



*“Arizona electricity hovered in the air at the premiere showing of "Man From Magdalena". The audience was stunned. Original, moving, completely professional, amazing...” Cathy Anderson, Chicago*

**Tucson Premiere**

# **MAN FROM MAGDALENA**

Story by Patty Christiena Willis | Music by Mary Lou Prince

**Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2010 @ 3:00 p.m.**  
**Most Holy Trinity Catholic Church**

**1300 North Greasewood Road, Tucson, AZ**

**Tickets (\$25) available in the parish office | (520) 884.9021**

50% of ticket sales support microloan projects in Central America ([www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org))

*“...the tale takes hold of your heart and mind...the music stays with you. An extraordinary piece of art, theater born in their own backyard that is worthy of being seen and heard by millions.”*  
*--Carol St. John, Tubac Villager*

In November of 2007, Manuel Jesús Córdova Soberanes, a migrant crossing the border, rescued an injured nine-year-old boy whose mother had just been killed in an automobile accident in the desert. Only eight hours from reaching his destination in Tucson, Soberanes halted his journey to help the boy. He later told reporters that he was thinking of his own four children when he decided to stay with the boy throughout the night. “I could never have left,” he said, “never.” This event inspired Man from Magdalena, the story of a stranger who reveals himself as an angel in our midst.

## ABOUT THE WRITERS

**“... Their work shows the power of the folktale to create wonder.” *Los Angeles Times*  
*The Sunday Times (of London)* hailed Prince and Willis’ performance as “the East-West highlight of the [Edinburgh] Festival.”**

Patty Willis (author-actress) and Mary Lou Prince (composer-pianist) met in Paris when Prince was studying composition with Nadia Boulanger. They co-founded a theater company in Japan that performed at international festivals, twice at the Edinburgh (Scotland) Festival Fringe, and on sacred Noh stages all over Japan. They were commissioned to write theater and music works by the city of Kanazawa, and both won national awards for their work with Japanese instruments and theater forms. One of Willis’ novels is on the recommended reading list of the Japanese Library Association. In Fall 2010, the Swedenborgian Institute awarded her the Bailey Prize for Literature. Prince and Willis collaborations include a cantata, *Songs of the Earth*; a children’s musical, *Frida’s Colores*; a film, *Feast of Light*; theater works including *When the Woman Who Loved Insects Hid* and *Just Between the Three of Us*; and over 40 songs for choir, children’s choir and solo voice. Their new CD *Sonora Morning* for voice, cello and piano will be released in early October.

## THE STORY

The play, performed by a storyteller (Patty Willis), vocal quartet (Marla Daugherty, Suzanne Miller, Seja Snow and Patty Willis), piano (Mary Lou Prince) and cello (Helene Benedikte), opens with an overture on the cello and piano. A rancher, living at the heart of this migration, recounts: Hundreds of strangers cross this land every night on their way from south to north. And of course, that crossing is of interest to lots of people. There are people interested in keeping migrants out and there are those invested in getting them north. The land holds tragedy and salvation. The quartet sings *Wind in the Desert*, touching on the rancher’s hope for a presence that will catch sparrows fallen in storms.

In Magdalena, as a man is readying himself for the crossing, his mother goes to the shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe to pray. In the voice of mothers all over the world whose children are setting out on voyages into the unknown, she sings: Watch them on their way. Keep them safe. The journey begins. The coyote cracks the whip; he will keep his group to their path. They set off into the desert. Almost at his destination, the man from Magdalena spies the boy by the side of their path. In an incredible act of kindness, he gives him his jacket and stays with him throughout the cold night. The stars will guard us, he sings. To keep the boy alive, he gives up his dream. The stranger becomes an angel of mercy.

Author/Storyteller: Patty Willis

Composer/Pianist: Mary Lou Prince

Cello: Helene Benedikte

Madera Vocal Quartet: Marla Daugherty, Claire Coon, Seja Snow and Patty Willis

## PROCEEDS FROM THE PLAY

Fifty percent of ticket sales go to Kiva ([www.kiva.org](http://www.kiva.org)) to help people in Central America and Mexico establish their own businesses, healing problems at the root of migration. So far, our performances have gathered over \$9,000 for micro-loans to embroiderers, merchants, carpenters and farmers in Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Guatemala and Mexico.