

# (UN)DOCUMENTS

## An Experience L.A. Event

Thursday, October 20, 2022  
Los Angeles Theatre Center  
Downtown Los Angeles

### KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

- *(Un)Documents* is the first solo show by Jesús I. Valles, an award-winning queer Mexican immigrant actor and poet currently based in Providence, Rhode Island.
- The show was written and is performed by Valles, and was directed by Rudy Ramirez.
- This is the West Coast premiere of *(Un)Documents*, presented by the Latino Theater Company.

**“I learned early on what some people are able to do or unable to do, all based on a few pieces of paper and, you know, some holograms on some plastic. Paperwork becomes personhood at a certain point, and that was never lost on me.”**

—Jesús I. Valles, in *The Austin Chronicle*, 2019

### WRITING PROMPTED BY EXPERIENCE AND POLITICS

Jesús I. Valles was a child when they came to Texas from Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, with their family. The family was undocumented at the time and eventually gained citizenship. Yet in 2009, Valles’s brother was deported after a workplace ICE raid. Valles processed it all through writing, often having “conversations with the documents that we constantly had to pull up” through journaling and poetry.

*(Un)Documents* built on Valles’s poems, and was prompted by the election of Trump to the U.S. presidency in 2016: “I was like, ‘Okay. Limited time, fascism is crazy, we don’t know how long it’s gonna take, or where it’s gonna go. What if you just say ‘f\*\*\* it’ and do whatever you wanted to do? And one thing I wanted to do, always, was writing and theatre. So I was like, ‘Cool, do a solo show,’” Valles told *The Austin Chronicle*.

Source: “Austin Playwright-Performer Provides a New Kind of Documentation in *(Un)Documents*,” by Beth Sullivan, *The Austin Chronicle*, February 15, 2019

“sin papeles,” we say, “without papers,” but the term is wrong

**we are wounded libraries of nothing but paper**

—from the poem “(un)documents” by Jesús I. Valles, published in *The New Republic*, August 24, 2018

## LATINO THEATER CO.

The Latino Theater Company is dedicated to contributing new stories and methods of expression for the American theater repertoire and increasing artistic opportunities for underserved communities. Programming highlights local playwrights and new voices from Latinx, First Nation, Black, Asian American, Jewish American, and LGBTQ+ communities. LTC operates the Los Angeles Theatre Center, a historic landmark in downtown Los Angeles that houses five theaters as well as office and gallery space.

## FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- What does *(Un)Documents* say about citizenship and personhood?
- What does Valles mean by “(un)documentation”?
- Valles told *The Austin Chronicle*, “I have a really deep love for the people I’m talking about . . . for my family and for undocumented communities.” Does this come through in the show? If so, how?

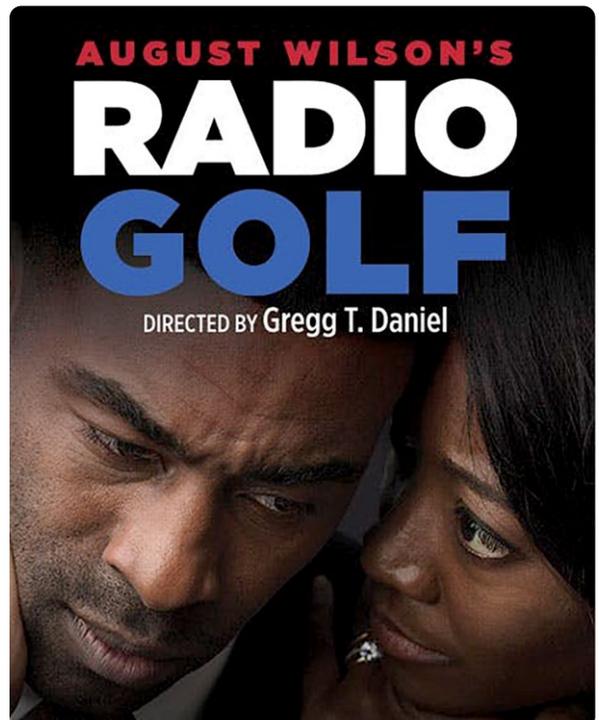
## IF YOU LIKED THIS EVENT, YOU MIGHT WANT TO CHECK OUT:

- Jesús I. Valles on social @thejesucia
- Latino Theater Co. [latinotheaterco.org](http://latinotheaterco.org)
- The Undocupoets Fellowship [siblingrivalrypress.com/undocupoets-fellowship](http://siblingrivalrypress.com/undocupoets-fellowship)
- Cornerstone Theater Company [cornerstonetheater.org](http://cornerstonetheater.org)
- Upcoming Visions and Voices events, including  
**10/25/22** [Lido Pimienta in Concert](#)  
**11/3/22** [Dahlak Brathwaite: Try/Step/Trip](#)  
**11/13/22** [August Wilson’s Radio Golf](#) at A Noise Within  
**12/2/22** [The Brothers Paranormal](#) at East West Players

*In 2020, about 281 million people were living outside the country they were born in, according to the UN.*



Dahlak Brathwaite: Try/Step/Trip



August Wilson's Radio Golf



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## DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**JAVIER GARIBAY** of the USC Libraries selected the following resources to help you learn more about this event. Electronic resources are accessible through the search bar on the USC Libraries homepage at [libraries.usc.edu](http://libraries.usc.edu) but may require the user to log in using their USC credentials.

### BOOKS

- ⦿ Ellie D. Hernández, Eddy Francisco Alvarez, and Magda García, *Transmovimientos: Latinx Queer Migrations, Bodies, and Spaces* (Lincoln: Univ. of Nebraska Press, 2021).
- ⦿ Leisy J. Abrego and Genevieve Negrón-Gonzales, *We Are Not Dreamers: Undocumented Scholars Theorize Undocumented Life in the United States* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2020).
- ⦿ Ana Raquel Minian, *Undocumented Lives: The Untold Story of Mexican Migration* (Cambridge: Harvard Univ. Press, 2018).

### DATABASES

- ⦿ [Contemporary World Drama](#)
- ⦿ [Digital Theatre Plus](#)

### JOURNALS

- ⦿ [Theatre](#)
- ⦿ [Theatre Journal](#)

