

For Immediate Release
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SOHO REP, IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE SOL PROJECT, PRESENTS MARA VÉLEZ MELÉNDEZ'S *NOTES ON KILLING SEVEN OVERSIGHT, MANAGEMENT, AND ECONOMIC STABILITY BOARD MEMBERS*, DIRECTED BY DAVID MENDIZÁBAL, MAY 17–JUNE 19

Puerto Rico-Born Playwright's Off-Broadway Debut Is a Drag Show about Decolonizing Places and People

Acclaimed Director David Mendizábal, Who Formerly Designed for Drag Superstar BeBe Zahara Benet, Will Also Design Costumes for This Production

**Soho Rep, in Partnership with The Sol Project, Presents
Notes on Killing Seven Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board Members
World Premiere
By Mara Vélez Meléndez
Directed by David Mendizábal**

May 17–June 19
Soho Rep (46 Walker Street)
Tickets: \$35 through June 19
99-Cent Sundays: May 29, June 5, 12
sohorep.org or 646-586-8982

We.
Did not.
Participate.
In. This. Decision.

Soho Rep, in partnership with **The Sol Project**, presents ***Notes on Killing Seven Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board Members***, written by **Mara Vélez Meléndez**, in her Off-Broadway debut, and directed by **David Mendizábal**. In Vélez Meléndez's daring new play, Lolita finds herself in the Wall Street office of the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board. Like a Boricua Lolita before her, she is here in the name of la Revolución! She's got glamor, glitter, and a gun. But is she really ready?

Harnessing drag's proclivity for skewering dominant power structures, *Notes* addresses the Puerto Rico Oversight, Management, and Economic Stability Act (PROMESA)'s damaging paternalism and blasts colonialism's grip on two characters' political and interior worlds to sparkling smithereens.

If drag is one lens through which the play operates, the absurd is another. Says Vélez Meléndez, "For me, Puerto Rican history and politics are super Sisyphean; we keep pushing the rock up the hill, and stuff keeps happening and happening and happening. The structure of the play links with Puerto Rico being known historically as the island that repeats itself, 'la isla que se repite'—where maybe there are doors out, but you still feel like you can't leave the cycle."

Vélez Meléndez wrote her protagonist, Lolita, as a Puerto Rican trans woman and her other character, a receptionist, as a shape-shifting Nuyorican cis gay drag queen. The playwright, who is trans, describes how the writing extended into her own life: "About a year-and-a-half ago, I started my transition, and that's when the play bloomed into what it should be. I had been thinking about it for a while, but as soon as I wrote it in the play, that's when I knew my reality was bigger—it was like the play was talking to me. As the play was writing itself it was also informing me in terms of what I'd always wanted with my life and the ways in which I was colonized."

Mendizábal adds, "Historically, trans women have been at the head of the fight for liberation in so many movements. Mara and I were compelled by the idea of summoning the revolutionary icon Lolita Lebron through a trans woman character, and by the notion of decolonizing the ideas that are embedded in our very DNA."

As with the play's two characters, the collaboration enjoins Vélez Meléndez's Puerto Rican and Mendizábal's first generation American perspectives. For Mendizábal—an Associate Artistic Director of The Sol Project and one of the participants in Soho Rep's inaugural year of Project Number One, as well as a Producing Artistic Leader of the OBIE Award winning The Movement Theatre Company—it also offers a chance for them to reengage in costume design. During Mendizábal's Project Number One residency, for their short film "eat me!," they began to revisit drag costuming, which sparked their desire to costume design for *Notes*. Says Mendizábal, "Between this and our conversations about decolonizing, it feels like a moment of being able to bring my whole self to telling the story."

The Sol Project Founder and Artistic Director Jacob G. Padrón says, "The mission and the vision of the Sol Project is to amplify the voices of Latinx writers, specifically in New York City. Soho Rep was definitely a north star for us in terms of companies we hoped to make art with, so this is a tremendous blessing. The other thing to say is there truly would be no Sol Project without David Mendizábal, so for us this is a really special moment in the life of the initiative. We believe in telling a real kaleidoscope of stories; this particular story, and the gifts Mara has given us, feel so in line with our values."

Notes on Killing Seven Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board Members features **Christine Carmela Herrero** (Lolita) and **Samora La Perdida** (Receptionist). The creative team includes **Gerardo Díaz Sanchez** (Scenic Designer), **David Mendizábal** (Costume Designer), **Kate McGee** (Lighting Designer), and **Espii Proctor** (Sound Designer), **Javier Antonio González** (Dramaturg), **María Victoria Martínez** (Assistant Director), **Tyler Arnold** (Assistant Costume Designer), and **Genevieve Ortiz** (Production Stage Manager)

Performance Schedule and Ticketing

The world premiere production of *Notes on Killing Seven Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board Members* runs May 17–June 19 at Soho Rep, located at [46 Walker Street](#) in Manhattan.

Press performance are:

Wednesday, May 25, at 7:30pm

Thursday, May 26, at 7:30pm

Friday, May 27, at 7:30pm

Saturday, May 28, at 3pm

The production opens officially on Monday, May 30, at 7pm.

Tickets—\$35 general admission—can be purchased by visiting [sohorep.org](#) or calling 646-586-8982. \$20 rush tickets are available at the box office 30 minutes prior to curtain for each performance. \$0.99 Sunday tickets will be offered **May 29, June 5, 12** at 7:30 pm. They are available first come, first served at the box office only. There are no advance sales for Rush or \$0.99 Sunday tickets.

About Mara Vélez Meléndez

Mara Vélez Meléndez (she/her) is a playwright born and raised in Puerto Rico. *Notes on Killing Seven Oversight, Management and Economic Stability Board Members* is her Off-Broadway debut. She also adapted the upcoming Spotify/Gimlet podcast, *Case 63*. Mara was a 2020-2021 Playwrights Realm Writing Fellow and is currently a member of Ars Nova's PlayGroup.

About David Mendizábal

David Mendizábal (he/they) is a director, designer, one of the Producing Artistic Leaders of the OBIE Award-winning The Movement Theatre Company, and Associate Artistic Director of The Sol Project. David is a 2021 Princess Grace Award Honoraria Recipient in Theater. They were part of the inaugural Soho Rep Project Number One Residency, where they created and directed the short film, *eat me!*. Select directing credits include: *This Bitter Earth* (TheatreWorks Hartford) *Don't Eat the*

Mangos (Magic Theatre/Sundance), *On The Grounds of Belonging* (Long Wharf), *the bandaged place* (NYSAF), *Then They Forgot About The Rest* (INTAR), *And She Would Stand Like This* (w/ choreographer Kia LaBeija) and *Look Upon Our Lowliness* (The Movement), and *Tell Hector I Miss Him* (Atlantic). Alumnus of Ars Nova Vision Residency and Maker's Lab, Drama League Directors Project, Labyrinth Intensive Ensemble, artEquity, NALAC, and LCT Directors Lab. David was a participant in the TCG Leadership U: One-on-One program, where they were the Artistic Associate at Atlantic Theater Company. BFA - NYU/Tisch www.davidmendizabal.com

Credits

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About Soho Rep

Soho Rep provides radical theater makers with productions of the highest caliber and tailor-made development at key junctures in their artistic practice. The organization elevates artists as thought leaders and citizens who change the field and society. Artistic autonomy is paramount at Soho Rep; the organization encourages an unmediated connection between artists and audiences to create a springboard for transformation and rich civic life beyond the walls of its theater.

Critics continue to herald Soho Rep as a go-to theatre destination for new and original works. *New York Magazine* says, "this indispensable theater offers more excitement per chair than any space in town," *Time Out New York* says, "Soho Rep is the best theater in NYC," and *The New York Times* describes Soho Rep as "form-twisting, boundary-breaking, and acclaimed" and says, "The downtown powerhouse... regularly outclasses the work done on many of the city's larger stages." *The Village Voice* named Soho Rep the "Best Off-Broadway Theater Company," and the company was listed in *Travel Magazine's* "10 Essential Off-Broadway Theaters."

Soho Rep won the “Best Theater in NYC” award for the Time Out Best of the City Awards 2021. *Time Out New York* wrote, "Soho Rep isn't the last word in downtown experimental theater: Better than that, it's often one of the first words, championing major voices at key points in their careers...And Soho Rep's low ticket prices, including 99¢ Sundays, help keep some of the city's bravest, boldest and wildest theater within the reach of all New Yorkers. "

Soho Rep has also been honored with a Drama Desk Award for Sustained Achievement. Over the last decade, Soho Rep productions have garnered 21 OBIE Awards; the 2016 Lucille Lortel Award for Outstanding Musical; 13 Drama Desk nominations; two Kesselring Awards; *The New York Times* Outstanding Playwriting Award for Dan LeFranc's *Sixty Miles To Silverlake*; and a special citation in The New York Drama Critics' Circle's 2012-13 awards. Jackie Sibblies Drury's *Fairview*, commissioned by Soho Rep and Berkeley Repertory Theatre, won the 2019 Pulitzer Prize for Drama. In recent years, Soho Rep has presented plays by established and emerging theatre artists such as David Adjmi, Annie Baker, Alice Birch, debbie tucker green, Aleshea Harris, Lucas Hnath, Branden Jacobs-Jenkins, Daniel Alexander Jones, Richard Maxwell, Sarah Kane, Young Jean Lee, Nature Theater of Oklahoma, and Anne Washburn.

Soho Rep is led by Directors Sarah Benson, Cynthia Flowers, and Meropi Peponides.

About The Sol Project

The Sol Project is a national theater initiative dedicated to producing the work of Latinx playwrights in New York City and beyond. Founded by Artistic Director Jacob G. Padrón and driven by an artistic collective, The Sol Project works in partnership with leading theaters around the country to amplify Latinx voices and build artistic homes for artists of color. Through the writers we champion, The Sol Project aspires to create a bold, powerful, and kaleidoscopic body of work for the new American theater. The Sol Project launched with the world premiere of *Alligator* by Hilary Bettis in collaboration with New Georges, followed by the New York premieres of *Seven Spots on the Sun* by Martín Zimmerman (Rattlestick Playwrights Theater) and *Oedipus El Rey* by Luis Alfaro (The Public Theater). In the fall of 2018, The Sol Project partnered with Yale Repertory Theatre to produce the world premiere of *El Huracán* by Charise Castro Smith and in early 2020 partnered with Baltimore Center Stage and The Playwrights Realm to produce the world premiere of *Richard & Jane & Dick & Sally* by Noah Diaz. The artistic collective includes: Adriana Gaviria, Rebecca Martinez, David Mendizábal, Julian Ramirez, and Laurie Woolery. Joey Reyes is the Associate Producer. Isabel Pask is the Producing Assistant. Brian Herrera is the Resident Scholar. Stephanie Ybarra is the Resident Dramaturg. Our partners include: Soho Rep, Atlantic Theater Company, Baltimore Center Stage, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, Cara Mía Theatre Company, LAByrnth Theater Company, Magic Theatre, MCC Theater, New Georges, New York Theatre Workshop, Playwrights Horizons, Pregones/Puerto Rican

Traveling Theater, Rattlestick Playwrights Theater, The Playwrights Realm, The Public Theater, WP Theater and Yale Repertory Theatre. www.solproject.org

Press Contact: Blake Zidell at Blake Zidell & Associates: 718.643.9052, blake@blakezidell.com