

Table of Contents

Play Synopsis	1
The Cast	2
The Costumes	3
The Set	4
The Playwright	5
Miguel de Cervantes	6

Man of La Mancha

A Musical Play by Dale Wasserman

Music by Mitch Leigh

Lyrics by Joe Darion

Original Production staged by Albert Marre

Originally Produced by Albert W. Selden and Hal James

Directed by Scott Nolte

Man of La Mancha

Dramaturg Guide

Created by

Sonja Lowe

Scott Nolte	Producing Artistic Director
Karen Lund	Associate Artistic Director
Mark Lund	Design Director
Anne Hitt	Production Stage Manager
Sarah Burch Gordon	Costume Shop Manager
Pam Nolte	TTC Ambassador/Co-Founder
Rick Rodenbeck	Finance & Operations Director
Nikki Visel	Marketing Director
Daytona Strong	Communications Manager
Sonja Lowe	Marketing Assistant
Zach Brittle	Director of Development
Anne Kennedy	Development Associate
Jenny Cross	Patron Services Manager
Kiersten Likkel	Box Office Manager
Marty Gordon	Custodian
Sara K. Willy	Director of Education
Nathan Jeffrey	Director of Outreach
Michael Adams	Patron Representative
Paul Adolphsen	Patron Representative
Laura Bannister	Patron Representative
Alysha Curry	Patron Representative



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www.taproottheatre.org

*We value faith. We respect people
We celebrate theatre.*

Play Synopsis

Playwright Miguel de Cervantes and his trusty servant have been thrown into prison by the officials of the Spanish Inquisition. In order to prevent all his belongings (including a precious manuscript) from being destroyed by the other prisoners in their mock trial, Cervantes must think fast. With his back against the wall, the desperate playwright uses his only weapon; he distracts the prisoners by telling them the story of Don Quixote.

Alonzo Quijana, begins Cervantes, is a simple country gentleman who in his madness has decided that he will be a knight and call himself Don Quixote de la Mancha. Sancho Panza becomes his squire and together they ride forth to “right all wrongs”.

At a roadside inn (which Don Quixote thinks is a castle) they meet Aldonza, a poor kitchen servant and a prostitute. Don Quixote falls in love with her at first sight and calls her Dulcinea. He sees her as a beautiful high-born lady, not the “kitchen slut” that everyone else knows. Aldonza has never had anyone treat her kindly before and she can’t understand Don Quixote’s adoration.

Meanwhile Alonzo’s friend Sanson Carasco and the local priest are hatching a plot to bring Alonzo home and cure him of his madness. Their plan works too well. Alonzo falls unconscious and when he wakes he does not remember his adventures as Don Quixote. He is very weak and seems to have lost the will to live. Aldonza comes to visit him and inspires him to take up his quest as Don Quixote. Alonzo Quijana dies, but he dies triumphant, believing he is Don Quixote with his “Dulcinea” at his side.

As Cervantes finishes the tale he is summoned by the guard to face his Inquisition trial. The prisoners return Cervantes’ manuscript to him as he and his servant exit to face their next adventure. Cervantes is confident that they will not be executed and we feel that somehow he will be able to talk his way out of the next trial too. Perhaps he will tell them the story of Don Quixote.

The Cast



Candace Vance



April Wolfe



Pam Nolte



Don Darryl Rivera



Ryan Childers



Mike Oliver



Stephen Grenley



Faith Russell



Jeff Berryman

The Characters

Jeff Berryman—Cervantes, Don Quixote, Alonso

Ryan Childers—Captain, Guard, Duke, Jose, Muleteer, Dr. Carasco, Gypsy

Stephen Grenley—Governor, Innkeeper, Muleteer, Gypsy

Mike Oliver—Guard, Windmill, Pedro, Muleteer, Padre, Gypsy

Pam Nolte—Wench, Muleteer, Maria, Housekeeper, Mother Bain, Gypsy

Don Darryl Rivera—Manservant, Sancho, Anselmo, Muleteer

Faith Russell—Wench, Muleteer, Fermina, Barber, Gypsy

Candace Vance—Aldonza, Dulicnea

April Wolfe—Wench, Muleteer, Antonia, Graciosa, Gypsy

What to Watch For.

Man of La Mancha is a play within a play. As Cervantes begins to tell the story of Don Quixote he asks the other prisoners to help him “act out the story”. This means all of the actors on stage will play multiple parts. In Taproot’s production we have 9 talented actors playing a total of 42 roles! As you watch their performance notice the changes in an actor’s voice or in their posture that make each character different.

The Costumes



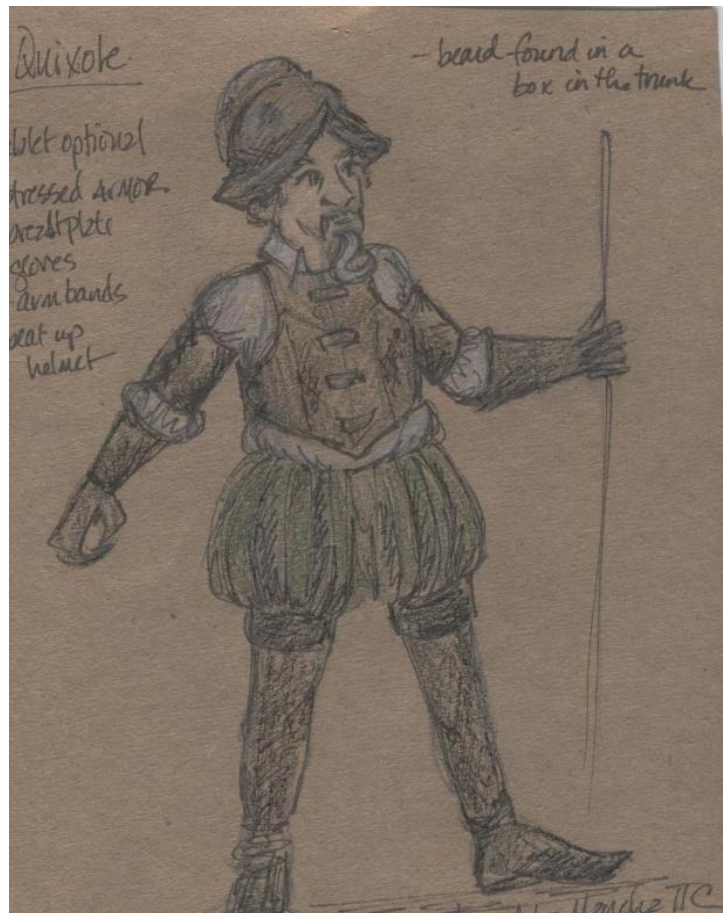
The Designs

These are some of the sketches that costume designer, Sarah Burch Gordon created for *Man of La Mancha*. A costume designer will bring these sketches to the first rehearsal so the actors can see what kind of costumes they will be wearing. Sometimes the sketches are accompanied by little scraps of fabric; which show what kinds of cloth will be used for each costume.

When creating costumes for *Man of La Mancha*, Sarah did specific research into 16th century Spain and the styles of clothing worn by different people at that time. Some of the prisoners are men and some are women, some were once wealthy and some have been poor all of their lives. All of these factors will affect the kinds of clothes that they wear on stage.

What to Watch For

Because the actors are playing so many different roles in *Man of La Mancha*, Sarah also needed to design costumes that were versatile. Since most the actors never leave the stage the costume changes needed to be simple and quick. As you watch this production look for the simple pieces of clothing that actors put on/take off as they change characters.



The Set



The Setting

Man of La Mancha takes place in a dungeon cell. This is an important background to the story. All of the prison characters are trapped together in this horrible place. Cervantes, however, offers them a way to escape through their imagination. As they begin to act out the story of Don Quixote they change their cell into a myriad of different places: an inn, a church, a windmill, etc.

What to Watch For

One of the challenges for our production of *Man of La Mancha* is that the actors rarely exit the stage. After all the whole idea of a dungeon is that you can't get out! This presents a problem for a director because while a number of actors have to be on stage not every actor is in every scene. Mark Lund designed this set to have plenty of corners and niches where actors can "get out of the way" of the main action. As you watch this production look for the places where the "extra actors" go in each scene.

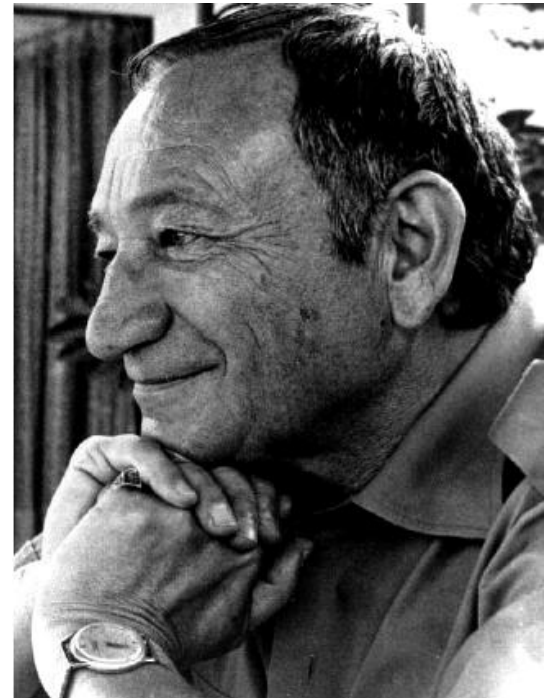
Production Team	
Director	Scott Nolte
Sound & Scenic Designer	Mark Lund
Musical Director	Edd Key
Costume Designer	Sarah Burch Gordon
Stage Manager	Deborah Armstrong Evans
Lighting Designer	Andrew Duff
Props Master	Jennifer Matthews
Dramaturg	Sonja Lowe
Assistant Stage Manager	Sydney Baird
Dresser	Carla Moar
Light Board Operator	Kristiana Matthews
Choreographer	Christy McNeil
Fight Choreographer	Geof Alan
Dialect Coach	Kate Forster

The Playwright

Biography

Dale Wasserman was born around 1914. The exact date is uncertain because Wasserman's parents both died when he was young and his birth certificate has been lost. As a child Wasserman was moved to several different orphanages and homes of relatives. At the age of 14 he ran away from home and lived what he called "a hobo life." Wasserman described hobos as "wanderers who worked." He spent many years riding the freight trains from town to town and working odd jobs wherever he could find them.

Wasserman had almost no formal education. He taught himself by stealing library books from one town and returning them to a library in the next town. When he was 19, he happened to get a job with a theatre group. After this he found several different jobs in different theatres, working as a stagehand, a technician, a director and eventually a playwright.



Wasserman wrote over 75 scripts for television, stage and film before his death in 2008. His most famous script is the musical play *Man of La Mancha*. This script was originally a non-musical television play entitled *I, Don Quixote*. *I, Don Quixote* aired in 1959 and was very popular with the television viewers. Years later, Wasserman collaborated with lyricist Joe Darion and composer Mitch Leigh to turn his script into a stage musical. Most people thought that a play about a Spanish writer who lived and wrote in the 16th century would never be a success on Broadway. When *Man of La Mancha* opened in 1965, it started out in a tiny theatre, but the play was so good that it began to draw huge crowds. It won five Tony Awards in 1966 and has gone on to become one of the world's most popular musicals.



What to Watch For

Dale Wasserman believed that an important key to the success of *Man of La Mancha* was the fact that the audience is asked to use their imagination to make the story come alive. He specifically didn't want large, flashy special effects to be used on stage. As you watch this production notice that the character of Miguel de Cervantes uses only objects and furniture found in the prison cell or pulled out of his "theatre trunk" to act out the scenes from the Don Quixote story.

Miguel de Cervantes



Biography

Born in 1547, Miguel de Cervantes is one of the greatest novelists of the Spanish language. He also wrote plays, poems and short stories. His masterpiece, *Don Quixote*, is one of the most important and influential books in the history of the modern novel.

In 1570 Cervantes joined the Spanish forces at Naples, Italy, and fought against the Ottoman Empire. He served in the famous Battle of Lepanto in 1571 where his left hand was permanently injured. Afterwards, Cervantes received letters of recommendation and obtained leave to sail back to Spain. During this journey his ship was captured by pirates. Cervantes was taken prisoner and lived in slavery for five years. At last, in 1580, Cervantes was ransomed by his family.

Upon returning to Spain, Cervantes looked in vain for a government position that would allow him to earn enough money to support his family and also pursue his main passion, writing. Eventually he took up several different contracts as a tax collector. This was hard and grueling work, traveling from town to town to collect payments of grain and crops from villages that were never too happy to see the tax collector arrive. Cervantes even got in trouble with churches who objected to his taxation, and once the government accused him of fraud and had him thrown into prison.

In 1605 Cervantes published Part 1 of his novel, *El Ingenioso Hidalgo Don Quijote de la Mancha*. Although Cervantes would never earn very much money from his masterpiece, the book gave him an international reputation as a writer. Cervantes' health was beginning to fail at this time, but he poured all his energy into publishing several more works before his death in 1616.



What to Watch For

Dale Wasserman includes several different bits of information about Miguel de Cervantes in his script. He does this most often by having the character of Cervantes talk about his past. As you watch this production notice how certain facts about Miguel de Cervantes' history are woven into the dialogue.