

Roadside Theater and Pregones Theater Present

# B E T S Y !

IN CONCERT AT APPALSHOP

August 11 & 12 ♦ 8:00 pm ♦ Whitesburg, KY

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♦ FEATURING ♦

Caridad De La Luz/  
La Bruja  
as  
**BETSY**

Ron Short  
as  
**MAN**

Lisa Davis  
as  
**SPIRIT**

**THE BAND**

is

Desmar Guevara (Piano) ♦ William Rodriguez (Drums)  
Waldo Chavez (Bass)

**Directed by Dudley Cocke & Rosalba Rolon**

**Book**.....Dudley Cocke & Ron Short with Rosalba Rolón & Beegie Adair  
**Music**.....Ron Short, Beegie Adair, and Desmar Guevara  
**Lyrics**.....Ron Short & Beegie Adair  
**Additional Music and Lyrics**.....Sylvia Rexach and Rafael Hernandez  
**Additional Text**.....Caridad De La Luz & Wenceslao Serra Deliz

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**Pregones Theater/Puerto Rican Traveling Theater (PRTT)**, established as a touring theater ensemble in 1979, later became a South Bronx, NY resident company, and remains in the vanguard of an arts renaissance radiating throughout and beyond the Bronx today. Working in Spanish and English, Pregones' original repertoire features 80 plays and musicals building on the practice of Caribbean and Latin American *colectivos*, *Nuevo teatro*, and popular theater.

**Roadside Theater** was founded at Appalshop in 1975 on the proposition that the world is immeasurably enriched when people and cultures tell their own stories and experience the stories of others. Roadside's original Appalachian plays have toured 43 states and Europe, and the company's community cultural development residency model enables communities anywhere over time to create their own public performances drawn from their own local cultural assets.

## ABOUT THE COLLABORATION

The friendship between Roadside Theater and Pregones Theater is anchored in a shared commitment to making a truly popular musical theater that reflects a people's history. In 1994, Pregones invited Roadside to the Bronx to perform, with a common geographic theme: mountains. The performances hit home with the longing of many Puerto Ricans living in the city for the special culture of their own mountains. Naturally, Roadside returned the favor and invited Pregones to visit its mountains and to perform in Whitesburg. Thus began 23 years of an artistic partnership in which *BETSY!* is the newest creation.

## ABOUT *BETSY!*

In 2002, Roadside's Ron Short started looking for the gravestone of what would have been one of his first Appalachian ancestors, asking: "Where are you, great-great-great grandmother?" He couldn't find the marker, so – aided by research and fragments of family oral history – he began imagining his first American ancestor's story. He called the one person show *BETSY*. In 2003, Roadside took *BETSY* to the Nashville Jazz Workshop, where Beegie Adair, noted jazz pianist from rural Barren Co., Kentucky, saw connections to her own family story. Roadside and Beegie began creating a new musical version of *BETSY* which they subsequently performed in Nashville with a cast of three and a four-piece band.

As part of its ongoing exchange with Pregones, Roadside brought this new version of *BETSY* to the Bronx where Pregones artists and audiences were drawn to the idea to who this new *BETSY* might be. Public performances of a newly-explored *BETSY!* (co-created with the Pregones ensemble and its composer, Desmar Guevara) were staged in the Bronx in 2006 and 2008; and then in April 2015 off-Broadway at the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater.

And now, without further ado, we bring you the Kentucky concert premiere of our off-Broadway show...*BETSY!*