**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**A STAGED READING FOR THE THIRD PIECE IN THE “NEW VOICES” SERIES**

An original piece written by San Francisco resident Justin P. Lopez, *“The Re-Education of Fernando Morales”* will have a one night only staged reading on Saturday, August 20th.

When young Fernando Morales is sent away by his family to a place that can “fix him" of being gay, he becomes split between the present and future. Surrounded by flashes of electricity, love, and Mozart’s *Requiem*, he tries to find some way to save himself. Will he succeed, or is the requiem for him?"

"Justin P. Lopez's play is full of ambition.” remarked Curator of Artistic Programming Daniel J. Eslick. “Structurally, it is rare to see a play that does what Justin's does. Let alone a play that addresses such a poignant, and for many people in the queer community, (myself included) such a scary topic. Yet, Justin managed to thread a needle with an intimate, personal narrative that left me in tears. It's always amazing to see a playwright at work, and we are so happy to be able to empower that voice."

Unlike the rest of our New Voices Series, This will be a one-night only special event and will feature a talkback after the reading with the cast and creative team.

**COVID PRECAUTIONS**

Town Hall Theatre is prioritizing the health and safety of our artists, staff, and audiences above all else. We are keeping close watch on the number of COVID cases and hospitalizations and if we feel we cannot safely produce any of our works, we will move to a hybrid in-person and digital model or postpone to a later date.

Town Hall Theatre has joined Theatre Bay Area’s coalition on COVID protocols (https://www.theatrebayarea.org/page/bayareasafe). Town Hall’s full COVID policy (found at https://www.townhalltheatre.com/covid19) states:

*Town Hall Theatre reserves the right to refuse service to anyone, and anyone violating this policy will be asked to leave the premises immediately.*

***MASKS UP AT ALL TIMES***

*- Masks that cover the nose and mouth must be worn in Town Hall Theatre or during any in-door off-site Town Hall produced events or classes regardless of vaccination status. This includes but is not limited to rehearsals, performances, classes, or meetings. This policy applies to audiences, performers, staff, Teaching Artists, students, visitors, and volunteers.*

*- Masks may be temporarily lowered to consume food or drink, but then must be replaced while not actively consuming food and beverage.*

*- Town Hall will provide disposable masks to anyone who needs them.*

***PROOF OF VACCINATION OR RECENT NEGATIVE COVID TEST IS REQUIRED*** *- Anyone who has received a vaccination must present proof of vaccination in the form of a vaccine card or state-issued digital vaccine record (which may be obtained at https://myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov/).*

*- Anyone who has not received a vaccination must present a negative COVID test from the past 72 hours.*

*- Appropriate photo ID is required to match both COVID test results and/or vaccination records.*

*- Students under the age of 12 registered in classes will not be required to provide vaccination status or COVID test. No-contact (laser, infrared) temperature checks may be administered prior to any onsite, indoor activities.*

*- NO VISITORS will be permitted within Town Hall during class times to minimize the possible exposure to students. Guardians should drop off and pick up their students at the door.*

*- Rapid tests will not fill the requirement for a recent negative COVID test. Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) test results will be the only results accepted.*

**Content Advisory for this Production**

*The Re-Educationof Fernando Morales* contains guns violence, physical violence, domestic violence, electric shock and mentions of suicide.

**ABOUT THE PLAYWRIGHT**

**Justin P. Lopez** is an actor, singer, writer, and boba-milk-tea enthusiast who seeks true connection and humanity in each script and song. Justin's work has received several awards and has been presented by many companies around the country, including Custom Made Theatre Company, The Playground Experiment, Ross Valley Players, and Primary Stages. His plays have been recognized by the Bay Area Playwrights Festival, Playground SF, the Ashland New Play Festival, and other national organizations and festivals. As an actor, recent credits include the world premieres of Kiss My Aztec! (Berkeley Repertory Theatre) and Unbreakable by Andrew Lippa (SFGMC). Find out what else Justin is up to at[www.justinplopez.com](http://www.justinplopez.com)

**ABOUT THE DIRECTOR**

**River Bermudez Sanders (they/he/she)** is a recent graduate from Emerson College’s Musical Theatre program and is now pursuing a career in directing and playwrighting. They are currently working as the Production/Literary Manager at Hillbarn Theatre in Foster City. They are deeply invested in contributing to a new American theatre that openly challenges white supremacy culture. Directing work includes *“The 25th Annual Putman County Spelling Bee”,* *“Little Women”,* and “*Legally Blonde”* as well as a number of concerts and revues. They are also the author of an award-winning thesis entitled “Latine Racial Protest in the American Musical Theatre'' which explores the ways Latine artists are advocating for equity and change in the theatre industry. They have worked as a director, actor, stage manager, and teaching artist at companies around the Bay including Palo Alto Players, Children’s Fairyland, the Oakland Theatre Project, and NCTC.

**ABOUT THE VOLUNTEER PRODUCER**

**Lisa Anne Morrison (she/her)** made her way back home to the Bay Area after working professionally as an actor in Los Angeles for many years. She is a CalArts graduate who found her love of new plays while producing and acting as a member of L.A.’s Theatre of NOTE. Some favorite Bay Area acting credits are “All’s Well that Ends Well,” “Othello” (Cal Shakes), “Intimate Apparel,” “Shakespeare in Hollywood” (TheatreWorks). She was last seen in Netflix’ “13 Reasons Why.” Lisa is a long-time teaching artist with CoachArt, a non-profit that pairs artists and athletes with chronically ill children and produced the Bay Area edition of the annual Coach Art Fundraising Gala where close to $1million was raised in a single evening. Lisa serves as the DEIB chair for Stanley Middle School and is on the district DEIB committee. The New Voices series is an exciting way to combine Lisa’s passion for theatre and promoting diversity in our community.

**ABOUT THE NEW VOICES SERIES**

In an effort to use Town Hall’s platform to raise up local artists, they have created the New Voices series starting in the 2021-2022 season. This is a series of small-scale productions that feature local playwrights whose unproduced work is still in the final steps of the workshopping phase. This offers playwrights the chance to get structured audience feedback and hear their work aloud. For Town Hall’s audiences it’s a chance to be exposed to new local artists. The primary focus of this program is to benefit local playwrights, especially those who belong to traditionally under-represented and under-produced groups.

**About Town Hall Theatre Company**

Established in 1944 as the Dramateurs, Town Hall Theatre is the oldest continuously active theatre in Contra Costa County. Town Hall Theatre was awarded Best Theatre Troupe 2016 by Diablo Magazine, Best of The East Bay, and is the past recipient of numerous Shellie Awards, and Theatre Bay Area Awards. THT is also home to an extensive children’s educational program, twice voted the Best Children’s Theatre Company by Bay Area Parent Magazine. In December of 2021 Town Hall Theatre Company became the owners of the historical Town Hall Theatre which had been maintained by the Lafayette Improvement Association since its construction in 1914.

**CALENDAR Information for The *Re-Education of Fernando Morales***

**WHO: TOWN HALL THEATRE COMPANY**

**WHAT: The *Re-Education of Fernando Morales***

By Justin P. Lopez

Directed by River Bermudez Sanders

**CAST:** To be announced

**DATE:** Saturday, August 20th, 2022 at 8:00pm

**WHERE:** Town Hall Theatre, 3535 School St., Lafayette, CA 94549

**TICKETS:** $20

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