

Begonya Plaza is a bilingual actor, writer and filmmaker. She began acting professionally at age nine playing the lead in an independent Hollywood film titled, *Big Sister*. Begonya was born in Colombia, and when she was two years old the family moved to her father's hometown, Gernika, in Northern Spain. At age six, the family moved to Los Angeles. During Begonya's formative years she continued bouncing between these three locations. In Los Angeles City College Theatre Academy, after completing her second year, Begonya was not invited back to the third year. Their explanation was that she didn't fit in. Begonya then studied with Eric Morris and soon after, film director Walter Hill cast her in, *48 HRS*. In a role that originally required nudity, but after Begonya refused, they adjusted the character to wear an Indigenous costume. She also rejected changing her name, and fought against playing only sexy Latina stereotype roles. Begonya moved to New York where she studied dance at Alvin Ailey, and privately: voice, dialects, and acting with the top teachers of that time, including Bill Hickey, Geraldine Page, Michael Howard and others of varied acting styles and approaches. While building an acting career, Begonya attended writing workshops at UCLA extensions, American Film Institute, NYU, and with Robert McKee. Begonya has been directed in featured and starring roles by Oliver Stone, Michael Mann, Amy Jones, Tim Hunter, Clint Eastwood, Phillip Seymour Hoffman and Ellen Kuras, amongst others. At Labyrinth Theatre Company, Begonya originated the role of Ms. Reyes in Stephen Adly Guirgis' "In Arabia We'd All be Kings." Begonya has collaborated in stage productions with artists like: John Randolph, Dan Lauria, Barry Gifford, Ensemble Studio Theatre-West, Austria's Kurt Palm and Russia's, Yevgeny Lansky. In 1987, Begonya spent a year in Spain, raising money, writing, filming, directing and editing a documentary about the bombing of Gernika and her father's childhood experiences during the Spanish Civil War. In 1991 Begonya starred in the CBS series, *Dark Justice*, shot in Barcelona where eventually her daughter was born. "Souvenir Views" is a 45" documentary about a young Catalan man living a rite-of-passage experience during the tragic events of 9/11 in New York City. The film premiered at the 2003 Tribeca Film Festival, La Habana International Festival and aired on The Independent Film Channel for two consecutive years. "Teresa's Ecstasy" is Begonya's first full-length play which she wrote and acted in, opposite: Shawn Elliott, and Linda Larkin. "Teresa's Ecstasy" was produced Off-Broadway at the Cherry Lane Theatre, in New York's historic Greenwich Village, with producer/theatre angel, Jack Sharkey at the helm.