

From the Abuelas' Window

A new musical

- **Book and lyrics by Nancy Burke**
- **Music by Ignacio Valdivia**
- **Additional lyrics by Ed Levy**



Synopsis:

In a rural farming village in the Central

Valley of Chile, a young girl (Maribel) comes of age. Her father (Rolando) is 'disappeared' by Pinochet's junta and she receives a gift of an old 'magic' bicycle with which she joins the resistance. The three abuelas, tricky old witches with magic up their sleeves, live in a tall, narrow house overlooking the family's garden. The abuelas and the children's mother (Ines) set their sights on the village school-turned-detention center, where others await transport under the eye of the evil captain.

The daughters of Rolando use three gifts from the abuelas to reunite a lost child with her parents who are among the imprisoned. All hope someone somewhere is doing the same for their father.

Humor, lovable characters and elements of magic realism lighten the plot making this a play for the entire family.

Characters:

The Family

Maribel, 12 year old girl

Sarita, 9 year old girl

Fabia, 6 year old girl

Ines, age 39

Rolando, age 40

The Abuelas

Wilfreda, age 70's

Marta, age 70's

Zoraida, age 80's

Village Grocer Family

Hector Herrera, age 40

Hilma Herrera, age 39

Paula, age 11

Family in Hiding

Sophia, age 30ish

Michael, age 30ish

Sandra, age 9

Heroes and Villains

Manuel, soldier, age 20

Padre Don, pastor, age late 50's

The Captain, Junta leader, early 50's

Background/Chorus

Small group of people held in the detention center

Setting

Small Village in Central Valley of Chile

Time Period: 1970 to 1973

Length of Play: 90 Minutes

Sets

Walled garden of the Lozano's home

Kitchen of the Lozano's home

Village School/detention center exterior and interior

Orchard and Road to Village

Village Church interior

Barn of the Abuelas' house

Plaza at La Moneda (for epilogue)

Background- Historical/Cultural

In September 1973, Augusto Pinochet led a military coup to overthrow the Allende government of Chile and established a dictatorship that ruled until 1990. Under his regime, thousands of Chileans were arrested and disappeared.

Many families of the disappeared still march at La Moneda, the presidential palace in Santiago de Chile demanding to know the fate of their loved ones.

The Museum of Memory and Human Rights, (Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos) in Santiago is a memorial for the victims of the Pinochet dictatorship as Chile continues to address its past and promote tolerance and respect for human rights.

This play pays tribute to the families of the disappeared and is dedicated to fostering understanding of the reasons families emigrate to the United States to become our neighbors and friends.

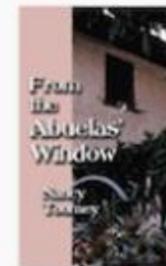


Nancy Burke, Librettist and Lyricist

Nancy Burke is a novelist, playwright and screenwriter. Her work includes *From the Abuelas' Window*, *If I Could Paint the Moon Black*, *Only the Women are Burning* and *Death Cleaning and Other Units of Measure*.

She was a finalist for the J.F. Powers Prize for Short Fiction for *At the Pool* (2020). Short plays include *Midway Island, 1944* and *Make Yourself at Home*. Her screenplay adaptation of *Only the Women are Burning* was a finalist in the Boston Screenplay Competition (2023)

She teaches writing at the university level and was responsible for fundraising for refugee resettlement efforts at St. Theresa of Calcutta parish, Montclair, NJ. [Visit Website](#)

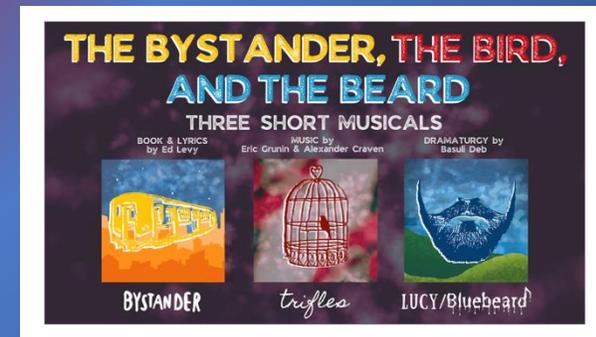
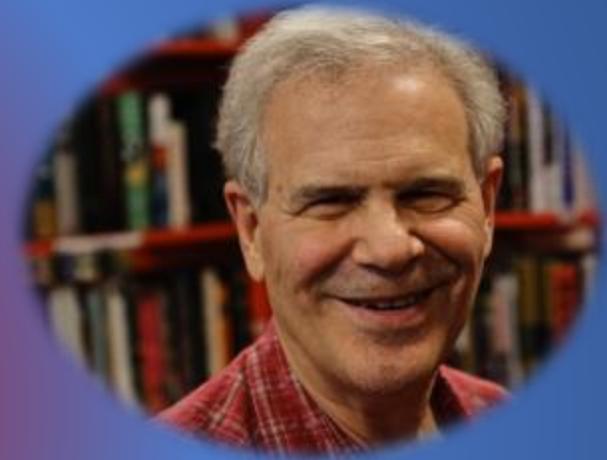


Ed Levy, Lyricist

Ed Levy is a librettist and lyricist trained at the Lehman Engel Musical Theater Workshop, the Einhorn School of Performing Arts (ESPA, and the Dramatist Guild Institute. His work includes ***Bystander*** (Best Short Play or Musical, NY Summerfest, Hudson Guild Theater, 2017) ***Sound Bites 5.0*** Best Music, Signature Theater, 2018). He wrote lyrics and libretto for ***Uncomfortable Sex***, 2017, ***Picket Line, 1936, Trifles***, and ***Lucy/Bluebeard***.

In addition to ***Abuelas'*** he is at work on a full-length musical, ***Strike!***

Additional credits include Assistant Director member of The Directors Guild of America on ***The Wiz***, directed by Sidney Lumet with Michale Jackson and Diana Ross, ***Kramer vs. Kramer*** directed by Robert Benton with Dustin Hoffman and Meryl Streep, ***Stardust Memories*** directed by Woody Allen with Woody Allen and Charlotte Rampling, and many more. [Visit website](#)



Ignacio Valdivia, Composer

Ignacio Valdivia is a Chilean composer, guitarist and producer. He premiered two original pieces with the Lehigh Valley Chamber Orchestra, *Elegy N*1*, (2023), commissioned by Nicolas Gomez Amin, and *La sinfonia del Muro de Flores* (2024), an interdisciplinary project directed by Daniel Djuro-Goiricelaya.

He has written original music for stage plays including Federico Garcia Lorca's *La Casa de Bernarda Alba* (2018), Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2025)) and *Las Dos Muertes* (2025).

Original arrangements and orchestrations include *Les Miserables'* (2019), *Into the Woods* (2023), *Moulin Rouge* (2022), *Jesus Christ Superstar* (2023 and 2025), *Aladdin* (2021 and 2024), *Beetlejuice* (2023), *Oliver* (2024) and *Beauty and the Beast* (2024).

He is a regular presence in the independent music scene in Santiago de Chile as part of the band, *Hijo de Ladron* and as a collaborator with *Alfilera*, *Futnes*, *Gatajazz*, among others.



Song List in Order

Welcome to Our Valley

Manuel's Song

The Chance We Have to Take

Desaparecido

Ray of Hope

Today's Special

If Papa Were Here

How to Show My Gratitude

Holding Onto Love

Count Your Blessings

Let's Paint

One Last Ride

Dirty and Dusty

Arpillera

Learn from this Example

Free to be Free

Three Little Pigs

Names of Our Brothers

Move Along

Too Far Down this Road

Musicians required include guitarist and pianist minimally. For full orchestration, estimate 12-13 musicians..

Preview of Selected Songs (click on icon)

Short Snippets of Songs



Move Along, Move Along



Today's Special



Count Your Blessings

Full Versions of Songs



Move Along, Move Along



Today's Special



Count Your Blessings

Many thanks to Alelí Cordero and Rocío Cancino who lent their voices to these demos.
For copy of script, please contact Nancy (nancyburke2@gmail.com) or 973-747-5695.

Show Timeline:

- Novel published in 2005 (for reviews)
- Libretto Based on the Novel Started February 2023
- Ed Levy Joins Project in 2023
- Composer Search started 2023 via Society for Chilean Music
- Ignacio Valdivia Joins Project in 2023
- Lyrics Written 2023 through 2025
- Early Draft Zoom Reading, August 2024
- Revised Draft Completed April 2025
- Dramaturg Review August, 2025
- Table Read September, 2025
- Launched Indiegogo September, 2025
- Revisions Completed 10/1/2025
- First Stage Reading: November 17, 2025 at Union Congregational Players
- Second Staged Reading: March 15, 2026 at Nutley Little Theatre

The Abuelas' Team is Seeking the Following Next Steps and Support:

Crowdsourcing Campaign on Indiegogo underway.

Seeking Professional Theatre Company for Production

Submission to Theatre Festivals and Fellowship Competitions

Seeking Investors and Producers for a Full Production!

Contact US at nancyburke2@gmail.com or 973 747 5695.