



WHAT: Altarena Playhouse presents *The Clean House*, by Sarah Ruhl, directed by Jacqui Herrera

WHEN: August 9 through September 8, 2019; Fridays & Saturdays 8pm, Sundays 2pm; Thursday night September 5 at 8pm. Special ASL interpreted performances on August 23 at 8:00 PM.

WHERE: Altarena Playhouse, 1409 High St., Alameda, convenient to public transit

TICKET PRICES: \$30 / \$27 for students and seniors. Tickets available at www.altarena.org, (510) 523-1553

Altarena's production of *The Clean House* by Sarah Ruhl is a celebration of women and diversity in theatre; it is written by a woman, directed by a Latina woman (Jacqui Herrera), and featuring four women of different colors, ages, and cultural backgrounds. The cast also includes one man who, according to director Herrera, "embraces all of the feminine energy that drives this production."

The show is a surrealist dramedy about life, death, and love, and how we humans try to control these forces. This layered theme unfolds through a story about five people who are struggling to harness control of their lives amidst an affair, grief and loss, a strained family relationship, and sickness.

The humor of the play is found where we find it in our lives amongst the absurdity in the delusion that everything is in our control. The central character, Matilde, is a Brazilian comedian dealing with the loss of her parents. She has found a job as a house cleaner, but she hates to clean and spends her time trying to write the perfect joke. She is the personification of the idea that out of chaos and mess, humor and life is found.

A Pulitzer Prize finalist and Tony Award Nominee, Ruhl is a fresh voice in American Theatre. She has been the recipient of a MacArthur Fellowship and the PEN/Laura

Pels International Foundation for Theater Award for a distinguished American playwright in mid-career.

Director, Herrera has been a part of Bay Area theatre for almost 30 years and has struggled to find theatrical spaces where a short round Irish Mexican can have a voice on and off stage. She is so thrilled to be a part of bringing this refreshing script to life. “I fell in love with the writing first,” says Jacqui, “and then with a script that does not call for any physical attributes [in its actors] which would exclude anyone, thus requiring talented actors to breathe life into their roles.”

The cast for Clean House features Janelle Aguirre, Marsha Harrison, Adriana Palhares, Jeanette Sarmiento, and Louis Schilling.

For press tickets, interviews with the director and/or cast members, and more information please contact: Christopher Ciabattoni at publicity@altarena.org.

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