**UPDATED 9/9/24**

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**Sierra Madre Playhouse
Presents the World Premiere of**

**¡Pasaje!
a New Musical about a Young Man who Discovers Family Secrets**

**Written by** San Gabriel Valley Native and First-Generation Salvadoran American **J. Quiroz**

**Music and Lyrics by** Multi-GRAMMY Award-Winning LA Native **Asdru Sierra**
**Directed by** Hacienda Heights Raised **Benjamin Perez**

 **The Two-Act Musical Is a Riveting Coming-of-Age Story
Deeply Rooted in LA and Celebrating Southern California’s Vibrant Latiné Community.**

 **October 4 – November 3, 2024**

(Sierra Madre, CA, August 21, 2024) The historic **Sierra Madre Playhouse,** an intimate performing arts center noted for its eclectic programming, presents the world premiere of **¡Pasaje!***, a*n enchanting journey of self-discovery and family relationships, running from October 4 to November 3, 2024. The riveting coming-of-age story explores themes of identity, belonging, and community through the eyes of Andy on the eve of his 18th birthday. He discovers that everything he believes in – his ethnicity, his family, his upbringing – are lies that have been told to him since birth. These lies lead Andy to South El Monte, where he meets a beautiful dancer, Marcelina, and the community patriarch, Don Miguel, who help him unearth long-buried secrets, propelling him to a poignant revelation about the Latin American diaspora and ultimate acceptance of his true self. In the end, he discovers his family is both flawed and redemptive.

Deeply rooted in South El Monte near East LA – both literally and figuratively – **¡Pasaje!** honors Southern California’s vivid and diverse Latiné community**.** Written by San Gabriel Valley-native **J. Quiroz**, a first-generation Salvadoran American, **¡Pasaje!** is a one-of-a-kind experience that promises to be poignant, heartrending, and magical. It features music and lyrics by multi-GRAMMY winner **Asdru Sierra**, co-founder of LA’s renowned Latin rock band, Ozomatli. The Sierra Madre Playhouse production is directed by **Benjamin Perez**, who was raised in Hacienda Heights (five minutes from South El Monte). **Perez** acted in national tours of *In the Heights* and *Nice Work If You Can Get It*, and directed several productions of *In the Heights* in regional theatres. The music director is **Greg Porée**, whose credits include working with Sonny & Cher, Diana Ross, Aretha Franklin and Earth, Wind & Fire, as well as eight years on *Dancing with Stars*. Other members of the production team include **Tania Possick,** an award-winning choreographer with extensive stage and television credits, and costume designer **Diana Gomez,** a recent CSUN graduation whose credits include productions at the Conundrum Theatre Company and University High School, among others.

**Cast Announced**The 13-member cast of the two-act musical features Seth Keller in the role of Andy Martin and Ixchel Valiente as Marcelina, Andy’s love interest.The cast also includes Karol Avila (Hustler Uno)**,** Daniel Moises (Hustler Dos)**,** Sandra Dar (Angela Martin, Andy’s mother)**,** Lisa Rodriguez (Beatriz Gonzalez)**,** Noah Peralta (Guicho)**,** Andrew M. Garcia (Ensemble/Andy Understudy)**,** Pablo Milla (Ensemble/Hustler Dos Understudy)**,** Itzel Ximena Gonzalez (Ensemble/Hustler Uno Understudy)**,** Joshua Duron (Don Miguel), and Maximiliano Garcia (Freddy).

**Genesis of ¡Pasaje!**The origin of**¡Pasaje!** is, itself, a unique story. It was initially conceived in 2008 and began in 2011. A group of South El Monte High School drama students and alumni set out to write a Mexican/Central American story reflecting their lives, people, community, and culture, drawing inspiration from Lin-Manuel Miranda’s Tony Award-winning musical “*In the Heights*,” a story about Miranda’s experience in his community of Puerto Ricans and Dominicans. **J. Quiroz** was among the original group of eight high school students and recent graduates who, in the summer of 2011, took up the challenge and spent hours every Sunday at the South El Monte Senior Center writing their script, the initial draft of which they completed that summer.

Their plan was to introduce Broadway audiences to their Latiné community through the eyes of a non-Latiné teenager from out of state who knew very little about his culture. That character, Andy, was a young man who had just graduated from high school and came into their community looking for his dad.

Following the first draft, **Quiroz** – who subsequently attended community college, where he further honed his writing skills – continued as the lead writer on the project, making dozens of major revisions to the script over the years with input from others along the way, including many in the original student group. **¡Pasaje!** is **Quiroz**’s first major production credit.

Among others drawn into the **¡Pasaje!** sphere was Ozomatli’s **Asdru Sierra**, who immediately grasped the essence of the musical when the writers/actors from South El Monte reached out to him about becoming involved in the project. Over pizza, the enthusiasm and genuine interest of these young people about the Mexican/Central American community convinced **Sierra**. He enthusiastically agreed to write the music, explaining, “I knew that the music had to be authentic to Los Angeles and its diverse Latiné culture. As part of that community myself, I wanted to represent the community and to be in service to the play’s story telling.” **Sierra**’s striking music embraces his trademark musical style and reflects the characters’ thoughts and emotions while giving the story of **¡Pasaje!** a truly original sound and scope. “There’s definitely a head-nod factor to the play’s music,” Sierra notes.

**Quiroz** reflects, “I was faced with the challenge of writing a show about ‘culture.’ I was intimidated by the word until I realized culture really refers to ‘family.’ We may all be raised differently, but we all understand family. The good, the bad, and especially the crazy, that’s family. I’m proud to have had that realization, and it has only been confirmed as the **¡Pasaje!** family grows. I’m honored to have the Sierra Madre Playhouse now part of that family. I can’t wait to see the audiences become part of that family.”

**Tickets and Information**

Tickets to **¡Pasaje!** ($12 - $45) are on sale now. For tickets and information, please call 626.355.4318 or visit [www.sierramadreplayhouse.org](http://www.sierramadreplayhouse.org). Sierra Madre Playhouse is located at 87 West Sierra Madre Boulevard, Sierra Madre, CA 91024.

**SIERRA MADRE PLAYHOUSE**, a vibrant Southern California cultural hub with a rich history spanning a century, energizes audiences and the community with distinctive theatrical productions and captivating live performances. Hailed as a “jewel” (*Pasadena Weekly*) and “a landmark theater” (*ABC7 Los Angeles*), the performing arts center has garnered tremendous accolades for its varied repertoire and thought-provoking education and outreach programs curated with social impact in mind. The *Los Angeles Times* proclaims, “This is theater from the heart.” As one of San Gabriel Valley’s only performing arts center presenting a broad spectrum of performance genres, including theater, music, dance, film, comedy, and family-friendly productions featuring eminent local and national professional artists, the treasured artistic beacon draws audiences from across the Southland. The intimate 99-seat Sierra Madre Playhouse offers an up-close and personal connection to performances that resonate deeply, earning multiple Ovation Awards, NAACP Awards, and LA Times Critics' Choice honors. It is nestled into a historic building on the inviting Main Street of Sierra Madre, a charming village in the foothills of the San Gabriel Mountains. Retaining its distinctive movie theater façade and instantly recognizable marquee, the structure has undergone numerous transformations since opening in 1910, from furniture emporium to silent movie theatre to the artistic institution that now stands as a vibrant embodiment of the region’s rich cultural legacy. The Sierra Madre Playhouse fosters creativity that aspires to bridge divides and spark dialogue, all while celebrating the rich tapestry of the American experience and the enduring pursuit of shared understanding.

**EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

**WHAT:**

**Sierra Madre Playhouse Presents
¡Pasaje!**Book byJ. Quiroz

Music by Asdru Sierra

**PRODUCTION TEAM:**

Director: Benjamin Perez

Music Director: Greg Poree

Choreographer: Tania Possick

Costume Designer: Diana Gomez

**CAST:**

Seth Keller (Andy Martin)

Ixchel Valiente (Marcelina)

Karol Avila (Hustler Uno)

Daniel Moises (Hustler Dos)

Sandra Dar (Angela Martin)

Lisa Rodriguez (Beatriz Gonzalez)

Noah Peralta (Guicho)

Andrew M. Garcia (Ensemble/Andy Understudy)

Pablo Milla (Ensemble/Hustler Dos Understudy)

Itzel Ximena Gonzalez (Ensemble/Hustler Uno Understudy)

Joshua Duron (Don Miguel)

Maximiliano Garcia (Freddy)

TBA (Ensemble/Marcelina Understudy)

**WHEN:**

Friday, October 4, 8:00 PM

Saturday, October 5, 8:00 PM

Sunday, October 6, 4:00 PM

Friday, October 11, 8:00 PM

Saturday, October 12, 8:00 PM

Sunday, October 13, 4:00 PM

Friday, October 18, 8:00 PM

Saturday, October 19, 8:00 PM

Sunday, October 20, 4:00 PM

Friday, October 25, 8:00 PM

Saturday, October 26, 8:00 PM

Sunday, October 27, 4:00 PM

Friday, November 1, 8:00 PM

Saturday, November 2, 8:00 PM

Sunday, November 3, 4:00 PM

**WHERE:**

Sierra Madre Playhouse
87 West Sierra Madre Boulevard
Sierra Madre, CA 91024

**RUN TIME:**

Approximately 2 hours with intermission.

**ADVISORY:**some language

**TICKETS & INFORMATION:**

Tickets are $12 - $45

626.355.4318

[www.sierramadreplayhouse.org](http://www.sierramadreplayhouse.org)

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