

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Cambria Herrera, Marketing and Communications Director
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DATE: January 23, 2017

WHAT

Milagro presents the World Premiere of *Swimming While Drowning*
By Emilio Rodriguez & Directed by Francisco Garcia

ABOUT THE PLAY

Playwright Emilio Rodriguez intertwines the everyday language of teenagers with heightened poetry to capture the world of two young men in an LGBT homeless shelter. Francisco Garcia, who was handpicked to direct this play by executive director Jose Gonzalez, brings an experience of creating theatre about young people's issues to his work on *Swimming While Drowning*. Additionally, he brings his experience of living in Los Angeles, where the play is set. There, he often worked with youth similar to the characters in *Swimming While Drowning*. His passion for giving a voice to underserved youth becomes apparent as he takes some time between rehearsals at Milagro to share his thoughts on the world premiere of *Swimming While Drowning*:

"This play, is going to be unlike anything that is currently playing right now in Portland and it's exciting to help bring it to life with the world premiere. We have a very serious issue of homelessness in this city, particularly with youth, teenagers that are living in poverty and teenagers in the foster care system either through issues that have been going on in their house or because of not feeling like they belong because of how they identify. I work with youth all the time, and it goes back to seeing yourself represented on stage, we're not seeing teenage characters that identify as LGBTQ and the real struggles that they go through, so being able to give a voice to those types of characters, that's important.

It's a coming of age story, but it's a story that resonates with anyone. The hope is that when the show is done, this will be something you talk about. Maybe this is a community you knew nothing about, that you want to learn more about or that you feel that you want to help support."

For more thoughts from Gracia, visit our blog:

WHEN

February 9 – 25, 2017

Thursday – Saturday at 7:30 PM; Sundays at 2 PM

Thursday, February 9, 7:30 PM — Preview

Friday, February 10, 7:30 PM — Opening Night with reception catered by La Bonita

WHERE

Milagro Theatre, 525 SE Stark Street, Portland, OR, 97214

ADMISSION

Adult tickets are \$27 in Advance, \$32 at the door.

Discount for students, seniors, veterans, groups 15+, and with the Oregon Trail card through the Arts for All program.

Senior tickets are \$25 in Advance, \$30 at the door.

Student/ Veteran tickets are \$20 in Advance, \$25 at the door.
Tickets available at milagro.org or 503-236-7253.

MORE INFORMATION

www.milagro.org or call 503-236-7253

MEDIA CONTACTS/ MEDIA PASSES

Cambria Herrera, Marketing & Communications Manager, cambria@milagro.org
503-236-7253 x117

High- resolution photos can be found:

On Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/miracletheatregroup>

Or by emailing cambria@milagro.org

SPECIAL EVENTS

Opening Night

February, 10 at 7:30 PM

Reception to follow catered by La Bonita

Art + Identity Showcase on February 11, 2017 at 9:00 PM -10:15 PM

Hosted by Milagro and Latinx Pride

Join us after the performance of *Swimming While Drowning* for an evening of discussion and showcasing art. Content will be focused on the intersection of art and identity within the LGBTQ community and people of color but all are welcome.

Admission is free!

Bilingual Poetry After Party/Open Mic on February 16, 2017 at 9:00 PM

Join us after the performance of *Swimming While Drowning* for an evening of poetry.

Topic: Art + Identity

To sign up to be a featured poet email marketing@milagro.org or bring your poem and participate in the open mic session. Poems in Spanish or English accepted!

CAST

Mila: Blake Stone

Angelo: Michel Castillo

PRODUCTION TEAM

Director: Francisco Garcia

Stage Manager: Michael DeMaio

Set Design: Emily Wilken

Lighting Design: Rose Etta Ventucci

Costume and Prop Design: Shen Telles

Sound Design: Dug Martell

Board op: Nicki D'Amico

Production Manager: Estela Robinson

Assistant Director: Mariel Sierra

Producing Creative Director: Roy Arauz

ARTIST INTERVIEWS

To arrange interviews with artists, contact Cambria Herrera, Marketing and Communications Manager, 503-236-7253, x117, cambria@milagro.org

SEASON SPONSORS

Milagro's 2016 – 2017 Season is sponsored in part by The Kinsman Foundation, The Collins Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, US Bank Foundation, Ronni Lacroute/WillaKenzie Estate, Oregon Arts Commission, Regional Arts & Culture Council, Work for Art, Juan Young Trust, Oregon Community Foundation, Print Results, A to Z Wineworks, Portland Roasting Coffee, Poster Garden, Nicholas Restaurant, The Oregonian, Tilde Noticias, and El Centinela.

ABOUT THE DIRECTOR

Francisco Garcia is a director, playwright and actor. He most recently directed *Broken Promises* by Olga Sanchez for Teatro Milagro and has worked extensively with elementary, high school and college students directing and developing original productions. He served as the 2012-2013 guest playwright for CalArts' Community Arts Partnership Program where his adaptation of *Fuente Ovejuna* was performed at REDCAT Theatre located at Walt Disney Concert Hall. In 2015, he wrote *Odessa* an adaptation of Homer's *The Odyssey* for Profile Theatre's Educational Outreach Program, which was performed in conjunction with Beaumont Middle School. Francisco is a member of Actor's Equity and SAG/AFTRA and last appeared on stage in the title role of Romeo in *Romeo and Juliet* at the Shakespeare Center of Los Angeles and in the world premiere of Jose Casas' *All Brown All Chingon* at the Hudson Theater. He received his Bachelor's degree from Portland State University and his Master's degree from Cal State University, Los Angeles.

ABOUT MILAGRO

As the premier Latino arts and culture center of the Pacific Northwest, Milagro has provided extraordinary Latino theatre, culture, and arts education for the enrichment of all communities since 1985. Teatro Milagro, Milagro's touring & arts education program, presents its original bilingual plays and educational residencies to diverse and underserved communities across the nation. On the mainstage, Milagro produces a full season of regional or world premieres, including one Spanish-language play each year, as well as our long-running Día de los Muertos signature production. We entertain our audiences; we give them pause to think, feel and imagine; and, through the cultural lens of latinidad, we reflect the full spectrum of humanity. For more information about Milagro, visit www.milagro.org or call 503-236-7253.

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