

2008 Bio for Sheila Rocha

Sheila Rocha is an Omaha native of the Pur'hepecha Tarasco nation of Mexico who has been active in non-traditional arts education and liberatory theater for nearly twenty years. She is the multicultural director at the Omaha Theater Company and an Artist in Schools and Communities with the Nebraska Arts Council. She holds an MFA from the Univ. of Nebraska Omaha-Kearney in Creative Writing and is completing a second Masters degree in English at UNO. She has published both poetry and prose in Latino Visiones Magazine and has numerous scripts that have been produced both locally and regionally. She is the 2007 recipient of the Heartland Latino Leadership Award in Arts and Humanities.

Sheila carries on the medicine story tradition handed down to her by her father. She recounts the life experiences of herself and family according to the spiritual and social needs of her audiences. She is the founder of two multi-cultural theater troupes at the Omaha Theater Company: Teatro Mestizo, which performs and develops work relating to the current issues that affect the Chicano/Indigenous communities and Young, Gifted & Black, an African American youth ensemble. She is also the founder of The Indigenous Collective of Theater & Art and is currently collaborating with The Native American Studies Program at UNO on a testimonial story production entitled *Wiping Tears*. The production will travel to urban and reservation areas to address the pressing issues of alcoholism and suicide amongst Native American communities.

Produced Plays

The Story of Me. Children's play commissioned by Emmy Gifford Children's Theater, Omaha, NE, 1993.

Hijo de la Chingada. Bilingual one-act produced by Emmy Gifford Children's Theater, Omaha, NE, 1992. Blue Barn Theater, 1993.

The Wailing Wall. Produced by The Omaha Theater Company, Omaha, NE, 1997.

Recuerdos of the Truest. Produced at The Omaha Theater Company, Omaha, NE, 1998.

Theme from English 'B'. Children's' play produced at The Omaha Theater Company, Omaha, NE. 1998 and 1999.

Black Women for Beginners. One Act produced by Young, Gifted & Black at The Rose, 2003.

Na Ni Indio. One Act produced for the Pedagogy of the Oppressed Conference, Omaha, NE, 2004.

Langston Hughes—Soul Grown Deep. Children's' play commissioned by Omaha Theater Company, Omaha, NE, 2001 and reproduced in 2005.

Voces. A testimonial production addressing the emigrant experience, 2007.

Sacred Sites Tribute to indigenous sacred sites in collaboration with authors A. Hedge-Coke, Laura Tohe and Lois Beardslee. March 2008.

RECENT DIRECTINGS

Sacred Sites Tribute to Native American sacred history through the tradition of theater as ceremony. March 2008.

Voces Bilingual testimonies of the emigrant experience crossing the border. The Omaha Theater Company, Omaha NE. March 2007.

Clueless & Clark. A spoof on the Lewis & Clark expedition from the Native American perspective. Written by Valery Killscrow Copeland. The Omaha Theater Company, Omaha NE. November 2005.

Sneaky A One-act comedy by William Yellow-Robe. The Indigenous Collective of Theater & Art, Omaha, NE. October 2006.