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LUCHA TEOTL STUDY GUIDE



Photo by Joshua Davis

AT&T PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
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SYNOPSIS

LUCHA TEOTL is a production from Prism Movement Theater featuring a mix of local Dallas acting talent and local luchadores, or wrestlers. *Lucha Teotl* is an immersive experience, with the audience ringside watching luchadores wearing the masks of Aztec gods, playing out a sincere and exciting wrestling storyline. This bilingual show follows a young rambunctious male luchador, Huitzi, teaming up with a more experienced luchador, Coyol, to become the top wrestlers in the world, evoking the epic, multi-year storylines that occur throughout lucha libre.



Prism's goal is to respectfully reflect the high drama and rich cultural history of lucha in a theatrical narrative. They are working with seasoned lucha libre performers in authentically creating the production to represent the community and the craft of this popular entertainment.

HISTORY

LUCHA LIBRE is a professional wrestling tradition in Mexico, characterized by colorful masks, rapid sequences of holds and maneuvers, high-flying maneuvers, and, often, tag-team matches. It differs from American wrestling in that luchadores are often more agile and use more aerial moves than American wrestlers and several weight classes in Lucha Libre cater to smaller, thinner fighters, which is why it is not uncommon for luchadores to begin their careers as teenagers.



Enrique Ugartechea is credited as the first Mexican wrestler, creating this particular style of wrestling in the 1860s based on traditional Greco-Roman wrestling styles. Lucha Libre became televised in 1933 after Empresa Mexica de Lucha Libre (Mexican Wrestling Enterprise) was formed, rapidly gaining popularity and spreading across the country in the 1950s.

AZTEC GODS

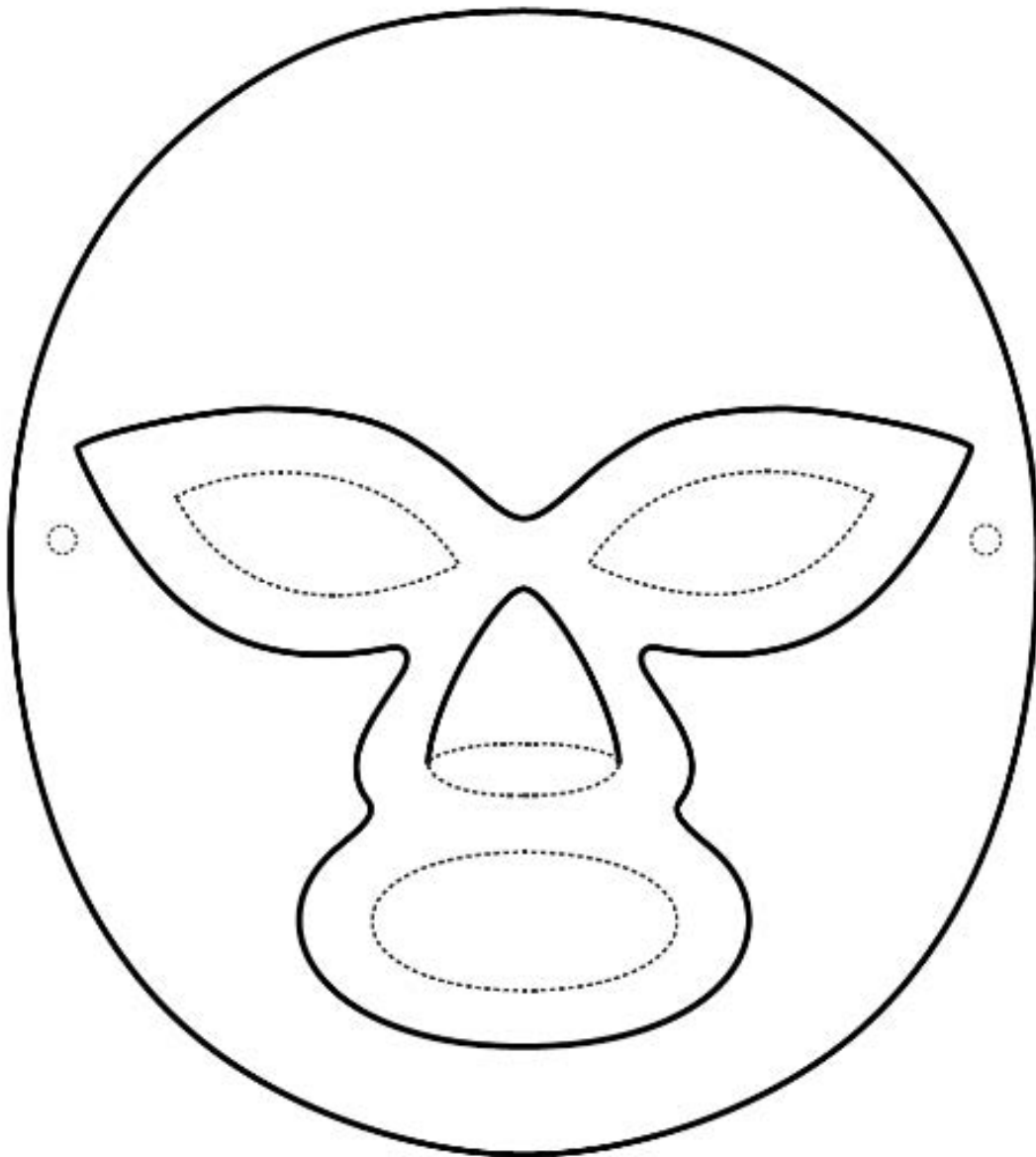
LUCHADOR MASKS are very culturally significant, often evoking images of animals, Aztec gods, and ancient heroes, and are an integral part of the luchador's identity. Masks are considered sacred enough that fully removing your opponent's mask during a match is grounds for disqualification. It is very common for luchadores to wear masks in the ring, but there are also several who wrestle without masks at all.



Many luchadores use masks that evoke images of Aztec gods, as they wear in *Lucha Teotl*. Several gods make an appearance in the show, including Huitzilopochtli – god of the sun and war, often represented by a hummingbird or eagle, Coyolxauhqui – goddess of the moon who was killed by her brother Huitzilopochtli, Quetzalcoatl – the feathered serpent, associated with the sun, the wind, creation, the planet Venus, the dawn, merchants, arts, crafts, and knowledge, Xolotl – the dog-headed soul-guide for the dead and twin brother to Quetzalcoatl, associated with fire, lightning, twins, monsters, misfortune, and more, and Tezcatlipoca – god associated with creation, obsidian, providence, hurricanes, sorcery, divination, temptation, patron of slaves, and more who lost his right foot battling with the earth monster Cipactli, often represented by a jaguar.

ASSIGNMENT

- 1) Choose one of the gods featured in the show (Huitzilopochtli, Coyolxauhqui, Quetzalcoatl, Xolotl, and Tezcatlipoca) and design a luchador mask for them. Consider what colors to use, incorporating the different gods' domains and stories, what the stitching would look like, etc. Get creative!



- 2) Write a paragraph explaining your research and the historical evidence that informed your design choices.