

FUENTEOVEJUNA: EAST END

Based on the play
Fuenteovejuna
by Lope de Vega

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PROGRAM NOTE

As 2025 Community Artists-in-Residence, Margarita Espada and Minerva Perez present a bold, community-devised adaptation of Fuenteovejuna, the classic Spanish play by Lope de Vega.

Originally written between 1612 and 1614 and published in 1619, Fuenteovejuna dramatizes a true event from 1476 in a Castilian village where townspeople, united against tyranny, took justice into their own hands. When interrogated—tortured even—by royal authorities, the villagers gave only one answer: “Fuenteovejuna did it.”

In this reimagined version, the Fuenteovejuna becomes our East End—a richly diverse community home to families from over 20 Spanish-speaking nations. In our schools, Latino students make up more than half the population and yet, many continue to face growing injustices: wage theft, housing exploitation, worker and transportation safety issues, barriers to mental health care, and unequal access to health services.

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This adaptation explores how systemic divisions—language, class, immigration status, and cultural origin—are used to isolate and disempower. But just as in the original play, it is solidarity that becomes the strongest force against oppression.

Through collective storytelling, movement, and multimedia elements, this production asks:

What does it mean to be a community?

When does the good of the many outweigh the needs of the one?

How do we support each other through darkness?

Whose voices are heard—and when?

What is violence, and how does it shape our bodies and our lives?

We invite you to witness this journey, grounded in both history and the urgent now.

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CAST & CHARACTERS

VALENTINA

Social Media Influencer

Heidy Escudero

SILVANA CABRERA

Reporter

Silvana Pilco

FERNÁN GÓMEZ DE GUZMÁN

Commander

Carlos Calva

FLORES

Captain & Assistant to the Commander

Mauricio Leguizamo

ORTUÑO

Sergeant & Assistant to the Commander

Christian Diaz

LAURENCIA

Daughter of Esteban, Mayor of Fuenteovejuna

Grace Quizhpi

PASCUALA

A friend of Laurencia

Tamy Calapucha

FRONDOSO

A Young Man in love with Laurencia

Marvin Vasquez

BARRILDO

A friend of Fronds

Daniel Jimbo

MENGO

Coworker of Fronds & Barrildo

Omar Tello

PADRE

Town Priest

German Calderon

ESTEBAN

Mayor of Fuenteovejuna & Laurencia’s Father

Andres Espinosa

CAST & CHARACTERS

JACINTA

Friend of Laurencia

Genesis Polo

JUEZ

Commander

Wilfredo Diaz

TERESA

A Young Dancer

Hazel Benalcazar

ANNA LA GITANA

Townsperson & Merchant

Elvia Bennett

EDILIA SAINZ

Townsperson & Merchant

Lina Pulgarin

INES

Town Musician & Merchant

Erika Figueroa

MARCELA

Townsperson & Merchant

Lucy Garduno

SEBASTIANA

Olivia's Mother

Julieta Medina

OLIVIA

Sebastiana's Daughter

Ana Sofia

CARLOTA

Town Dance Teacher

Evelin Portillo

ENGLISH SYNOPSIS: ACT 1

Act 1: Scene 1

Characters: People of Fuenteovejuna, Valentina, Laurencia, Pascuala

Setting: The Market in Townsquare, Sunday Afternoon

The play opens on a village market day - we are introduced to Valentina, The Influencer, a narrator who describes the lavish lifestyle of Fuenteovejuna via her social media. Laurencia, our protagonist enters with her friend Pascuala, and Laurencia mocks The Influencer, as they both discuss the realities of living in Fuenteovejuna and the struggles that many people face. They go on to discuss the Commander, Fernan Gomez de Guzman, who has long been chasing after Laurencia, and is known to be a womanizer.

Act 1: Scene 2

Characters: Laurencia, Pascuala, Barrildo, Mengo, Frondoso, Flores

Setting: The Market, Sunday Afternoon

Barrildo, Mengo, and Frondoso enter, and ask Laurencia and Pascuala to settle a disagreement. The conversation turns to a debate about love, with Mengo claiming it is selfish, while Barrildo argues it is pure and divine. Laurencia dismisses Mengo's views, and the arrival of Flores, the Commander's assistant, shifts the focus to the end of the war and the importance of Fuenteovejuna in maintaining order.

Act 1: Scene 3

Characters: People of the Village, The Commander, Alonso, Esteban, Flores, Ortuno, Laurencia, Pascuala.

Setting: Town Square, Sunday Evening

The Commander is warmly welcomed by the townspeople with music, gifts, and celebration. However, after the festivities, he reveals a darker side by attempting to coerce Laurencia and Pascuala into attending a private party at his mansion. The women resist his advances and insults, ultimately escaping.

Act 1: Scene 4

Characters: Influencer, Reporter

Setting: Town Square, One Week Later

The Reporter announces new laws that reduce privacy and increase restrictions. The Influencer then comments casually, expressing mixed feelings about the changes. While supporting stricter laws for women's protection, she shifts focus to promoting her self-defense video series and encourages viewers to subscribe.

Act 1: Scene 5

Characters: Laurencia, Frondoso, The Commander, The Influencer

Setting: The Woods, Sunset

Laurencia meets Frondoso and confronts him about rumors of their relationship, though it's clear they care for each other. Their private moment is interrupted by the Commander, who tries to assault Laurencia in the woods. Frondoso bravely defends her by threatening the Commander with his own shotgun and escapes with Laurencia. The Commander vows revenge and falsely claims to the public that he was attacked by a criminal youth.

Act 1: Scene 6

Characters: Reporter, The Influencer

Setting: The Internet

The reporter announces that The Commander has characterized his interaction with Frondoso as gang related activity and announces plans to further restrict freedoms. The scene ends with The Influencer spinning the story for views, asking the public for their comments on the situation.

Act 1: Scene 7

Characters: Mother, Daughter

Setting: A Home, Evening

A mother brushes her daughter's hair as the girl confesses fear and guilt over angering the powerful Commander. The mother gently reassures her, explaining that true strength lies in compassion and that cruel people often act out of weakness. She reveals that the Commander's power only exists because the people allow it—and one day, they'll take it back.

ENGLISH SYNOPSIS: ACT 2

Act 2: Scene 1

Characters: Esteban, Alonso, Barrildo, Juan Rojo, The Commander, Ortuno, Flores, The Influencer

Setting: Town Square, A Bar, The Next Morning

Tensions rise in Fuenteovejuna as town leaders Esteban and Alonso discuss worsening conditions under The Commander—fewer jobs and more control. When they and others confront him, The Commander mocks their concerns, insults their daughters and wives, and asserts his dominance, leading to a heated argument. Esteban stands up for the town's dignity, while The Commander fumes over Frondoso's defiance and his own boredom with village life. Meanwhile, The Commander and his men brag about their abuse of power and exploitation of local women.

Act 2: Scene 2

Characters: The Influencer

Setting: The Internet

The Influencer shares ideas about how to maintain physical and mental health during this time and urges the people of Fuenteovejuna not to watch the news, especially with their children. She also asks for more comments from the people, as well as pet photos.

Act 2: Scene 3

Characters: Laurencia, Pascuala, Mengo, Jacinta, The Commander, Flores, Ortuno

Setting: The Forest, Sunset

At night in the forest, Laurencia and Pascuala, walk with Mengo, as they are afraid to walk alone due to the Commander's threats. Laurencia reveals her love for Frondoso, who risked his life to save her. Suddenly, Jacinta struggles in, having escaped an attempted assault by The Commander's men. Laurencia and Pascuala flee in fear, leaving Mengo to protect Jacinta. When The Commander arrives, Mengo bravely stands up for her but is captured. The Commander then tries to assault Jacinta, who is injured and unable to fight back, calls on divine justice.

Act 2: Scene 4

Characters: Frondoso, Laurencia, Esteban, Alonso

Setting: The Same Day, Evening, Outside Esteban's House

Frondoso risks returning to the village to see Laurencia and proposes to her. She accepts and tells him to get her father's blessing. Esteban and Alonso arrive, discussing The Commander's recent atrocities, including Jacinta's assault and Mengo's capture. When Frondoso asks for Laurencia's hand, Esteban happily agrees, pending Laurencia's approval. Laurencia confirms her love, and Esteban gives them his blessing. The scene ends joyfully with the couple embracing and running off together.

Act 2: Scene 4

Characters: People of Fuenteovejuna

Setting: The Internet

Comments from the public discuss Laurencia and Frondoso's impending wedding in a month.

Act 2: Scene 5

Characters: The Reporter

Setting: Television

The reporter announces breaking news that The Commander is being sent back to Fuenteovejuna due to allegations of sexual misconduct and abuse of power.

Act 2: Scene 6

Characters: People of the Village, Laurencia, Frondoso, Mengo, Father Alonso, Juan Rojo, Esteban, The Commander, Flores, Ortuno

Setting: Town Square, The Next Day

Laurencia and Frondoso's wedding begins joyfully with music, blessings, and celebration. However, the festivities are interrupted by the arrival of The Commander and his soldiers. He has Frondoso arrested for previously threatening him and, despite pleas from the townspeople, also seizes Laurencia. When Esteban, the mayor, defends the couple, The Commander violently strikes him. The villagers are left shocked and devastated as the newlyweds are taken away, turning a joyful event into one of sorrow and outrage.

ENGLISH SYNOPSIS: ACT 3

Act 3: Scene 1

Characters: Esteban, Barrildo, Father Alonso, Juan Rojo, Mengo, Laurencia, Jacinta, Pascuala, The Influencer

Setting: A Private Meeting Hall, Three Days Later

In the town hall of Fuenteovejuna, a few male leaders gather to decide how to respond to the Commander's brutal actions—Fronoso's arrest, Laurencia's kidnapping, and general abuse of power. As the townspeople debate what to do, Laurencia bursts in, battered and enraged. She fiercely condemns the men for their cowardice, describing her assault in harrowing detail and shaming them for their inaction. Her powerful speech ignites the spirit of rebellion in everyone. The townspeople, men and women alike, unite to rise up against the Commander and reclaim their town. The scene ends with Laurencia rallying the women to join the fight, determined to make history with their courage.

Act 3: Scene 2

Characters: People of the Village, The Commander, Fronoso, Flores, Ortuno, Mengo, Esteban

Setting: The Commander's Residence, The Same Day

At the Commander's residence, Fronoso is about to be executed when the angry townspeople of Fuenteovejuna arrive, storming the mansion. As the mob breaks down doors - the Commander panics, unties Fronoso, and pleads with him to calm the crowd. But it's too late—fueled by Laurencia's earlier speech, the townspeople demand justice. The scene ends with the people shouting for justice, chanting “Long live Fuenteovejuna! Death to the Commander!”

Act 3: Scene 3

Characters: Laurencia, Pascuala, Jacinta, Women of the Village, The Commander, Esteban, Barrildo, Flores, Mengo, Ortuno

Setting: Inside the Commander's Residence, The Same Day

Laurencia leads the women of Fuenteovejuna. The women join the men in a final act of unity and justice by defeating The Commander and his men. The women celebrate their victory, shouting “Long live Fuenteovejuna!”

Act 3: Scene 4

Characters: People of the Village, Esteban, Frondoso, Mengo, The Influencer
Setting: Town Square, A Week Later

Esteban warns that an investigation is coming and urges everyone to stay united with one answer: "Fuenteovejuna did it." The townspeople agree to take collective responsibility and refuse to name individuals, even under pressure. Meanwhile, The Influencer announces the spread of the news and warns about upcoming interrogations, asking followers not to discuss The Commander's death on her social media.

Act 3: Scene 5

Characters: Laurencia, Frondoso, Judge, Esteban, Jacinta, Pascuala, Mengo, A Girl, People of the Village
Setting: A cavernous space used for interrogation, The Same Day

Laurencia begs Frondoso to flee as townspeople are being interrogated, but he refuses, choosing love and loyalty over fear. Hidden, they hear the Judge interrogate villagers—Esteban, Olivia, Marcela, Jacinta, and Mengo. Each one bravely repeats the same answer: "Fuenteovejuna did it." Though Mengo nearly breaks under duress, he defiantly joins the chorus, and the Judge, unable to single out a culprit, grows frustrated and gives up. The scene ends with Laurencia and Frondoso reaffirming their love—and the village's unity—with the same truth: Fuenteovejuna did it.

Act 3: Scene 6

Characters: People of the Village, Frondoso, Laurencia
Setting: Sunday, Noon, Market Day

The village celebrates joyfully with dancing, decorations, and laughter. Children play, and Laurencia and Frondoso dance together. Frondoso asks once more, playfully, who killed The Commander. The entire town triumphantly shouts in unison: "Fuenteovejuna, Señor!"