel.

Within the realm of folk and traditional music, he has played in various different groups. He has also shared the stage with flamenco artists of the stature of David Lagos, Jesús Méndez, Santiago Lara and Mercedes Ruiz.

He has specialised in music for the stage, as a performer, composer and musical director, creating and performing music for productions staged by La Abadía

(*Celestina*, *Interludes*), and by the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico (*The Tableau of Marvels* by Cervantes, *Journey to Parnassus*, *Romances of El Cid*, *The Mayor of Zalamea*, *El perro del hortelano* / *The Dog in the Manger*), by the CDN (*Dracula*), by his own company, Tigre Teatro (*The Man Who Would be King*), and by other companies, including titles such as *La familia interrumpida*, *Waiting for Godot*, *A Slight Ache*, *Safronia* and *Sísifo B*, with directors such as José Luis Gómez, Gustavo Tambascio, Joan Font, Eduardo Vasco, Francisco López, Juan Codina, Ignacio García May, Pilar Valenciano, Iñaki Rikarte and José Padilla.

She has been a director's assistant for work such as *L'elisir d'amore*, *Turandot*, *La fille du regiment*, *Die Zauberflöte*, *Don Giovanni*, *Rigoletto*, *Il barbiere di Siviglia*, *L'Ottavia restituita al trono*, *El diluvio de Noé* and *The Jungle Book*, with directors such as Gustavo Tambascio, Francisco López, Alejandro Chacón, Javier Hernández and Alessandra Panzavolta.

“We take our pleasure and take our ease; few see old age”

Elicia in “*Celestina*”



Actors



Marta Belmonte (Melibea)

Trained at Col·legi del Teatre, she has taken part in projects such as *Juicio a Don Juan (Don Juan On Trial)* (directed by Didier Otaola), presented at the Almagro Off Festival; *The Cenci* (directed by Sonia Sebastián) at the Teatro Español; the laboratory *Los pecados de Shakespeare (Sin in Shakespeare)* (directed by Tamzin Townsend). On Spanish television she has appeared in series such as *Isabel* and *Gran Reserva*, amongst others. In the cinema she has appeared in recent films such as *Fuera de foco* (directed by Esteban Ciudad and José Manuel Montes) and *Puenting* (directed by Bibiana Monje).



Diana Bernedo (Lucrecia)

She is currently on tour in *Interludes*, produced by La Abadía. She has worked for the following theatre companies: Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico in *In Life Everything Is Truth and Falsehood* by Pedro Calderón de la Barca, directed by Ernesto Caballero; the Compañía Siglo XXI in *Morir pensando matar* by Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla (directed by Ernesto Caballero); La Fura dels Baus in *Degustación de Titus Andronicus* by W. Shakespeare (directed by Pep Gatell); Rajatabla Producciones in *Entre bobos anda el juego* by Francisco de Rojas Zorrilla (directed by Antonio Castro); the CDN in *Doña Perfecta* (directed by Ernesto Caballero); and the Teatro Real, taking part in various operas.



Miguel Cubero (Pármeno)

He has been linked to La Abadía since its very beginning. He belongs to the first generation of actors who emerged from La Abadía and took part in legendary productions such as *Tableau of Avarice, Lust and Death, Interludes* and *Baraja del rey don Pedro*, all three directed by José Luis Gómez; *Mr. Puntilla and His Man Matti* (directed by Rosario Ruiz Rodgers); *The Merchant of Venice* (directed by Hansgünther Heyme); and *Garcilaso, el cortesano* (directed by Carlos Aladro).

As a stable member of the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, he has worked on numerous productions, including the following: *The Mayor of Zalamea, White Hands Do Not Offend, Love After Death, ¿De cuándo acá nos vino? / How Did This Happen to Us?* (Lope de Vega), *None Beneath the King, Don Gil of the Green Breeches, La entretenida / The Diversion*.

His latest projects at La Abadía have been as the director of *The Dreams of My Cousin Aurelia and Other Unfinished Plays* by Lorca, and as an actor in *The Café*, by Fassbinder/Goldoni, under the direction of Dan Jemmett.



Palmira Ferrer (Alisa)

At La Abadía she has taken part in the following productions: *Mr. Puntilla and His Man Matti* (directed by Rosario Ruiz Rodgers); *Faust* (directed by Götz Loepelmann), *The Art of Comedy* (directed by Carles Alfaro); *En la luna/On the Moon* (directed by Alfredo Sanzol) and *Interludes* (directed by José Luis Gómez).

She has worked on musicals such as *Saturday Night Fever* and *High School Musical* and on productions such as *The House of*

Bernarda Alba (directed by Amelia Ochandiano), *Doña Rosita the Spinster* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (both directed by Miguel Narros), *Don Juan Tenorio* (directed by Maurizio Scaparro), *Internautas* (directed by Antonio Muñoz), *Hora de visita / Visiting Time* (directed by José Luis Alonso de Santos) and *The Miser* (directed by Jorge Lavelli).



Chete Lera (Pleberio)

This is the third time he has worked with La Abadía, following *Castillos en el aire / Castles in the Air* by Fermín Cabal (directed by J.L. Gómez) and *Long Day's Journey into Night* by Eugene O'Neill (directed by Àlex Rigola). He has worked with directors such as Rodrigo García, Lluís Homar, Juan Carlos Pérez de la Fuente (playing Basilio in *Life's a Dream*, amongst other productions with this director), Emilio del Valle and Gerardo Vera, featuring a total of more than fifty theatre productions.

He has also taken part in numerous films, such as *Familia*, *Secretos del corazón*, *Plenilunio*, *La forja de un rebelde ...* with filmmakers such as Alejandro Amenábar, Montxo Armendáriz, Icíar Bollaín, Mario Camus, Julio Médem and Imanol Uribe.



Nerea Moreno (Areúsa)

She has worked at La Abadía on *Arlecchino, Servant of Two Masters* (directed by Andrés Lima); at the Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico on *Sainetes* (directed by Ernesto Caballero); and at the Centro Dramático Nacional on *Haz click aquí* (text and direction by José Padilla), *Bohemian Lights* (directed by Lluís Homar), and *Tableau of Avarice, Lust and Death* (directed by Salva Bolta). She has also taken part in numerous productions by Gustavo Tambascio, the most recent being *The Seagull*.

She has also featured in numerous television series.



Inma Nieto (Elicia)

She began her career at La Abadía with *Interludes* (1996) and worked with J.L. Gómez again on productions such as *Tableau of Avarice, Lust and Death* by Valle-Inclán, and *Exit the King* by Eugène Ionesco. She has also taken part in projects at La Abadía under the guidance of other directors, such as Roberto Ciulli in *The Little Prince*, Hansgünther Heyme in *King Lear*, Luis

Miguel Cintra in *Play Without a Title* by Federico García Lorca; and Carlos Aladro in *Terrorism* by the Presnyakov Brothers.

Other productions we might mention include the following: for the CDN *An Enemy of the People*, directed by Gerardo Vera; for Producciones Micomicón and under the direction of Laila Ripoll, *Macbeth*, *Los cabellos de Absalón / Absalom's Hair* and *La ciudad sitiada*. She has worked with other theatre companies and directors such as Ernesto Caballero in *Hedda Gabler*, Gabriel Garbisu in *The Goblin Lady*; and Juan Pastor in Strindberg's *A Dream Play*.



Raúl Prieto (Calisto)

In recent years this actor has worked a great deal with Miguel del Arco, on the following projects: *Antígona*, based on the work by Sophocles; *Misántropo*, based on the work by Molière; *Veraneantes*, based on the play by Gorky; and *La función por hacer*, based on Pirandello, for which he was presented with a Max Award for Best Supporting Actor.

Other theatre productions he has been involved in include: *El lindo don Diego* (directed by Carles Alfaro), *La tierra* (directed by Javier Yagüe), *La señorita Julia*, *Móvil* and *Salomé* (all three directed by Miguel Narros), *Cara de plata* (directed by Ramón Simó) and *Naturaleza muerta en una cuneta* (directed by Adolfo Fernández).

He has also worked frequently for television and the cinema.



José Luis Torrijo (Sempronio)

At La Abadía we have seen this actor in *Husbands and Wives* (directed by Àlex Rigola), *Mr. Puntilla and His Man Matti* (directed by Rosario Ruiz Rodgers) and *Interludes* (directed by José Luis Gómez).

Other plays include: *La amante inglesa* (directed by Natalia Menéndez), *El inspector* (directed by Miguel del Arco), *La avería* (directed by Blanca Portillo), *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (directed by Tamzin Townsend) and *Journey to Parnassus* (directed by Eduardo Vasco).

In the cinema he has worked with Guillermo del Toro (*Pan's Labyrinth* and *The Devil's Backbone*), Pedro Almodóvar (*I'm So Excited!* and *All About My Mother*), Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón (*El caballero Don Quijote*), Achero Mañas (*Noviembre*), Juanma Bajo Ulloa (*Airbag*), Mariano Barroso (*Lo mejor de Eva*), Juan Calvo (*Di que sí*), Inés París (*Miguel y William*), Fernando Colomo and Jaime Rosales, who directed him in *La soledad*, the film for which he was presented a Goya Award for Best New Actor in 2007.

José Luis Gómez (Celestina)

See above.

**“For to whom you tell your secret,
to him you give your liberty”**

Pármemo in “Celestina”

Teatro de La Abadía



Teatro de La Abadía, a centre for acting studies and creation in the Madrid Region, was founded in 1995 by José Luis Gómez. The theatre is housed in a former church. Since its first memorable production (*Tableau of Avarice, Lust and Death* by Valle-Inclán), the company has pursued a line of research into acting techniques, words in action and ensemble work as a cast.

La Abadía stages several productions each season, amongst which we might highlight those that have been granted Max Awards: *On Horatios and Curiatios* by Brecht (directed by Hernán Gené), *Argelino, servidor de dos amos* by Alberto San Juan, based on the masterpiece by Goldoni (co-production with Animalario, directed by Andrés Lima), *Veraneantes*, based on the work by Gorky, featuring text and direction by Miguel del Arco (co-produced with Kamikaze Producciones) and *En la luna/On the Moon*, featuring text and direction by Alfredo Sanzol.

Over and above the works mentioned above, the company's most recent productions include the following: *Grooming* by Paco Bezerra (directed by José Luis Gómez); *El diccionario* by Manuel Calzada, (directed by José Carlos Plaza); *Husbands and Wives* based on the script by Woody Allen (directed by Àlex Rigola); *La punta del iceberg* by Antonio Tabares (directed by Sergi Belbel); *Éramos tres hermanas (Variaciones sobre Chéjov)* by José Sanchis Sinisterra (directed by Carles Alfaro); and *The Public* by Lorca (directed by Àlex Rigola).



La Abadía frequently works with foreign directors, such as Georges Lavaudant (*Play Strindberg*), Dan Jemmett (*The Café* and *The Trickster of Seville*) and, in recent seasons, the Polish stage director, Krystian Lupa (*End game*), the Italian-German director, Roberto Ciulli (*The Little Prince*) and Olivier Py (*Towards Happiness*). Our theatre also stages its productions in other countries, having toured some 35 different foreign cities to date, ranging from Stockholm to Rome and from Bogotá to Budapest.

Teatro de La Abadía takes part as the only Spanish theatre company in the Cities on Stage / Ciudades en Escena Project, one of the EU's grand cultural initiatives (only ten multi-year cooperation proposals were selected within the framework of the Cultural Programme). This initiative features the participation of six leading theatre companies on the European scene, who, between 2011 and 2016, will stage a series of co-productions and organise a number of meetings and professional exchange programmes: Théâtre National de la Communauté Française (Brussels), Folkteatern (Gothenburg), Théâtre de l'Odéon (Paris), Teatrul Național Radu Stanca (Sibiu, Romania), Teatro Stabile di Napoli "Mercadante" (Naples), Teatro de La Abadía and, from 2013, the Festival d'Avignon.

Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico



The Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico is the production branch of INAEM (Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música), which is attached to the Spanish Ministry for Education, Culture and Sports. Created by Adolfo Marsillach in 1986, this company is the key point of reference in terms of recovering, preserving, staging and promoting our theatrical heritage prior to the twentieth century, focusing in particular on Spain's Golden Age and on the study of classical verse.

Throughout its almost 30-year history, the Company has staged more than 85 productions, which have not only toured Spain, but have visited many locations throughout Europe and the Americas, thus effectively promoting Spain's theatre legacy throughout the world.

The stage director, Helena Pimenta, has headed the Company since September 2011. Previously, it was headed by Adolfo Marsillach, Rafael Pérez Sierra, Andrés Amorós, José Luis Alonso de Santos and Eduardo Vasco.



The Company's main objectives, as set out in its Governing Remit, include the following:

- To consolidate key repertoire works and recover other less-known works of considerable artistic value from Spain's classical theatre heritage.
- To promote these works and facilitate public access to their productions and projects.
- To promote the Compañía's regular participation in the leading classical theatre festivals, both throughout Spain and abroad.
- To foster collaboration with prestigious professionals in all artistic fields and throughout the realm of theatre.
- To promote specialised training within the Company, placing a special focus on programmes such as La Joven Compañía.
- To cooperate with institutions and companies, both public and private, Spanish and foreign, on specific projects.
- To promote teaching initiatives that facilitate access to and enjoyment of the Company's programme amongst diverse age-groups, whilst also enhancing the training of professionals in the poetry of classical theatre.

Contact

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