

COMPANY CRISTINA VERBENA

Storytelling has been my primary occupation for more than twenty-five years. In my work I like to alternate between **traditional materials**, tales, songs, legends, tongue-twisters and riddles, with **literary-sourced material**, poems and stories adapted to orality. I view literature as something that flows - from the book to the lips. I have told stories in Spain, Italy, France, Belgium, Portugal, Argentina, and the United States.

I studied Hispanic Philology and Theatre. Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Zaragoza. Postgraduate scholarship at the University of Padua, Italy. Postgraduate Degree in Translation and Interpreting, University of Siena. I tell stories in Spanish and Italian.

I have been trained in oral storytelling with Ana M.^a Bovo, Juan Moreno, Marco Baliani, Ignasi Potrony, Pepito Mateo, Magda Labarga, Virginia Imaz, Juan Tapia, the PAI theatre company and with every single audience I tell stories to. In poetry with Vicente Fuentes and in singing with Pato Badian.

I do research about folktale motifs, forms of orality, rhythm, ways of intertwining the repertory of oral tradition and free versions of works by authors of universal literature.

I perceive oral storytelling as an art form.

I consider myself a traditional storyteller. My work relies heavily on gesture and voice. I do not need scenography since this is created through words. I narrate stories in the void using body and voice. I appeal to the audience's imagination so as to travel together through the stories.

I enjoy working in calm places with good acoustics.

I work on each story I tell from a theatrical and musical perspective, as if its world were one of a kind.

REPERTOIRE:

I have shows for babies, well accompanied (recommended for one- to three-year-old kids). Inside them, the tales fly in the air and fall sweetly onto us. There are songs that we place in the body. Books that open up and become landscapes, that we can walk through. The word grows to be rhythm, ballad, company, sound play...

Likewise, shows for children or family audiences with traditional stories from many countries that speak of the unexpected and tenderness - of exciting quests. Of a minuscule woman who possesses a massive voice and flowers that bloom as you pass by. With played books, riddles, and poems.

Shows for adult audiences with a closed structure, in line with the style of narrative theatre (***Inevitable***) and other shows where I freestyle the repertoire. The narrative always blends traditional and literary material which together articulate a single voice.

I present narrated poetry, tales of physically or culturally nomadic cultures, (***Donde silban los vientos***/Where the winds whistle), stories whose main characters are women (***Espejos***/Mirrors), erotic tales (***Loco amor***/Crazy love). In all my sessions, short stories by authors such as R. Bolaño, Kae Tempest, Natalia Ginzburg, John Berger, S. Benni, Flavia Company... resonate together with tales coming from cultures like Romani, Inuit, Chinese... and a song to go along with the steps.

If you wish, we can hold **workshops** for girls and boys from nine to fourteen years old with a gendered approach where they can envision individual and collective spaces (***Puertas al cuento***/Gates to the story). We can also go the distance **from the book to the lips** in a workshop conceived for telling and being told.

Or, if you prefer, a workshop where poetry dances with tales, ferociously poetic for those of us who live in this wild forest. Poems that urge us to play the game of travelling, losing, loving, and living (***Zapatos de manteca, pezones de hierro***/Butter shoes, iron nipples).

In my repertoire, I have two projects in good company:

'VOZ(ES)'/VOICE(S) with Pato Badian. Musical narrative piece.

LA VIDA, INSTRUCCIONES DE USO/LIFE, INSTRUCTIONS FOR USE, Music-theatre essay. With the theatre company *Cuarto de tono*.

I HAVE SHOWCASED MY WORK, AMONG OTHER PLACES, IN:

AGÜIMES International Festival, Spain, 2023, 2017 and 2011. Matadero Madrid, Spain, 2023. Sete Falares, Spain, 2023. MUECA, Spain, 2021. Fridays of the Tales and Guadalajara Storytelling Marathon (multiple editions.) **Argentina**, September 2019: Tutú Marambá Festival, Misiones, Argentina. Cuentamares Festival, Mar del Plata, Argentina. **Strasbourg**, France, October 2019. CUCÚ International Festival of Theatre for Babies, 2018, Zaragoza, Spain. Segovia Festival, Spain, 2016, 2013, 2007. International Storytelling festival, **Belgium** 2014. Buenos Aires Book Fair, **Argentina**, 2011. **Cervantes Institutes** of Lyon and Albuquerque - France and USA, 2011. *Palabras Andarilhas*, Beixa, 2010, **Portugal**. **First Prize** in Theatre Contest, Arnedo, Spain, July 2011.

ART DIRECTOR of ***Tardes conFabuladas*** (conFabulated Evenings). Series of oral storytelling sessions for adult audiences at Zaragoza's Auditorium and the project sponsored by Irene Vallejo: ***Érase una voz*** (Once upon a time) oral narration sessions for children at the pediatric ward of Miguel Servet Hospital, Zaragoza, **Spain**.

Publications:

PICTURE BOOK: *El baile de la tarántula* (The Dance of the Tarantula).

Artwork: Rebeca Luciani. Publishing house La Fragatina.

COLLECTIVE RECORD: *Tu latido mueve el mundo* (Your heartbeat moves the world). Espacio Bebé, 2020.