

February 22, 2016

For Immediate Release

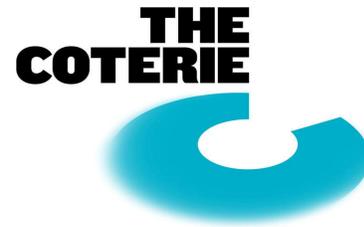
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## PRESS RELEASE

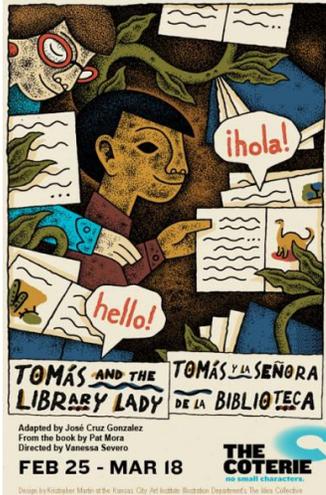
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The Coterie presents Its  
First-Ever Bi-lingual Play

Based on True Life Story of  
Tomás Rivera

*Tomás and the Library Lady*

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### OVERVIEW:

WHAT: ***Tomás and the Library Lady***

Adapted by José Cruz González from the book by Pat Mora

Based on the true life story of Tomás Rivera

Directed by Shanara Gabrielle

WHEN: **February 25 – March 18, 2016**

**Press / Opening Night: Friday, February 26, at 7:00 p.m.**

WHERE: The Coterie, Level one of Crown Center, 2450 Grand Blvd., Kansas City, MO

PRICE: \$11.00 for youth under 18, full-time students, and seniors age 60 and older;  
\$15.00 for adults; \$5.00 - \$6.50 for Groups of 20 or more.

INFO / RESERVATIONS: The Coterie Box Office

Phone: (816) 474-6552 Online: [www.thecoterie.org](http://www.thecoterie.org)

**Kansas City, MO** – The Coterie Theatre presents its first-ever bi-lingual production in the company's 37 year history with the stage adaptation of the award-winning book ***Tomás and the Library Lady***. Based on the true life story of acclaimed Mexican-American author and education advocate, Dr. Tomás Rivera, ***Tomás and the Library Lady*** is adapted by José Cruz González

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from the book by Pat Mora. It will be directed by Shanara Gabrielle and will be performed live on The Coterie's stage February 25 – March 18, 2016.

## **ABOUT THE PLAY**

An inspiring true tale of how reading and stories help us all escape, ***Tomás and the Library Lady*** follows the life of young Tomás and his family, who are migrant workers who pick farmers' crops. It's hard labor. It's even rougher for Tomás because the family moves constantly to find new work. But one summer, Tomás visits a local public library and soon discovers worlds filled with dinosaurs and tigers - and a great new friend in the "Library Lady." While helping Tomás improve his English by reading many new and exciting stories, the librarian fosters his newfound interest in learning and teaches him the importance of a good education.

***Tomás and the Library Lady*** was adapted from the children's book by Mexican-American writer, Pat Mora, and named the winner of several prestigious literary awards including the Américas Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature, a Teachers' Choice Award from the International Reading Association, and a Notable Book for Children award from the Smithsonian Institute. Mora based her story on the life of acclaimed Chicano writer Dr. Tomás Rivera. Having grown up the child of Mexican migrant farm workers, Rivera went on to become an award-winning writer and a nationally-recognized educator, receiving multiple degrees, including a PhD in Romance Languages and Literature from the University of Oklahoma, and eventually serving as the first minority chancellor in the University of California system. ***Tomás and the Library Lady*** draws on Rivera's early life when, unable to read English, Rivera was terrified of school. That is, until he found refuge in a library in Iowa where the librarian introduced him to the fun, magic, and escape that can be found in the pages of a good book.

Staying true to Rivera's own real life journey, the stage adaptation of ***Tomás and the Library Lady*** looks at Tomás' journey through a multi-cultural lens. Featuring bi-lingual language and music inspired by traditional Mexican folk songs, the story explores Tomás' relationship with his family, particularly with his mother and grandfather, Papa Grande. Played in The Coterie's production by respected Kansas City artist, José Faus, Papa Grande highlights the many stories he shares with young Tomas by drawing and painting live during the play. The art created on stage helps this heartwarming story illustrate the power of positive encouragement and the idea that believing in someone can motivate them to conquer fears and encourage them to accomplish exceptional things.

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***Tomás and the Library Lady*** will run approximately 55 minutes with no intermission and will be most appreciated by families with ages eight and older. The production is funded in part by the Missouri Arts Council, ArtsKC Fund, and Theater League.

## **ABOUT THE ARTISTS**

The cast of ***Tomás and the Library Lady*** features Francisco Javier Villegas (as Tomás), Judy Simmons (as The Library Lady), José Faus (as Papa Grande), Victoria Sofia Botero (as Josefa), and Tony J. Pulford (as Enrique). The artistic and production company includes Shanara Gabrielle (director), José Faus (set designer), Art Kent (resident lighting designer), Georgianna Londré Buchanan (costume designer), David Kiehl (sound designer), Nicholas Ruby (properties designer), William J. Christie (resident production stage manager), Scott Hobart (resident technical director/ set designer), and Chloe Robbins-Anderson (resident production assistant/deck manager).

## **SHOW DATES, TIMES & TICKETS**

The Coterie, now in its 37th Season and named "One of the Five Best Theaters for Young Audiences in the U.S." by *TIME* magazine, will perform ***Tomás and the Library Lady*** February 25 – March 18, 2016, in The Coterie Theatre, located on level one of the Crown Center Shops in Kansas City, MO. Press Night will be held on Friday, February 26, 2016, at 7:00 p.m.

**Individual Tickets:** Tickets are \$11.00 for youth under 18, students, and seniors age 60 and older; and \$15.00 for adults.

**Group Pricing:** The Coterie offers groups of 20 or more a special preview rate of \$5.00 per person the first week of the run, February 25-28, 2016. After preview week, groups pay only \$5.50 per person on weekdays and \$6.50 per person on weekends (Friday nights, Saturdays, and Sundays).

**Subscriptions:** In lieu of season subscriptions, The Coterie offers the Spotlight Club Pass, which works like a season ticket without committing to a set schedule. Spotlight Club members pay \$100.00 for a flexible pass that includes 10 tickets - a savings of 40% off individual ticket prices - that can be used for any show or combination of shows in the 2015/2016 Season.

All tickets and Spotlight Club Passes are on sale now and may be purchased by calling The Coterie's box office at (816) 474-6552, dropping by the box office on level one of the Crown Center Shops, or by visiting [www.thecoterie.org](http://www.thecoterie.org).

## PERFORMANCE CALENDAR

### Tomás and the Library Lady / Tomás y la Señora de la Biblioteca

FEBRUARY 25 - MARCH 18, 2016						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				25 9:45 am	26 9:45 am 7 pm 🎉🗣️	27 2 pm 🎉
28 2 pm 🎉	29	1 9:45 am 11:45 am	2 9:45 am 11:45 am	3 9:45 am 11:45 am	4 9:45 am 11:45 am 7 pm 🗣️	5 2 pm
6 2 pm	7	8 9:45 am 11:45 am	9 9:45 am 11:45 am	10 9:45 am 11:45 am	11 9:45 am 11:45 am 7 pm 🗣️	12 2 pm 🗣️
13 2 pm	14	15 9:45 am 11:45 am	16 9:45 am 11:45 am	17 9:45 am 11:45 am	18 9:45 am 11:45 am 7 pm 🗣️	



Francisco Javier Villegas (as Tomás), José Faus (as Papa Grande), and Judy Simmons (as The Library Lady) in *Tomás and the Library Lady*. Photo by J. Robert Schraeder.

#### CALENDAR LEGEND

-  **Opening Nights**
-  **Friday Family Fun Night** featuring post-performance opportunities for photos and autographs with cast members
-  Post-performance **Question and Answer session** with the company
-  **Interpreted performances** in American Sign Language

## NOTABLE PERFORMANCE EXTRAS

During the run of *Tomás and the Library Lady*, The Coterie invites audiences to take advantage of these special, free performance extras (with paid admission):

**Friday, February 26, 7:00 p.m.: Opening Night Celebration** featuring a post-performance reception with the director, company, staff, and board of directors.

**Fridays, February 26, March 4, 11, and 18, 7:00 p.m.:** Bring the whole family for **Friday Family Fun Night** and meet with members of the cast after the show for photos and autographs.

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**Saturday, February 27, and Sunday, February 28, 2:00 p.m.:** A **Question & Answer session** with members of The Coterie's staff and artistic company will immediately follow the performance.

**Saturday, March 12, 2:00 p.m.:** **Interpreted performance** in American Sign Language.

### **THE REMAINING 2015/2016 SEASON**

Following *Tomás and the Library Lady*, The Coterie's 2015/2016 Season continues with *Where the Wild Things Are*, March 21 – May 7, 2016, and *Madagascar – A Musical Adventure*, June 14 – August 7, 2016.

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Due to the nature of live theatre, play selection, performance schedule and casting are subject to change.

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