School Matinee Series • Study Guide
2017/2018

David Gonzalez
CUENTOS: TALES FROM THE LATINO WORLD

Mon • October 16 • 9:15 & 11:15 am
Welcome to the Hop

A performance needs an audience, so be prepared to play your part!

Theater Etiquette

When entering the Hopkins Center, show consideration for all those sharing the building by remaining quiet and respectful in common areas.

Be aware and use quiet voices. Remember that live theater differs greatly from watching television or movies or attending a sporting event. Live performers can hear and see you and are easily distracted by any talking or moving around in the audience. Even the smallest sounds can be heard throughout the theater, so it’s best to be quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance. Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation!

Important to remember: Backpacks, food, drink, and gum are not allowed in the theater. Please turn off all cell phones and note that recording the performance or taking any photos is strictly prohibited. Hats off! It is respectful to remove hats during your time in the theater.

Information For Teachers

Prepare—review this study guide for context that will help your students engage with the performance. Check in with the Hop if you have any questions or concerns about content. Read the letter that accompanies guide—Hop staff often requests details about your visit including how many buses you’ll be bringing and what accommodation you need.

Arrive—arrive 30 minutes prior to start time to allow time for Hop staff to check you in and escort students to their seats. Hop staff will ask you for a head count of students. Please visit hop.dartmouth.edu/online/plan_a_successful_visit to review our bus policy before arrival.

Lunch—sometimes we are able to offer a space for schools to eat bag lunches following the show. Check the letter that accompanies this guide to confirm. If staying for lunch, please confirm with Hop staff one week prior to show. The day of the show, please bring lunches in boxes or tubs labeled with school’s name. Hop staff will take lunches to the lunch space and escort school group there following the show. Schools are responsible for calling their own bus back to the Hop when they are ready to leave.

Ticketing Policy—no tickets are issued for school matinee performances. Seating placement for each school group is determined by Hop staff. Please let them know if you have a seating request or accommodation; we do our best to keep each school group seated together. Payment is required 30 days before the performance regardless of whether all students are able to attend on the day of the show—please feel free to bring extra chaperones or school staff to fill any empty seats.

Photography—though photography by the audience is prohibited, the Hopkins Center may take photographs during the performance for use on our website or other promotional materials. If you or your students do not wish to be photographed, please let Hop staff know.

The Show Must Go On!—we do not cancel events due to school closings for inclement weather. Performances will only be cancelled if the artist is unable to reach the theater. Schools will be notified by phone if this occurs. We do not issue refunds for performances missed due to school closure. Please contact Hop staff if you find your school unable to attend for this reason.

This study guide was created by the Hop’s Outreach and Arts Education team. To download copies of this and other guides, visit hop.dartmouth.edu/online/outreach

Enjoy The Show!

Hopkins Center Outreach Department: Stephanie Pacheco, Outreach Manager
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The Hopkins Center Outreach & Arts Education department embodies the Hop’s mission to “ignite and sustain a passion for the arts.” It provides Dartmouth, the community and beyond rare personal contact with artists and a broad context for the performing arts. Unveiling the creative process of extraordinarily diverse artists, Outreach programs touch more than 14,000 lives each year.

Did You Know?

• The Hopkins Center opened in 1962.
• The Hopkins Center was designed by Wallace Harrison, architect of Lincoln Center and the United Nations Building in New York City.
• Spaulding Auditorium houses one of the largest pipe organs in New Hampshire. Can you find it?

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About the Show

“Cuentos” means “stories” in Spanish. In Cuentos: Stories from the Latino World, storyteller David Gonzalez brings to life stories from the myths of Latin America and Africa (see Contextual Background section of guide for more information on these regions). Some of the stories are from David’s life—he and his family are Latino. A three-person band plays music and provides sound effects. Another important piece of the show is the audience—they are asked participate in the performance when prompted by David, including repeating word in Spanish.

There are two performances of Cuentos at the Hopkins Center—one for students in kindergarten–grade 2 and another for grades 3–6. Each show is different.

For the younger students (9:15 performance), Cuentos will include stories such as:

Juan Bobo & the Pig – traditional Puerto Rican folktale about the not-so-wise Juan Bobo

The Man Who Could Make Trees Sing – a true story from David’s childhood about the time his Uncle Jose set up a workshop in the basement and built something very special for him

Chango and the Power of the Drum – Cuban/Yoruba tale about an orisha and the wish to trade the power to tell the future for the power of music. There will be a lot of audience participation in this one!

For older students (11:15 performance), stories include:

Delgadina – a fantastic Chilean story about a young girl, her magical red snake and the trouble that arises when the snake gives her a gift of gold

Obatala and the Creation of the World – Yoruba tale that explains the beginnings of all life

Milomaki – Puerto Rican creation story about how the Royal Palm Tree (La Palma Real), with all its healing powers, came to the island

Vovo – Colombian story of a boy whose kindness brings him magical treasures, but when his brothers choose to ignore the rules that govern these gifts they are in for a rough time

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About the Artists

DAVID GONZALEZ is a professional storyteller, poet, playwright, musician and public speaker. He grew up in a large Puerto Rican family in The Bronx in New York City. David is a cultural ambassador for the U.S. State Department and is the proud recipient of the Lifetime Achievement Award for Sustained Excellence from International Performing Arts for Youth. He was a featured performer at the National Storytelling Festival, appeared for three seasons at the Royal National Theatre in London, England and was the host of New York Kids, a radio show in New York City, for eight seasons. David earned his doctorate from New York University’s School of Education and worked as a music therapist with disabled children for many years.

DANIEL KELLY is an award-winning composer and pianist who loves to transform stories of everyday people with music. He has worked with David Gonzalez on many projects, performed in hundreds of schools, and toured to performing art centers throughout the US and Canada and to the Royal National Theatre in London.

WILLIE MARTINEZ lives in New York City and plays the drums and percussion. He plays many different styles of music. He also composes and arranges music. An arranger makes sure all the instruments playing in a piece of music work well together.

CHEMBO CORNIEL plays the conga drums and other percussion instruments. He was born in New York City to Puerto Rican parents and his music has been used on Dora the Explorer. He was nominated for a Grammy in 2009.
Contextual Background

David’s stories happen in places that may be unfamiliar to audience members. They come from Latin America, Africa and The Bronx.

Where is Latin America?

Latin America is located south of the United States. Though North and South America are continents, Latin America is not. It is a group of several countries where the main language people speak is not English. Instead, most of these countries speak Spanish, Portuguese, French or other languages derived from the now defunct Latin language. These countries share many cultural similarities, as people have traveled between them over many years, sharing traditions. Latin America includes parts of North, Central and South America, as well as the many islands of the Caribbean. David’s stories come from all over this region, including Chile (CHILL-aye), Colombia (co-LOM-bee-ah) and Puerto Rico (pwhere-toe REE-ko). David’s grandmother is Puerto Rican and some of his stories come from directly from her and her family.

What (and Where) is Yoruba?

Some of David’s stories are from the Yoruba (yo-ROO-bah) culture in Africa. Though many years ago part of Africa was known as “Yorubaland,” the word “Yoruba” now refers to a group of people with a similar background and ethnicity, not a specific country or state. Over 40 million Yoruba currently live in parts of Nigeria, Benin and surrounding countries in western Africa. The Yoruba once had the largest population of any ethnic group in Africa, but during the 19th century, many Yoruba were sold as slaves and taken to other parts of the world including Brazil, Puerto Rico and Cuba. Slavery was not an unknown concept to the Yoruba; many Yoruba had their own slaves. Research has shown that many African-Americans have Yoruba ancestors. Yoruba are often religious and spiritual people. One of their traditional religious concepts is that of orishas. Orisha are characters that represent the gods that Yoruba worship. They appear in stories and have adventures that often teach a lesson. Some orisha are: Ogun, (God of metal, war and victory), Shango (God of thunder, lightning, fire and justice) and Esu (a trickster who shares the wishes of men with the gods).

Did you know?

In Cuba, Shango is known as Chango.
Where is The Bronx?

The Bronx is one of the five boroughs of New York City, which is in New York State, the United States of America. David Gonzalez grew up in The Bronx, raised by his Puerto Rican grandmother and surrounded by his extended family. The name “Bronx” originated with Jonas Bronck, a man who first settled the area in 1639. In the 19th and 20th centuries, The Bronx became home to many immigrant groups, first from European countries and later from the Caribbean (particularly Puerto Rico, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic), as well as African American migrants from the southern United States. The Bronx is also home to Yankee Stadium and The Bronx Zoo.

Did you know?

Orishas: a popular festival with spiritual connotations is the Eyo Olokun festival or orisha play, celebrated by the people of Lagos in Nigeria. The festival is dedicated to the God of the Sea Olokun, an orisha whose name means “owner of the seas.”
About Storytelling

People have been telling and listening to stories for a long time. Stories allow us to share information and wisdom between people in a way that is easy to remember. When people travel or move to a new place, they take their stories with them. They also listen to the stories in their new home. This is how stories travel from place to place. There are some groups of people that do not write their stories into books; these stories must be told from one person to another, over and over, to make sure no one forgets them.

Storytelling is universal. Every culture in the world has a tradition of storytelling. Storytelling maintains shared beliefs and values in a community, expressing love of their culture. The storyteller works to suspend the “real” world so that messages can be conveyed through imagery, sound and emotion. By using voice and body movement to communicate, the storyteller can infuse the words of a story with the rhythms and music of life.

How to Tell Stories

When you see David’s show onstage, you will see him, three musicians, a chair, a glass of water and maybe a brightly colored scarf or two. These are not many things, yet whole worlds come to life as David uses his body to move in different ways for each character, his voice to speak in a different way for each character, and audience participation to get everyone involved in the story.

MOVEMENT: David uses his entire body to create the “pictures” of the story. He does this using mime. Mime is a theatrical technique that utilizes movement and gesture instead of words to represent action and emotion instead of words. Though David speaks while he performs, his movements clearly show what is happening in the story. As you watch the show, think about which parts of his body are used most. His hands? His eyes? His arms and legs? Does he create imaginary objects with his body? How does the way he moves change from character to character?

VOICE: David’s voice changes often throughout the performance. He can change his voice to be high or low; he can speed up or slow down. He also sings. Listen for David’s “normal” voice. Then listen for his “narrator’s” voice. Finally, listen for all the voices of the different characters. How does he change his voice for each one?

COMMUNICATION: David’s job is to communicate with you, the audience. He does this by using his body and voice and by inviting the audience to participate at certain times in the performance. David always looks at the audience to make sure they understand the stories. David has lots of fun telling his stories and wants to make sure that the audience has a good time too!
Music in Storytelling

Music tells stories. It can communicate when something or someone is happy (fast, upbeat music) or sad (slow, low music). It can imitate sounds of nature, like birds in a forest or thunderstorm. David includes lots of music in Cuentos because the places and people associated with his stories have a wonderful history of music. Legend has it that the orisha Shango brought the drum to the Yoruba many hundreds of years ago. As the Yoruba and other African people moved throughout the world, they took their skill and love of drumming with them, sharing it with other people. Much of Latin America’s musical traditions were directly influenced by African drums and drumming. Many Latin American musicians have shared their instruments and music with people from other cultures.

About the Instruments

CONGA DRUMS: In Cuentos, you will see and hear many instruments on stage, including guitar and an electronic keyboard. One instrument you will see that you may not recognize are the conga drums. Conga drums are made of wood or fiberglass. Sometimes they are carved from one piece of wood, but often they are made of staves, like a barrel. The head, or top, of the drum is made from an animal skin like buffalo or from a synthetic material. Though closely associated with the country of Cuba and, in general, all Latin American music styles, the conga came from Africa. Other instruments you’ll see onstage are:

- Cowbell
- Shakers
- Tambourine
- Drum set

Fun Fact:

In Cuba, congas are called tumbadoras.
(toom-ba-DOOR-ahs)

A few of the Spanish words in Cuentos:

- arboles (ARE-bowl-ehs): trees
- arco y flechas (AR-ko EE FLECH-as): bow and arrow
- bruja (BREW-ha): witch
- caracoles (car-a-COLE-ayes): seashells
- El Yunque (EL YOON-kay): The rainforest of Puerto Rico
- madera (mah-DAY-rah): wood
- martillo (mar-TEE-yo): hammer
- oro (o-RO): gold
- pajaro (PA-JA-RO): bird
- serpiente (ser-pee-EN-tay): snake
- tambor (tam-BOR): drum

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Pre-performance discussion questions

- What stories do you like to listen to or read? How do you think it will be different to see a story told by one person? How might it be like a movie? How might it be different?

- Do you speak Spanish fluently? If so, how did you learn it? What should other people know about Spanish? If not, do you know any Spanish words? Are you learning Spanish or hope to learn it someday? Why might it be important to know another language?

- One out of every ten Americans comes from a Spanish-speaking culture. Why is it important to understand other cultures? How does your background make you different from other people? How does it make you similar?

Post-performance discussion questions

- What new Spanish words did you learn? Do you remember in which story you heard the word(s)?

- Did you have a favorite story or piece of music?

- When did you see David use his body to tell the story? How did he move to indicate that something had changed?

- If you were telling a story, how would you move and change your voice?

Learning Activities

**We Got the Beat (grades K–2)**

In speaking and in music there is rhythm—even our heart beats to a rhythm! Briefly explain to students that rhythm is a pattern that repeats. In music, a repeating pattern creates a certain series of sounds. Have students create their own pattern and rhythm. Begin by drawing (or having students draw) two or three simple figures or symbols, for example ♥ ✶ ✘. Next, assign a sound using body percussion to each symbol. ♥ might be “clap hands”, ✶ = “stomp feet” and ✘ = “slap legs”. You could also do snaps, vocal sounds, slap the table top, anything that uses the things you have on hand to make sound. Next, create a pattern with the symbols, for example: ✶ ✶ ✶ ♥ ✘ ✘ ✘ ✘. Have students translate the pattern into rhythm by doing the assigned sound with the pattern (stomp stomp stomp clap slap slap). Try it faster and then slower. Ask students what they think it sounds like—an animal in the forest? A song on the radio? A marching band? Next, have students develop their pattern to perform. In pairs, have them share their new rhythm with each other.

**Fly Like a Bird (grades K–2)**

Listen to Pajarillo: youtube.com/watch?v=NdeT4AZ5gWM

The title of this song means “little bird.” As they listen, ask students to use their imagination to hear bird-like sounds in the song. Repeat song if necessary. Students should draw what they think the little bird looks like based on what they heard—remind them to use their imagination. Does it live in a tree or on the ground? Does it eat bugs or fish? What color is it? After they complete their drawing, have them explore moving around the room like their bird. Play the music again as the birds move. Take turns watching all the birds fly. Share drawings with each other. How are the birds different? How are they the same?
Sing in Spanish (grades K–2)

Music, rhythm and repetition can help with learning and memory. Students can practice some simple Spanish words by singing them in Spanish then in English! This song is called “Buenos Dias.” It is about greeting people throughout the day (morning, afternoon, evening): youtube.com/watch?v=25m0yDoKM0Y

World Music Exploration (grades 3–6)

Play these songs for the students:

Pata Pata by Angelique Kidjo: youtube.com/watch?v=cbRgTaiOh_U
Que Rico Mambo by Perez Prado: youtube.com/watch?v=S9-WTUmdm18

Pata Pata is a song from Africa. It was written and first performed in 1957 but was not heard in the United States until 1967. This version is sung in the Xhosa language and performed by Angelique Kidjo, who is Yoruban. Que Rico Mambo is a song from Cuba. There are not many words, but those you hear are in Spanish. This song was composed by Perez Prado, a bandleader and composer from Cuba who also lived in Mexico. This song was written in the late 1940s.

Ask students to compare and contrast these two pieces of music. List all the instruments they hear in each. Next, write a list of adjectives that describe how the music feels in each. What makes them different? What makes them similar? Do they like the song? Why or why not? Using their notes and ideas, ask students to write two-three paragraphs comparing and contrasting the African and Latin American sounds of these songs.

EXTENSION: Students can further research the history of one of these songs—they have been recorded and performed many times by different performers. Why is this a song that people like to listen to and record or perform often? Students may write a short report or make a presentation on findings and conclusion.

In the Beginning (grades 3–6)

David’s story Milomaki is a creation story, a way to explain how things came into being and help people make sense of the world around them. Creation stories also teach the reader or listener about the values of a culture. Talk to students about other creation stories from various cultures. What are the similarities between various creation stories? How are they different? What values do students find in these stories? Ask students to imagine and write their own creation story. After writing their story, ask students to think about how they can use their body and voice to tell the story. Practice incorporating simple movement and vocal changes that highlight important characters or moments. Present stories to class or in a small group. How was telling a story different from writing a story? How does it change from the written version to the spoken version?

EXTENSION: Have students tell their story to another student who then will retell it to the class. How was a classmate’s interpretation the same or different from the original?
**Vocabulary**

**Ancestor:** a relative, often from many years before one was born, like a great-grandparent, great-great uncle

**Borough:** referring to one of five sections of New York City—Manhattan, Queens, The Bronx, Staten Island, Brooklyn

**Composer:** a person who writes music

**Culture:** the beliefs, art and traditions of a particular group of people

**Defunct:** no longer exists or works

**Electronic keyboard:** a portable set of piano keys that work through a series of electronic switches to create sounds and music

**Ethnicity:** relating to a group of people with a common background

**Extended:** referring to members of family beyond mother, father, sisters and brothers

**Fiberglass:** a plastic material that is very strong

**Fluently:** speak easily

**Gesture:** a movement that communicates an idea or meaning, often using hands and the head

**Imagery:** pictures

**Imitate:** to copy a person's movement or speech

**Latino:** from Latin America

**Myths:** traditional stories, especially ones about people from long ago that explain a natural or social event

**Percussion:** musical instruments that are played by striking them with hands, sticks or other means

**Pianist:** a person who plays the piano

**Prompted:** having caused or brought about

**Rhythm:** a strong, regular, repeated pattern of movement or sound

**Spiritual:** relating to religion or affecting the human spirit

**Staves:** tall planks of wood that are put together to form a barrel shape

**Synthetic:** made through chemical processes often to imitate a natural product

**Technique:** a way of completing a particular job or task

**Theatrical:** of or relating to the theater

**Traditions:** customs or beliefs that are handed down from generation to generation

**Trickster:** a person who cheats or misleads people

**Values:** certain things that a person or group of people think are important and useful in life

**Universal:** something done or understood by all people in the world or within a particular group

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**Additional Resources and References**

**David Gonzalez:** davidgonzalez.com

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shango

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bat%C3%A1_drum

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**Download coloring sheets of Cuba and maracas:**
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