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  *Star-Crossed Lovers*- Junebug Productions:
         Donna:  Troi Bechet
         Nelson:  John O'Neal
         Donald:  Andrew Baham
*Silent Dancing*- Pregones Theater:
         Father:  José Joaquín García
         Angela:  Soldanela Rivera
*Charming Billy*- 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
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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.