

## **FesTeLõn, FESTIVAL OF SPANISH THEATRE IN LONDON** **John Lyon Theatre 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> October**

FesTeLõn, the festival that celebrates Spanish theatre in London is back for the 7th annual edition with a series of contemporary and Spanish Golden Age plays, lectures and workshops. For two weeks in October, from the 1<sup>st</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup>, the John Lyon Theatre will host a diversity of productions to submerge the audience in some of the most exciting modern and classic Spanish theatre. The premier night of each production will be followed by a Q&A session with the audience aimed at strengthening the cultural interchange and understanding between spectator and performer.

This year FesTeLõn launches its very own fringe festival, FesTeLõn-OFF. Emerging companies in the UK are invited to perform a Spanish play in a competition to be held in London next April. The winner will then perform at FesTeLõn 2020.

For the founder of the festival, Mariví Rodríguez Quiñones, the highlight of this year's edition lies in 'the powerful productions that give voice to women and the LGBT community to talk about power, love, violence, homophobia, struggles as relevant in their day as they are now'.

Starting with 'La Calderona', a black comedy musical that uses hip-hop, with a live DJ on stage, that tells the story of the most controversial of king Philip IV's lovers. The play speaks of power, ambition, love and survival, relevant concepts in 17<sup>th</sup> century Spain that resonate very strongly with contemporary audiences.

The 2019 winning production of AlmagrOff, the fringe festival that runs alongside the prestigious International Festival of Classical Theatre in Almagro, will have its UK premier at FesTeLõn. 'La Margarita del Tajo que dio nombre a Santarén' is a riotous and tragicomic adaptation of a religious comedy about passion, adultery, sacrilege and femicide.

Lorca's acclaimed play Yerma will open the second week of the festival. The portrayal of a woman's desperate desire to become a mother reflects on the tragedy of unfulfilled expectations and the meaning of fertility in the modern day.

With only one actor on stage, Powdered Fists (Puños de Harina) presents two parallel stories of two gypsy boxers living at different moments in time but sharing similar experiences of violence, masculinity, racism and homophobia.

And last but not least, 'Crickets and Fireflies' (Grillos y Luciérnagas), a production about the lights and sounds of the night will instil the theatre bug in the younger audiences.

The festival will open with a piano concert by Javier 'Peke' Rodriguez, who returns to London after a sell out tour in Europe.

FesTeLõn was set up in 2013 by Mariví Rodríguez Quiñones, a lecturer at King's College London, in response to the lack of Spanish theatre being performed in the British capital.

### **Note to editors:**

Over the past seven years FesTeLõn has been growing and gaining more of a presence in London, with a diverse audience. A 2017 survey showed that over 15% of the audience have a first language outside of Spanish or English. Through

the use of surtitles the productions are also accessible to those who are hard of hearing. FesTeLõn has been able to allow Spanish theatre companies to perform in their native tongue whilst also guaranteeing that all those interested in Spanish theatre, regardless of their knowledge of the language, are able to participate and enjoy the productions.

As well as the work it produces onstage, FesTeLõn has also dedicated itself to introducing a collection of activities offstage to its programming.

For further **information on lectures and workshops** that will run throughout the festival please visit:

[www.festivalspanishtheatre.co.uk/talks-and-workshops/](http://www.festivalspanishtheatre.co.uk/talks-and-workshops/)

For further **information on FesTeLõn, the companies and/or images** please contact:

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