

# Erasure of Women in Juarez

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pression is more difficult than it looks. We want answers; we want to solve the mystery. At most, we want to locate the story outside of anything that could touch us, to congratulate ourselves for attending to a story that is tragic, or sad or powerful. Although there are no definitive answers to what has happened to many or most of the disappeared women of Juarez, the play could do more to help audience members ask themselves

the questions that would awaken appropriate self-examination. What does it suggest about American culture that now hundreds of Mexican women have disappeared while employed at subsistence wages by American companies, and yet so little has been done to protect them and stop the killings? What does it suggest about how much we value the lives of these women -- of women at the margins and women in general -- that most of us know so little about this pattern of disappearances? What

connects our lives to theirs? Although I expect audience members will be moved, the play could do more to prompt them to internalize such questions.

With that said, holding space for stories like these is an important starting point. It is a move against the erasure of these women; it helps us to visualize their faces and voices, and guides us toward the practice of empathy and of treating their lives as valuable. The music of this production -- traditional Mexican folk songs sung by the cast -- give voice to their dreams and hopes. And this play, based on the stories of real women, gives them names: Yolanda. Marisela. Ivonne. Brenda. Zaide. Desamaya.

Artists Repertory Theater's production of "La Ruta" plays through Dec 1 at the Portland Opera stage.

Darleen Ortega is a judge on the Oregon Court of Appeals and the first woman of color to serve in that capacity. Her movie and theater review column *Opinionated Judge* appears regularly in *The Portland Observer*. Find her blog at [opinionatedjudge.blogspot.com](http://opinionatedjudge.blogspot.com).

# FOOD



This super slow-cooker recipe has been a lifesaver. It cooks while I'm away and smells heavenly when I walk in the door in the evening.

## Fruited Chicken

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 large onion, sliced
- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breast halves
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tablespoon grated orange peel
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/2 cup chopped dried apricots
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- Hot cooked rice

### DIRECTIONS

Place onion and chicken in a 5-qt. slow cooker. Combine the orange juice, soy sauce, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, orange peel and garlic; pour over chicken. Sprinkle with apricots and cranberries. Cover and cook on low for 7-8 hours or until chicken juices run clear. Serve over rice.



Slow cooked chicken breasts in a rich, peanutty, slightly spicy sauce. Serve over rice.

## Slow Cooked Thai Chicken

### INGREDIENTS

- 6 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves - cut into 1/2 inch strips
- 1 large red bell pepper, seeded and sliced into strips
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 1/2 cup chicken broth
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin

- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2/3 cup creamy peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 1/4 cup lime juice
- 3 green onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/2 cup chopped roasted peanuts

### DIRECTIONS

1. Place the chicken breast strips, bell pepper and onion into a slow cooker. Pour in the chicken broth and 1/4 cup of soy sauce, then season with cumin, garlic, red pepper flakes, salt and pepper. Stir to blend, then cover and cook on Low for 4 1/2 to 5 hours.
2. Remove 1 cup of the liquid from the slow cooker, and mix this with the cornstarch, peanut butter, 1 tablespoon of soy sauce and lime juice. This should blend into a fairly thick sauce. Stir the sauce back into the slow cooker, and place the lid on the pot.
3. Cook on High for 30 minutes. Garnish with green onions, cilantro and peanuts before serving.

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