

MAN OF LA MANCHA

WRITTEN BY DALE WASSERMAN • LYRICS BY JOE DARION • MUSIC BY MITCH LEIGH
DIRECTED BY PETER ROTHSTEIN • MUSIC DIRECTION BY DENISE PROSEK



THEATER
LATTÉ
DA

PLAY GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 13 - OCTOBER 22, 2017
RITZ THEATER



Founded in 1998 by Peter Rothstein and Denise Prosek, Theater Latté Da is entering its 20th year of combining music and story to illuminate the breadth of the human condition. Peter and Denise began their successful collaboration in 1994 by privately producing five original cabarets to showcase Twin Cities talent. They discovered that by placing equal emphasis on music and story-telling, they could weave tapestries of engaging, challenging and often surprising narratives that resonated with people on many levels. Theater Latté Da officially incorporated as a non-profit organization in 1998 and remains committed to rigorous experimentation with music and story that expands the art form and speaks to a contemporary audience challenging us to think deeply about the world in which we live. The venues we perform in are an integral part of our productions.

In 1998, Theater Latté Da began performing at the intimate 120-seat Loring Playhouse. By 2007, Theater Latté Da Productions were playing to sold-out houses. At this time, we began searching for spaces with different performance configurations to meet the unique needs of our productions. Since 2007, Theater Latté Da has produced shows at the Guthrie Theater, Ordway, Pantages Theatre, Southern Theater, History Theatre, Fitzgerald Theater, the Rarig Center Stoll Thrust Theatre, the Lab Theater, the MacPhail Center for Music. In 2016, Theater Latté Da became proud owner of the Ritz Theater in Northeast Minneapolis. The company is becoming a national leader in the art of musical theater, having produced over 65 mainstage productions including 10 world premieres, 10 area premieres and dozens of productions celebrated for their bold re-imagination.

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MAN OF LA MANCHA

Written by Dale Wasserman
Lyrics by Joe Darion
Music by Mitch Leigh
Original Production Staged by Albert Moore
Originally Produced by Albert W. Seldon and Hal James

Directed by Peter Rothstein
Music Direction by Denise Prosek

September 13 - October 22, 2017
Previews on September 13, 14, and 15
Opening Night on September 16, 2017

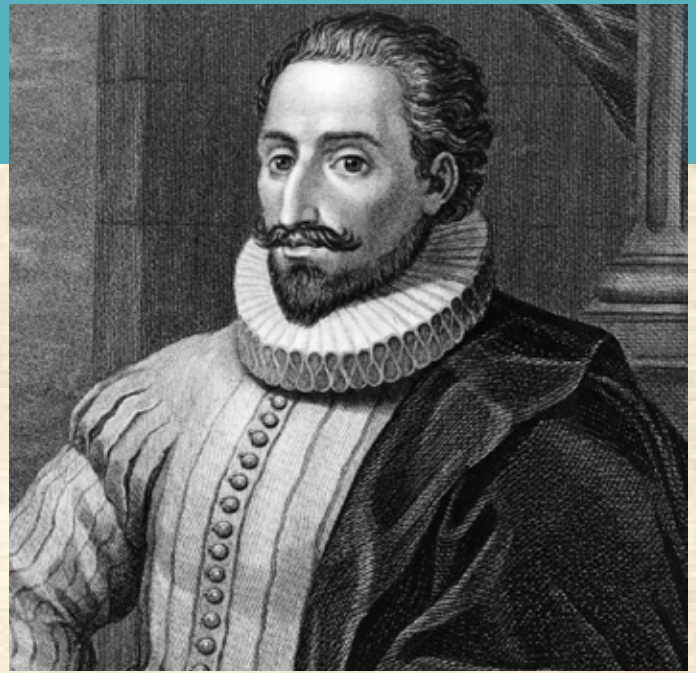
ABOUT MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

LIFE

Miguel de Cervantes, born in Alcalá de Henares in 1547, was the son of a surgeon who presented himself as a nobleman, although Cervantes's mother seems to have been a descendant of Jewish converts to Christianity. Little is known of his early years. Four poems published in Madrid by his teacher, the humanist López de Hoyos, mark his literary début, punctuated by his sudden departure for Rome, where he resided for several months.

In 1571 he fought valiantly at Lepanto, where he was wounded in his left hand by a arquebus shot. The following year, after recovering from his wounds, he took part in Juan of Austria's military campaigns. Returning to Spain by sea in 1575, he fell into the hands of Algerian corsairs. After five years of captivity as a slave in Algiers, and four unsuccessful escape attempts, he was ransomed by the Trinitarians and returned to his family in Madrid. In 1585, a few months after his marriage to Catalina de Salazar, twenty-two years younger than he, Cervantes published a pastoral novel, *La Galatea*, at the same time that some of his plays, now lost except for *El trato de Argel* and *El cerco de Numancia*, were playing on the stages of Madrid.

Two years later he left for Andalusia, which he traversed for ten years, first as a purveyor for the Invencible Armada and later as a tax collector. As a result of money problems with the government, Cervantes was thrown into jail in Seville in 1597. In 1605 he was in Valladolid, then seat of the government, just when the immediate success of the first part of his *Don*



A PORTRAIT OF MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

Quixote, published in Madrid, signaled his return to the literary world. In 1607, he settled in Madrid just after the return there of the monarch Philip III. During the last nine years of his life, in spite of deaths in the family and personal setbacks, Cervantes solidified his reputation as a writer. He published the *Novelas ejemplares* in 1613, the *Viaje del Parnaso* in 1614, and in 1615, the *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses* and the second part of *Don Quixote*, a year after the mysterious Avellaneda had published his apocryphal sequel to the novel. At the same time, Cervantes continued working on *Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda*, which he completed three days before his death on April 22, 1616—coinciding with Shakespeare's death—which appeared posthumously in January 1617.

What we know of Cervantes's life is the result of a long series of inquiries begun during the first three decades of the eighteenth century. But the most significant contributions have been those of scholars in the early part of the last century, especially Cristóbal Pérez Pastor.

Source: The Cervantes Project

INFLUENCE ON SPANISH LITERATURE

As a literary figure, Cervantes developed all of the genres, including theatre and poetry, but it was the novel that particularly made him stand out from the rest. In theatre he cultivated the “entremés” which were short plays that were put on during the intervals of the longer plays. In poetry he experimented with many different genres, but he himself admitted that the muses had not granted him this gift. Certainly his poetry did not reach the same level as other poets of the time, like Góngora or Quevedo, but this does not mean that Cervantes was not as able. With regards to the novel he used all types of genre, but began with a pastoral novel, which he called *La Galatea* in 1585.

His masterpiece which has made him famous worldwide is *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quixote de La Mancha* (The Ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote of La Mancha). In this book he narrates the life of a country gentleman from La Mancha who goes mad because of too much reading. It was a firm attack on the novels about knighthood, which were very fashionable at the time. The protagonist loses his mind, calls himself a knight and convinces his neighbor Sancho to follow him on a journey to find glory so that he and his Lady

Dulcinea (imaginary name that he has given a female neighbor from Toboso) can become nobility. His adventures as a knight begin in the lands of La Mancha, where he fights against all types of imaginary enemy.



AN ILLUSTRATION OF DON QUIXOTE AND SANCHO

Until this point novels and historical accounts had narrated the life of the protagonist, hero or antihero from birth. Cervantes changed this trend, beginning his novel in the thick of the plot. We know nothing about the protagonist’s birth or infancy because it is not important for the rest of the story. Cervantes gives us a brief explanation of the context of Don Quixote’s life at that moment in time, but there are no descriptions of before the moment when he went mad.

The book portrays the complete ideology of the era. The criticism of knights’ literature has already been mentioned, but the theme itself was huge. Cervantes lived in an age of crisis and great changes, some of which are described



FIRST EDITION OF VOLUME ONE OF *DON QUIXOTE*

in the book. Literature was changing from something that is read aloud, to something that was read in silence. Cervantes thought, along with general opinion, that this type of “silent” literature could provoke insanity.

In the novel he includes all the genres that were fashionable in 16th century literature: pastoral, Moorish, knights, etc, creating a huge contemporary literary treaty. All of the genres are perfectly woven together and link to the central theme. Don Quixote represents idealism as he is motivated by the idea of glory and honor, which thus projects an image of the author himself into the adventures.

In terms of the formal structure of the novel, it is written in the form of a discovered manuscript. Cervantes tells us that he is not the author of the book, but that he found it. It was a manuscript signed by a certain Cide Hamete Benengeli. This format has been widely used in literature but Cervantes probably used it because of his origin, since it was already suspected that he had Jewish ancestors, and so it worked as an alibi against the Inquisition.

During the Renaissance and the Baroque period a debate arose about realism and probability. As a supporter of probability, Cervantes believed that artwork had to be believable. This meant that the fantastic elements that appear in his novels had to be explainable in some way. Don Quijote gives the author an excuse to include fantasy because it could be counteracted by Sancho Panza’s simple rational explanations for everything supernatural. This makes Cervantes way ahead of his time, as we see all the fantastic elements through the eyes of the crazy man, which allows him room for unreality.



DON QUIXOTE AND SANCHO ILLUSTRATION

Source: From “El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de La Mancha”
Spanish Literature Learning

A HISTORY OF MAN OF LA MANCHA



1950s

Dale Wasserman travels to Spain and becomes interested in Miguel de Cervantes while researching *Don Quixote*.

1959

Wasserman creates a made for television play, *I, Don Quixote*. Lee J. Cobb plays Don Quixote.

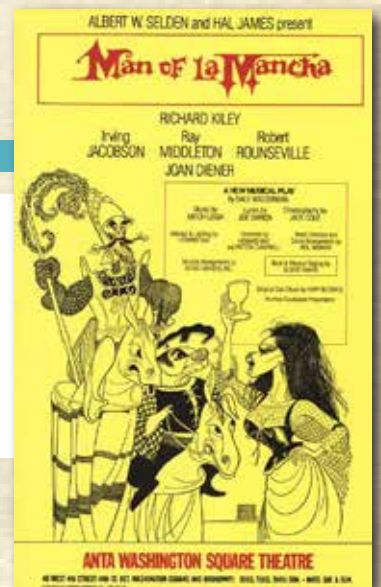


1964

Director Albert Marre and Dale Wasserman turned *I, Don Quixote*, the TV Play, into a stage musical. Composer Mitch Leigh and lyricist Joe Darion write the music and lyrics.

1965

Man of La Mancha premieres at the ANTA Washington Square Theatre in New York City.



1966



Man of La Mancha wins five Tony awards: Best Musical, Best Composer and Lyricist, Best Actor in a Musical (Richard Kiley), Best Scenic Design, and Best

Direction of a Musical.

1972

Albert Marre directs the revival at the Vivian Beaumont Theatre.

C. REHEARSALS | PHOTO BY EMILEE ELOFSON



1972

Peter O'Toole and Sophia Loren star in the film version of *Man of La Mancha* directed by Arthur Hiller.



1977

Albert Marre directs another revival at the Palace Theatre.



1992

Albert Marre once again directs a revival at the Marquis Theatre.



2002

Jonathon Kent directs a revival of *Man of La Mancha* at the Martin Beck Theatre (now known as the Al Hirschfeld Theatre) starring Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio and Brian Stokes Mitchell.

INSIDE MAN OF LA MANCHA

In a speech President John F. Kennedy never got to deliver on November 22, 1963, he had planned to say, "We are in this country watchmen on the walls of freedom. We ask, therefore, that we may be worthy of our power and responsibility, that we may achieve the ancient vision of peace on earth, goodwill toward men."

That's the core of *Man of La Mancha*, inspired by – though not literally based on – Miguel de Cervantes's timeless 1615 masterpiece *Don Quixote*, the second biggest selling book in the history of the world. Like Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine's Sunday in the Park with George, *Man of La Mancha* is an examination not only of the art but of the artist as well. As critic Norman Nadel wrote of *Man of La Mancha*'s literary source, "Cervantes had begun *Don Quixote* as a satire on the romantic literature of his day, about 360 years ago, but he went on to write a durable compendium of human folly as well as a testament to man's unquenchable spirit." The novel was the prototype for a whole genre of comedy, in which the sanest characters can't see the real truth of life, and only the lunatics are truly wise. The progeny of *Don Quixote* even includes modern television shows like *Third Rock from the Sun*, *Green Acres*, *News Radio*, and others, as well as hundreds of plays and movies.

Life magazine's critic Tom Prideaux wrote of *Man of La Mancha* in 1965: It is easy to dismiss this play as sentimental. But the audience's tears are shed not so much for Quixote's death as for his undying valor – his bravery in still



BRONZE STATUES OF DON QUIXOTE AND SANCHO PANZA AT THE PLAZA DE ESPAÑA IN MADRID, SPAIN

being, in the end, his own dream-ridden self. In a time when men complain about losing their identity, of being mere cogs and numbers in a computerized world, the spectacle of a rampantly individual Don Quixote is welcome. His constant homage to spiritual ideals touches a chord, especially among the young today who are so earnestly and vociferously finding ideals among political realities. The audience's tears testify to the aching human ambivalence of Quixote, who is both a criticism and a defense of man's idealism. In making us love him and recognize parts of him in ourselves, this absurd but magnificent dreamer has revealed deep truths. He has shown to what an important extent all men can, and must, create their own reality – and how inspiring and dangerous it can be.



A PORTRAIT OF MIGUEL DE CERVANTES

You'd almost think Prideaux had written this in 2004, about the sudden and exciting new influx of young people into the political process, about the human disconnection of our increasingly computerized world, about a new kind of spirituality that is sweeping the world and that does not exclude or demean others' beliefs. Quixote's "bleak and unbearable world," a world that demanded idealism, was both the 1960s and today.

Being primarily a playwright, Cervantes' one great novel was at its core about the Battle Between Reality and Illusion, the same eternal tension of the theatre, and the most central tension of musical theatre in particular. Just as Quixote must navigate the fine line between illusion and reality, so too do all musicals have to maintain the same balancing act. Though they may present entirely - even painfully - realistic

emotions, issues, people, and worlds, the act of breaking into song will always belong solely to the world of illusion.

Cervantes' famous story simply had to be a musical.

CREATORS OF *MAN OF LA MANCHA*

And yet no other musical - except perhaps Andrew Lloyd Webber's *Phantom of the Opera* or Frank Wildhorn's *Jekyll & Hyde* - divides musical theatre lovers as completely as *Man of La Mancha*. It is considered by many to be a masterful, unconventional, deeply moving piece of theatre; but to others, it's sentimental and clichéd. This show sits at the far opposite end of the spectrum from the Ironic Musicals like *Chicago*, *How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying*, and *Urinetown*. It was

born out of the experimental theatre movement of 1960s New York, and in its indictment of the establishment, of authority, of standards of beauty and morality, of government and religion, the show came from the same anger that spawned anti-government films like *Dr. Strangelove*, *A Clockwork Orange*, *2001: A Space Odyssey*, *Soylent Green*, and *The Candidate*. But that angry idealism is too often ignored or missed by contemporary audiences, and sadly, even by directors working on the show.

In a sense, modern audiences have become Dr. Carrasco in *Man of La Mancha*, afraid to expose their emotions for fear of being ridiculed or considered weak, afraid of standing up for what they believe in. Because the song "The Impossible Dream" (actually called "The Quest" in the show's original program and score) was embraced by every two-bit crooner in the 1960s and 70s, the song - and its lyric - became a cliché. But as we must with shows like *Carousel* and *Show Boat*, we have to look at *Man of La Mancha* fresh, see the sophistication and truth in it, and give it another chance. There is much to admire and enjoy in this show if we only let ourselves.

Man of La Mancha was not written to be seen as it is today, almost exclusively set on proscenium stages with a stark division between actors and audiences, often in cavernous theatres. *La Mancha* was written to be played in a small theatre, and in its original New York production, it was staged in three-quarter thrust, with the audience on three sides of the stage. Just as Cervantes' novel rarely provides much detail of the settings of Quixote's adventures, leaving it up to the reader's imagination, likewise the musical's creators wanted their show to be extremely



BRIAN STOKES MITCHELL IN THE 2002 BROADWAY REVIVAL OF *MAN OF LA MANCHA*

minimalist, with a bare set, minimal costumes and props, and the challenge to its audience to participate in the storytelling through the use of their own imagination. But it asks for us to participate in another way as well. In its heart, *Man of La Mancha* is about the 1960s, and by extension, about any time of political unrest - including today - and it is about the responsibility of each of us to make the world a better place than we found it.

MAN OF LA MANCHA AND POLITICS

Man of La Mancha is set in a prison vault, a waiting room of sorts for those to be tried by the Inquisition or other courts. And that prison and all it implies swims under the surface of the show throughout, never letting the



AN ILLUSTRATION OF ENGLISH MERCHANT NICHOLAS BURTON, WHO WAS ACCUSED OF ATTEMPTING TO PROMOTE PROTESTANTISM IN SPAIN.

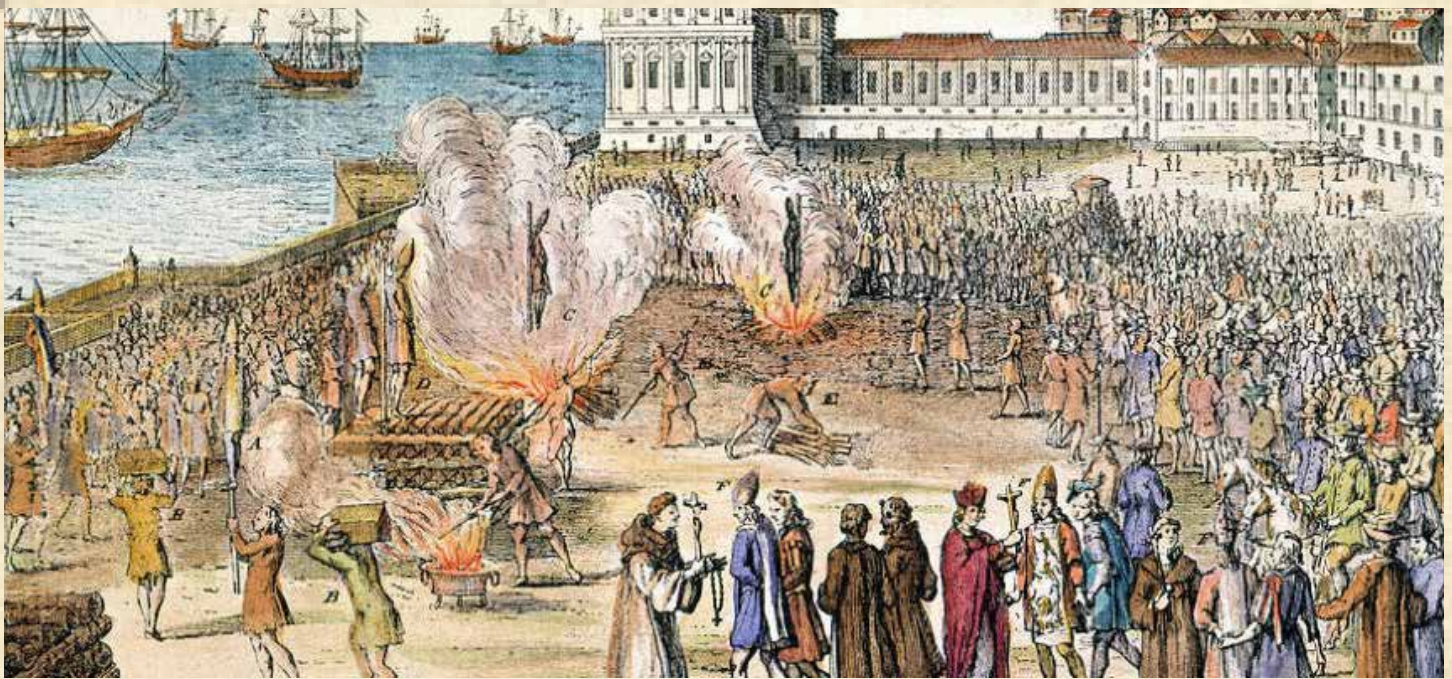
audience forget that this story is being told inside a cell, to an audience who are also imprisoned. References to imprisonment are everywhere in *La Mancha*, in explicit terms, as in the scene with the Moors, and also more subtly, as when Quixote speaks of his “captive heart.” And certainly, many of the characters in the interior story are metaphorically imprisoned, including Aldonza, Antonia, and others.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, opposition to the Roman Catholic church swept across Europe, and Spain in particular feared being overtaken by Muslims and Jews. So with roots going back as far as 1100 a.d., Pope Innocent III established a tribunal in 1215 called

the Inquisition to try people accused of heresy against the church. The word heresy comes from the Latin word for choice. In other words, choice was not an option when it came to God; you believed what the Pope told you to believe, or else. The Inquisition was originally intended to protect the Church and to protect “civilization” in a world where secular law enforcement was often absent or irrelevant. There was no central authority (other than the Pope), no single Inquisition, but instead several relatively independent Inquisitions, in Italy, Spain, and Portugal, and later in Latin America.

The European concept of “innocent until proven guilty” was too high a standard to successfully fight the spread of heresy, so the Pope changed the rules. He appointed “inquisitors” who would secretly gather information, opinion, rumor, and gossip, build their case, and then arrest and accuse the alleged heretic. It was then up to the accused to recant or be burned at the stake. Those were the choices. And even if the accused recanted and admitted his heresy, he still had to inform on others, much like Salem Witch Trials and the House Un-American Activities Committee in America in the 1950s. If the accused would not inform on others, he would be imprisoned anyway and be fined all his possessions. In some cases, people were accused posthumously, and if convicted, their graves would be vandalized and they still would be fined all their possessions; but since they were already dead, that meant their surviving family would be stripped of their home and possessions and left destitute.

By the early 1400s, the Inquisition began to fade from public view. Except in Spain.



AN ENGRAVING OF THE SPANISH INQUISITION BY B. PICART.

During the Middle Ages, Jews had been expelled from most of Europe and many had settled in Spain, where they lived happily. But by the end of the 1300s, economic and social problems sent Spaniards looking for scapegoats and they found them in the Jews. Hoping to end the resulting violence and upheaval, the crown declared that all Jews in Spain either had to convert to Christianity or leave the country. Those who did convert now could rise to high social, governmental, and religious positions previously off limits to them, but this brought with it resentment and fear from Christians who could not rise as high. And so the Inquisition was resurrected.

The new and improved Spanish Inquisition, the most feared and brutal of all, reached its height in Spain during the days of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. Quite separate from the Inquisition which had come before, this one was controlled not by the Pope, but by Ferdinand, who carried it to outrageous extremes, in large part in order to acquire for himself the great wealth held by the converted Jews of Spain.

The Inquisition was used as a cloak for grand larceny as well as political and private revenge, and the inquisitors were known for their fanatical zeal and great cruelties. It was a product of its time - the church and state were united closely (mostly for the profit of the state), and heresy was considered a crime against both, to be compared only with high treason and anarchy.

The Inquisition continued in modified form in Spain until 1820. The Congregation of the Holy Office was established by Pope Paul III in 1542 to review the judgments of the Inquisition courts and to examine charges of heresy. It was supplanted during the Vatican Council II (1962-1965) by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Miguel de Cervantes was tried by the Inquisition in 1597, and was excommunicated for "offenses against His Majesty's Most Catholic Church," escaping more severe punishment, which could've included burning at the stake. He served several prison terms.

THE SIGNIFICANCE

It's important to remember the times in which *Man of La Mancha* was written, times that mirror the current atmosphere in America, a sharply divided country, a battle between the doves and hawks over a current war, a distrust of government, and so much more. Quixote, at least as he's portrayed in *Man of La Mancha*, is a hippie. Wasserman describes him this way:

The Knight of the Woeful Countenance is a world-class symbol of nonconformity, an idealist, posited against an overly rational, cynical age. He believes in love's power to prevail over all challenges, even death. And he imagines the world not as it is but as it might be.

But look even deeper. There are parallels between our world today and the world into which the Spanish Inquisition was imposed. The Inquisition's doctrine of guilt-by-association and cleansing by informing on others, was mirrored in America's own Communist Witch Hunts in the mid-twentieth century. And the long-ago religious "Holy War" in Spain between the Catholics on one side and the Jews and the Muslims on the other, mirrors more recent religious wars, including the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, the Muslims and Hindus in India, and the current worldwide battle between Christian fundamentalists and Muslim fundamentalists. Sixteenth century Spain was embroiled in the same kind of ethnic cleansing we've seen in Nazi Germany, the Balkans, Kosovo, Iraq, and elsewhere.

Those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it.



PETER O'TOOLE AS DON QUIXOTE

But *Man of La Mancha* goes even further. The Spanish Inquisition – as well as its modern parallels – are not just a backdrop for the story, not just an outside evil that surfaces here and there in the script. No, Quixote's story is a metaphor for the world of the Spanish Inquisition. Quixote is a social and political heretic. He does not accept the mainstream view of the world. He does not accept its rules. He will not adhere to its philosophy. And in both worlds, the only answer is to confess or be killed. Because Quixote will not confess to being insane, he is "murdered" – in other words, Carrasco's tactics "kill" the idea that is Don Quixote. When Carrasco is done with Quijana, Quixote no longer exists. He is dead. Like unrepentant heretics or Jews, Quixote simply disappears.

Source: *Inside Man of La Mancha* By Scott Miller

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Set design for Theater Latté Da's Man of La Mancha. Set design by Michael Hoover