

THE EXCHANGE PROJECT

presents

**Junebug Productions,
Pregones Theater and
Roadside Theater**

in

PROMISE OF A LOVE SONG

Three theater companies

Three cultures

Three stories of love

Written by:

John O'Neal, Rosalba Rolón, and Ron Short

Directed by:

Steven Kent and Rosalba Rolón

THE COLLABORATORS

Executive Producer	Theresa R. Holden
Dramaturg	Rosalba Rolón
Writers	John O'Neal of Junebug Productions Ron Short of Roadside Theater Rosalba Rolón of Pregones Theater(as dramaturg to "Silent Dancing" by Judith Ortiz Cofer)
Directed by	Steven Kent and Rosalba Rolón
Composers	Ricardo Pons of Pregones Donald Harrison, Jr. of Junebug Productions Ron Short of Roadside Theater Desmar Guevara of Pregones
Song Lyrics & Music by	Ron Short
Musical Director	Desmar Guevara
Lighting & Set Designer	Douglas D. Smith
Costume Designer	Theresa R. Holden
Production Manager	Selena Anguiano
Sound Engineer	Gary Slemp
Actors	<i>Star-Crossed Lovers-</i> Junebug Productions: Donna: Troi Bechet Nelson: John O'Neal Donald: Andrew Baham <i>Silent Dancing-</i> Pregones Theater: Father: José Joaquín García Angela: Soldanela Rivera <i>Charming Billy-</i> Roadside Theater: Mother: Kim Neal Billy: Ron Short

Musicians

Junebug Productions
Andrew Baham, Trumpet
Pregones Theater
Waldo Chavez, Bass
Desmar Guevara, Keyboard, Congas
Roadside Theater
Ron Short, Banjo, Guitar, Fiddle
Guest Musicians
Ricky Sebastian, Drums
Luis Disla, Flute, Saxophone

Documentor

Arnaldo Jose Lopez

The Exchange Board

Dudley Cocke, Roadside Theater
John O'Neal, Junebug Productions
Rosalba Rolón, Pregones Theater

Project Consultant

Alvan Colón Lespier of Pregones Theater

Booking Contact

Holden & Arts Associates
PO Box 50120/ Austin, TX 78763
(512) 477-1859/ email: mh4arts@aol.com

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Exchange Project wishes to acknowledge and thank the following presenters who co-commissioned this new play. Without their support this play could not have been developed.

The Flynn Theater for the Performing Arts of Burlington, Vermont
The Lied Center of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln
The Wagon Train Project of Lincoln, Nebraska

The Exchange Project has received generous support from:

The National Endowment for the Arts
The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
The National Performance Network

The original production of the play was made possible in part by a grant from the **Wallace-Reader's Digest Funds**.

STORY BEHIND THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Promise of a Love Song is born out of ambition: To connect otherwise isolated cultures and bring them face-to-face in the making of art; to encourage artists with very different experiences and aesthetics to compare notes and pool their creative resources; to then stage and tour a play relevant to each community and of vital interest to the nation at large. Conceived back in 1995, the Exchange Project initially saw Junebug, Roadside, and Pregones theaters traveling in a round-robin fashion to introduce themselves and their works to each other's world. Artists met with the community in workshops, story circles and music jam sessions; they were presented at local arts centers and schools; they joined their audiences in informal discussion and celebration. Each time, they were greeted in home-style, enjoying the best home cooking and the stories that are best heard around it. The performance stage was clearly but one of many spaces where the Exchange Project would develop.

Following the excitement of the initial two-year exchange, a joint production was proposed in 1997. At first, the artists entertained disparate ideas of what their play could be--folk music revue, history lesson, multicultural cabaret.... But, within the year, one proposal, said to have come to an ensemble member in a dream, won everyone over: Love stories, a musical play. Everyone agreed that love and music would best capture their exchange, all about cultures and styles and the ties that bind.

The three companies started playing off each other's ideas: Talking about family, about politics, about food, about what's funny and what's not; arguing over right and wrong, on and off the page. The dialogue extended to the stage, with each company playing their music, dancing along, or else, engaged in debate over what's Blue about the Blues, whether Delta, Bluegrass and Bolero have anything in common. Oh, they fought sometimes, and disagreed, and sometimes agreed to disagree. They quarreled like lovers. Mostly, they worked, each and everyone, overtime and without losing track of that one promise of a promise.

It's a fitting reminder to say that collaborations are trials of the soul. And if that's what it takes to build community, then there's no greater challenge than to keep the *Promise of a Love Song*.