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# THE DARK STONE

Sep 23 - Oct 2, 2022

# **A Note from Playwright Alberto Conejero**

This work is based loosely on the life of Rafael Rodríguez Rapún, a student of Mining Engineering, secretary of the La Barraca University Theater, and Federico García Lorca's companion during the final years of their lives. Rapún died on August 18, 1937, exactly one year after Federico, in the military hospital at Santander, having been wounded a few days earlier in an aerial bombardment near the northern Spanish town of Bárcena de Pie de Concha. The encounter that is the subject of my play, therefore, is fiction. The rest of the information here, however—facts, names, events, etc.—is the result of my own research over the past few years.

During this process, it was my privilege to be lavished with assistance from members of Rafael's family, principal among these his brother Tomás, who in Madrid in the spring and summer of 2012 shared with me, at the age of ninety-five, hours of memories and mementoes of their relationship. This work is dedicated to his generosity, good cheer, and high-flying spirit. Tomás's daughter, Margarita, also allowed me unlimited access to their family archive of photographs, postcards, and the like. I am similarly indebted to Toña, who lived for decades with Rafael's older sister María, for her astounding memory at age eighty-three and the gift of her invaluable recollections.

I would also like to thank Ian Gibson for his help and ever stimulating conversation; Juan Carlos Rubio for his generosity and guidance, and finally Alfonso, the son of Rafael's trench-mate Paulino García-Toraño, for sharing with me his father's memories.

Madrid, June 22, 2012

(on the 100th anniversary of the birth of Rafael Rodríguez Rapún: June 22, 1912 - August 18, 1937)

# **A Note from Director Ignacio García-Bustelo**

No one would be surprised if AENY-Spanish Artists in New York presented *The Dark Stone* as a period piece focused on the historical aspects of the Spanish Civil War. It would almost be expected. After all, we (artists from Spain) understand the culture, the historical context, and the specific circumstances of that time. We have direct access to the right sources and institutions, and we can find in our very roots the elements and pieces that shape the world of this play.

We could easily tell that story — but we have chosen to do something different.

The struggle that took place in Spain almost a hundred years ago during the Civil War is taking place before our very eyes between the nations of Ukraine and Russia. The scenery changes; the conflicts, the violence, the turmoil, in essence (and sadly), remain the same.

Current global issues demand that we examine this play anew. Rather than producing it as an archeological piece pertaining only to a certain time in history, we feel strongly that this work provides the opportunity to examine universal themes about the human condition in a time of conflict. In doing so, theater remains relevant, for it speaks to us about our current and immediate circumstances, and provides a place for dialogue with our audience.

What would it be like to have actual actors from Ukraine and Russia play these characters, say these lines, speak to each other and explore the moral dilemmas that this play presents? How would the audience react? And, perhaps most importantly, what can we learn?



# The Cast

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## Andrew KoGolenok (Sebastián)

Andrew KoGolenok is an actor born in Minsk, Belarus. There wasn't much work for young Andrew so at the age of 17 he moved to America to pursue an acting career. On arrival, he signed with a talent agent (Ezme Arana) and a manager (Wayne Gasser) and has since been in two feature films, six short films, three plays, one musical, and two music videos.

Andrew's first big role was Calvin Rose in the feature film *Hold Me Softly* (2021). It was filmed in Phoenix, Arizona, and produced by Berber Productions. Since then Andrew has also performed in the play *An Adjustment of Love* at the New York Theater Festival in November of 2021. In January of 2022, he portrayed Vince in *The Blood Orange* (an off-off-broadway musical). In May of 2022, he starred in an episode for a web series *My Nineties*. This October, Andrew is returning to work with director Ina Bailey on her second feature film *Wander, Woman*. Andrew is playing Chase Greyhound, the protagonist who turns out to be an antagonist.

Andrew is fluent in Russian and is currently a senior student at Drew University in Madison, NJ.



## Zenon Zeleniuch (Rafael)

Zenon has appeared in *Shadow of Heroes* (Matyas Rakosi) at the Metropolitan Playhouse; *Meshahnye - The Philistines* (Teterev) at The Theatre for the New City; *Perfect Crime* (Lionel McAuley) at Theater Center; *Bedfellows* (Benjamin Franklin) at The Lion Theatre; *The Medea* (Creon) at ATA; *The Relapse* (Sir Tunbelly Clumsy) at The Westbeth Theatre; *Sub-Basement* (Gustav) at The Athena Theatre; and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (George) at CUSOTA. Regional Theatre credits include *Coriolanus*, *42nd Street*, *Bent*, and *The Irish Question*. Zenon appeared on television in *Pause with Sam Jay*, *Chicago Med*, *Madam Secretary*, *The Blacklist: Redemption*, *The Americans*, *The Knick*, *Power* and *The Enemy Within*.

# About the Author

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## Alberto Conejero (Playwright)

Born in Vilches (Jaén) in 1978, Alberto Conejero has a degree in Stage Direction and Dramaturgy from Madrid's Real Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático and a PhD in Religious Studies from the Complutense University of Madrid. While he had long been active in Madrid's indie theatre scene, Conejero's career really took off in 2010, when he became one of the most highly regarded playwrights of the moment. His plays examine, from different milieus, his own identity and the essence of dramaturgy itself. Conejero has also become a trailblazer in LGBTIQ+ matters, with the subject of homosexuality at the forefront of many of his works. In 2018 he directed for the first time, with *La geometría del trigo*, his most personal work so far, which earned him the National Dramatic Literature Award.

In addition to creating his own plays, he also translates and adapts for the stage works from Classical Greece and Rome, the Spanish Golden Age, and his contemporaries and newer authors. He has also tried his hand at writing YA novels and poetry. He is the current Artistic Director of Madrid's Festival de Otoño.

## G. J. Racz (Translator)

G. J. Racz is Professor of Humanities at LIU Brooklyn, review editor for *Translation Review*, and a former president of the American Literary Translators Association (ALTA). Primarily a poetry translator with a special interest in meter and rhyme, Racz edited *Three Comedies by Jaime Salom* (UP of Colorado, 2004), in which his translation of the mock-Renaissance farce *El señor de las patrañas* (Eng. *Rigmaroles*) appears. Additionally, Racz's translation of Salom's *Dos griegas* (Eng. *Callas and Medea*) was commissioned and staged by the Thalia Spanish Theatre. His translations of the Spanish Golden Age dramatists Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *La vida es sueño* (Eng. *Life Is a Dream*) and Lope Félix de Vega Carpio's *Fuenteovejuna* were commissioned for the *Norton Anthology of Drama* (2009). The two works were also published as stand-alone volumes, the former in the Penguin Classics series (2006) and the latter by Yale UP (2010). His renderings of Miguel de Cervantes's *La Numancia* (Eng. *The Siege of Numantia*), Lope de Vega's *El perro del hortelano* (Eng. *The Dog in the Manger*), and Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz's *Los empeños de una casa* (Eng. *Trials of a Noble House*) appear with *Life Is a Dream* and *Fuenteovejuna* in *The Golden Age of Spanish Drama: A Norton Critical Edition* (2018).

# The Creative Team

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## Ignacio García-Bustelo (Director)

Originally born in Spain, Ignacio Garcia-Bustelo is a New York based actor and stage director. As an actor, Mr. Garcia-Bustelo has worked for the National Theater and some of the most prestigious venues in Spain; here in the US his list of New York and Regional theater credits is comprised of leading roles in classical and contemporary productions presented at La MaMa ETC, The Theatre Project, Olney Theater Center, Theater for the New City, Gala Theater and Spanish Repertory Theater among others. He received ACE, HOLA awards and an ATI nomination as best actor for his performance in Lope de Vega's *El Caballero de Olmedo* (*The knight from Olmedo*). Film appearances include *Pawn Sacrifice*, directed by Edward Zwick. His role in *Silencio*, by Dee Paphangorn, earned him an award as best actor at the European Film Festival in 2018. He also participated on the Spanish prime-time TV series *MIR and Hospital Central*. Off-Broadway directing credits: *Wearing Lorca's Bowtie*, at The Duke on 42nd Street, and the devised opera *Signora Rossini*, for The Loretto Theater at The Sheen Center. He also directed the American Premiere of *Dias Estupendos, Ronensborough, An Invisible Piece of this World* at IATI Theater in NYC, and more recently the immersive piece *Theater to Circumnavigate the World*, commissioned by the Embassy of Spain in Washington D.C. and the series of filmed monologues *Mini Micro Theater* in Central Park, commissioned by the Consulate of Spain in NYC. Mr. Garcia-Bustelo serves as the Artistic Director of AENY - Spanish Artists in New York; he is a Fulbright Scholar, and holds a BFA from the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in Madrid, and a MFA from The New School for Drama in NYC.

## Valeria Llanea (Assistant Director)

She is originally from Buenos Aires, Argentina. After she finished her BFA in Dramatic Arts at Universidad del Salvador, she started working in the industry with distinguished directors such as Julio Chávez, Rubén Viani, Stella Maris Closas, Marcelo Katz as well as touring; nationally and internationally. She attended The American Musical and Dramatic Academy of New York receiving a degree in Musical Theatre. Since then, she has been working in numerous productions. Recent credits include *No me arrepiento, The Selfish Giant, En el país del encierro, todo es mágico, Aunt Malvina, Retablillo, Crying is allowed, It's a Woman Thing (The story of a friendship), Aquel Cabaret de Berlín, Rapiña, four short stories of love and predation, A Tango for Tita, Pool Scum, This is us, Trickeration, Barbie Live, las aventuras de las princesas, Mate a un tipo, Obras cortas de Julio Chávez*, among others. As an Assistant Director/ Stage Manager, her recent credits include: *Eva Luna, La Dama Boba, Anna Pavlova: A Night of Inspiration, En el Cielo con Diamantes, Umbral, tango y música Argentina* among others. Winner ATI Award for Best Actress in a Musical and Best Actress in an English play. Visit her page: [www.valeriallaneza.com](http://www.valeriallaneza.com) / Instagram: @llanezavaleria.

# The Creative Team

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## **Leni Méndez (Set & Costume Design)**

Leni Méndez was born in Argentina and has a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts with a concentration in Scenography Design. Méndez worked as an intern with Mercedes Alfonsín (film), with Oswal and Tito Cadiz at the Teatro Colón in Buenos Aires (scenery and lighting design) and with Tito Egurza at the Teatro Payró (scenery). She is the founder of the Group Zoetrope that presents physical theater in Buenos Aires and the Theater Company VOID that provides a space for artistic production with emphasis on multidisciplinary corporal expression. Their work has been shown in Buenos Aires, Puerto Rico, United States and Europe.

## **Laira Cabrera and Isabelle Duverger (Projections Design)**

Laia Cabrera is an award-winning filmmaker and video artist working in the fields of art Installations-new cinema, creating a wide range of artworks, from traditional and experimental filmmaking, virtual theater, interactive art and immersive projection mapping installations. She is exploring new ways of using space and the visual imaginary as a tool for narrative storytelling and audience connection, driven by both scenographic and dramaturgical aspects and creating immersive content experiences. Her innovative interdisciplinary work merges cinematic arts, dance, music, theater, digital and interactive arts. She is the artistic director and co-founder of LAIA CABRERA & CO. based in New York, a team of artists creating a wide range of interdisciplinary projects. [laiacabrera.com](http://laiacabrera.com)

Isabelle Duverger is an award-winning New York-based French visual artist, animator and projection mapper working in the US and Europe. She is a three-time New York Innovative Theater Awards nominee for Outstanding Innovative Design for her projection designs. Her work has been presented at Spring/Break Art Show (Armory Arts Week), Central Park Summer Stage, Times Square Plaza, St John the Divine Cathedral, La Mama, Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), NJPAC, Flutter Experience Art Gallery, LA, Nuit Blanche and Georgetown Glow, Washington DC, Teatros del Canal, Madrid, Fabra i Coats Contemporary Art Center, Barcelona and Tempietto Di Bramante, Italy among others.

## **Bruce A! Kraemer (Lighting Design)**

Bruce A! Kraemer has done lighting design for Roundabout Theatre, Soho Rep, the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Ensemble Studio Theatre, 59e59 Theaters, the NYC Fringe, Theatre Row, and many others. Bruce also does TV and event lighting, audio, technical direction, stage management, production intercom and RF coordination. He has done one or another of those for the Summer and Winter Olympics, the Paralympics, the World Cup, two Papal visits, three Superbowls, six Tony Awards, ten Christmas Tree Lightings at Rockefeller Center, on Broadway, off Broadway, off off Broadway, for dance, fashion shows, art installations and hundreds of corporate events.

# The Creative Team

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## David Margolin Lawson (Sound Design)

David Margolin Lawson is a New York-based sound designer, composer, and recording engineer. In addition to his previous work with Repertorio Español, he has worked with, recorded, and designed for many New York area performing arts organizations including: Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), La Mama, E. T. C., The Juilliard School, The Public Theater, The Signature Theater, UP Theater Company, HERE Arts Center, The New School, Capital Repertory, Two Rivers Theater, Hartford Stage, Urban Stages, Intar, and others. Recent works include the Neuma Records release of SIGNALS. Nearly an hour of electronic instrumental music co-composed with David Merrill ([www.lawsonandmerrill.com](http://www.lawsonandmerrill.com)). David has been a faculty member at Pace University since 2011 where he teaches courses in Theatrical Sound Design. [www.dmlsoundny.com](http://www.dmlsoundny.com)

## Ryan Brooks (Videographer)

Ryan Brooks was raised in Orlando FL and graduated from Rutgers with a degree in law. After developing a love for being on sets with his partner doing various crew roles for many years, he began picking up the camera and shooting music videos. From editing to lighting, Ryan appreciates every part of the creative process and the collaboration it takes to make something great. He has worked shooting commercials, music videos, documentaries, streaming, and live performances. He is known for his cinematic style, love of tech, and respect for the artists' creative vision. With the right lighting he believes anything is possible.

## Allison Kadin (Producer)

Allison Kadin brings over a decade of experience in strategy, creative production, communications, fundraising, and project operations to mission-driven organizations and arts collectives. After a tenure at BAM (Brooklyn Academy of Music), where she led hundreds of campaigns to promote live performances and internationally renowned festivals, she parlayed her passion for storytelling into social impact. She merges her experience in arts management and desire to elevate social issues with creative engagement projects like Forward Union Fair and boundary-pushing works by theater and dance companies in New York City. She was selected to be part of Race Forward's first cohort of the Racial Equity in the Arts Innovation Lab and was an International Society for the Performing Arts Global Fellow. She spent two years living and working in Spain, and thus feels a special connection to Spanish contemporary theater and believes in sharing Spain's rising voices in New York City.

## Anna Bashlukova (Graphic Designer)

Anna Bashlukova is a 2D artist, graphic designer, and fine artist based in Kharkov, Ukraine. More about Anna and her work at [facebook.com/anna.bashlukova](https://facebook.com/anna.bashlukova).



# Thank You

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In collaboration with Repertorio Español



With support from the Consulate General of Spain in New York



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In consultation with Jersey City Theater Center



# AENY - Spanish Artists in New York

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In October 2010, a small group of Spanish artists gathered at New York's Spanish Benevolent Society (Centro Español) to give voice to the growing community of Spanish creatives in NYC. AENY – El Puente emerged as a way to bring Spanish contemporary work to the United States. AENY debuted its first full-length production *Wearing Lorca's Bowtie* at The Duke on 42nd Street in 2011. AENY – El Puente changed its official name to AENY – Spanish Artists in New York (AENY is an acronym for “Artistas Españoles en Nueva York”). Today the company's affiliated artistic community includes actors, dancers, composers, directors, musicians, performers, playwrights, theater designers, and visual artists. In 2014, the company formed as a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization to fulfill its mission: to foster interdisciplinary artistic collaborations and encourage a unique cultural bridge between Spain and the United States of America. AENY is committed to maintaining an experimental, collaborative approach throughout its production process. AENY's artistic leadership works to establish a stable and enriching relationship between Spanish and US-based artists. Moreover, AENY seeks to enliven the New York arts scene through its focus on productions that illuminate and examine the challenges of contemporary society.

**What's Next?** Learn more about our 2022 NYC Staged Reading Series and the Spotlight on Contemporary Spanish Theater program in DC. Watch a selection of Mini Micro Theater videos. Find out how to collaborate with us, be part of our next production, join our board, and so much more!

All on [\*\*aeny-elpuente.org\*\*](https://aeny-elpuente.org).



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