

## **Dramatis personae**

Two actors will be sufficient, if and only if they are multifaceted and understand the revolutionary power of language. Transgressions of gender, ethnicity, race and class are not only desired but a must. This means that the protagonists should define themselves by their actions, by their words, by their costumes and surroundings, and by the three languages into which they will be dubbed. During casting, one should not forget to focus on the accents of the speakers. Each voice should be distinctive and the irony traceable but not dominant.

A major job falls upon the set designer, who should not try, at any time, to be realistic, but rather to capture the essence, the characteristic of a person, of a style, of an epoch. Or the original artefacts should be brought into light.

Exaggeration is advisable, in the same way in which it is used by Cantinflas, who with a few lines makes the model, his figure, recognizable to the public. It is thus recommended to cast Cantinflas in person.

### **Maximilian(o)**

The idealistic, naïve, and indecisive, yet full of ambition, younger brother. Even though considered more liberal, Maximilian(o) had been left to boredom in the shadow of the emperor, who by that time had been ruler of the Austrian-Hungarian Monarchy for 16 years, until he became an imposed ruler of Mexico by the French on April 10, 1864. Benito Juárez had already been appointed president 6 years before, during which he suspended payments on debts to creditor nations—Spain, France and Great Britain. Conscious effort was made to surround himself with and to embrace distinctively local elements, as through commissioning portraits of the heroes of independence from Spain, thus positioning himself as heir to the struggles of 1810-1821.

### **C(h)arlot(te)a**

Maximilian(o)'s younger wife by 8 years, *Marie Charlotte Amélie Augustine Victoire Clémentine Léopoldine of Belgium* who, once in Mexico, took the name Carlota. After having been desperately eager for a more challenging role in life, she tried to take her imperial duties seriously and undertook a tour of the Yucatán frontier, visiting the ruins of Uxmal. Being childless, together with her husband, she attempted to adopt as heirs the nephews of the daughter of Mexico's first emperor, but the boys' mother claimed that she had been forced to give up her sons. Rumours say that Maximilian(o) and C(h)arlot(te)a had, essentially, kidnapped the boys.

The scene takes place in the Chapultepec Castle in Mexico City. Period of action about 145 years. Darkness. When the lights go on, one sees a setting with a gold-varnished carriage.

### **Carriage**

Countless joyful moments had by Maximilian(o) and C(h)arlot(te)a with this carriage. In the beginning of 2011, this golden carriage burst across the world's headlines as part of a possible exchange for the controversial feather headdress, known in Spanish as *Penacho de Moctezuma*, that in itself is a stroke of myth, residing in the Museum of Ethnology in Vienna since the 19<sup>th</sup> century.