

¡Entusiasmo!

"A triumph... Tolerance, understanding, inventiveness and vision: a strong sense of community, a dedication to peace. These qualities light up ¡Entusiasmo!"

–*The Oregonian*

About ¡Entusiasmo!

¡Entusiasmo! uses a provocative blend of sensuous aerial dance, breathtaking acrobatics, humor, live music, along with a traditional dramatic narrative, to tell the incredible and inspiring true story of Gaviotas. The performance gradually turns a barren stage into a paradise filled with wonder and delight. The music is in Spanish, the text is in both English and Spanish, and the show can be performed in Spanish or English. ¡Entusiasmo! features traditional Colombian music by Los Llaneros and live original music by composer Joan Szymko. Written by Robin Lane, it is adapted from the book *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World* by Alan Weisman.

About Gaviotas

Founded in 1971 by visionary Paolo Lugari, Gaviotas is a village in Colombia that is an exemplar of sustainable culture. Through invention, ingenuity, imagination, and "entusiasmo", Gaviotans have invented over 50 percent of the sustainable technology used in the developing world. When asked about the key to their success, Paolo would point to "whole buildings filled with failed experiments. You can not be afraid to fail." On the savannahs of eastern Colombia, previously considered barren, the Gaviotas have regenerated a native rainforest. They live in peace in the middle of a war torn country and have become a beacon of hope to the world.

A Note From the Artistic Director

"Gaviotas is not a Utopia. In Greek the prefix U means no. Utopia means no place. Gaviotas is a topia, a real place. We want to move from fantasy to reality. If we can do this here, (in Colombia with so much adversity), then people can do it anywhere."

–*Paolo Lugari, founder of Gaviotas.*

I was looking for a story or fable to make into a show. Around that same time I heard about Gaviotas and read Alan Weisman's book *Gaviotas: A Village to Reinvent the World*. I wasn't intending to use a true story for this show, but Gaviotas captivated me. While reading, often stopping to sob for no apparent reason, I became aware of the power of stories to change the way we feel about our own lives. This was a true story about the existence of a village actually governed by the values I believe in, in a country much more troubled and dangerous than ours. This story renewed my waning optimism. These

kind of stories do not get to be center stage. We are inundated with the opposite kind of information.

I wanted to put the story of Gaviotas center stage.

I think this story is not only a story of hope, it is the story of creativity itself. The process that began in Gaviotas over 30 years ago, and is still evolving today, is the closest thing I've read to my understanding of the process of making art.

I wanted to learn more about these people.

In October 2003 I went to a three day event in Colorado entitled "Conversations About Community." A conversation with Paolo Lugari and forty people from around the world who were working to create community, sustainability, or art. Some of Paolo's words in this show and my reflection on them come from my transcription of that experience. Karin Stein, who grew up in Los Llanos, the region of Colombia where Gaviotas is, agreed to create the music, as a way of going home. Joan Szymko's music to Mary Oliver's words provided the perfect complement for the show. Author Alan Weisman gave us visuals, information, and invaluable feedback about the script, as did his wife, dramaturge and sculptor Beckie Kravetz.

Creating a show about the Gaviotas process of collaboration, trial and error, and play, while doing the same, was pure delight.

– *Robin Lane*