



'The Journey of the Saint'
by César de María

(Lima, Peru, 1960)

Translated and Directed by Rose Cano

Musical director: Meg Savlov

Dramaturgy: Julieta Vitullo

The story of Santa Fortunata's mummified remains

Fortunata was a martyr of the 3rd century of the Christian Era born in Caesarea, Palestine. She was tortured to death under Emperor Diocletian's rule for refusing to renounce her faith in Christ. She was 17.



It is believed that her body was taken to Rome and buried in the catacombs. In 1793, Pope Pius VI ordered the exhumation of her remains and of a glass that was said to contain her blood.



Franciscan priest

In 1796, twenty-five Franciscan missionaries took Fortunata's remains out of Rome, via Cádiz (Spain), on a journey that included Luanda (Angola), Brazil, Argentina and Chile, and ended two years later in Moquegua (at the time part of the Viceroyalty of Peru).

'The Journey of the Saint' reimagines these priests as Jesuits who support the wars of independence in the Americas.

The Jesuits had been expelled from Spain and the Americas in 1767. All across the colonies, their expulsion meant the eradication of social networks and institutions that had been at the core of society for two centuries.

This helped unveil the political and economic contradictions, and the inequities experienced within the Americas, and initiated the breakup between the crown and the colonies, eventually paving the way to independence.



Engraving circa 1800 representing the expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain

The Dominicans and the Inquisition

The Order of the Dominicans was one of the four great mendicant orders of the Roman Catholic church. Dominicans were known as “domini canes,” the (watch) dogs of the Lord, because of their leading role in the Inquisition.

The order's membership achieved its peak during the colonialist expansion of Spain throughout the Americas. One of its most notable figures was Bartolomé de las Casas, known for defending the rights of the Native Americans by stating that, unlike Africans, natives had souls that needed to be saved. This disturbing ideological construct drove up the traffic of African slaves for the next three centuries.





In matters of theology, the Dominicans polemicized with the Jesuits, whose morals they considered too relaxed. In the Americas, the ongoing power struggle between Dominicans and Jesuits was shaped around which order had more influence and space within the educational system.



The Dominicans supported the expulsion of the Jesuits, as this allowed them to gain more power. They did not, however, realize that the power vacuum left by the Jesuits within the educational system would negatively affect all religious orders in the long term.

The wars of independence against Spain

At the end of the 18th century, the Americas were divided into four Spanish viceroyalties, two captaincies and a Portuguese territory.

In 1810, a Revolution broke out in Buenos Aires, leading to the proclamation of the independence of Argentina from Spain.

During the next twenty years, the rest of Spanish America revolted against Spain. By 1830, the former Spanish empire was divided into 16 independent nations which, for many years, waged war against each other.



José de San Martín

Born in 1778 in Yapeyú (Viceroyalty of Río de la Plata, present-day Argentina), José de San Martín was a soldier, statesman, and national hero who helped lead the revolutions against Spanish rule in Argentina (1812), Chile (1818), and Peru (1821).



He famously crossed the Andes from Argentina to Chile with his army of gauchos and “libertos” (freed Black soldiers).

Freemasonry is the largest secret society in the world, founded in Europe around the end of the 17th century and spread worldwide through the expansion of the British Empire.

It's well known that José de San Martín had a connection to Freemasonry. Some historians think that his initial involvement with a lodge connected to Freemasons in Cádiz, Spain, and then in London, was only for the purpose of bringing emancipation to the Americas.



The masonic symbol



José de San Martín,
Liberator of South America

Santa Fortunata, patron saint of Moquegua

Every October 14, worshippers arrive from all over the Moquegua region in order to participate in a large procession in honor of Santa Fortunata. Fairs and cultural shows are held in her honor. These popular festivities blend Andean indigenous traditions with Christianity, and are an example of the religious syncretism that exists in Peru and all of Latin America.





These and other images in this presentation belong to the Peruvian "Trujillo Codex," an 18th century watercolor treasure representing people and everyday life in Peru.



Dramaturgical presentation
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