

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Jan. 5, 2017

RUBÉN C. GONZÁLEZ' POWERFUL, "LA ESQUINITA, USA," TELLS THE STORIES OF A ONCE-BOOMING AMERICAN BORDER TOWN, NOW FORGOTTEN

Rubén C. González' powerful, poetic play about love, forgiveness and ultimate redemption connects 10 people left behind in their little corner of the world to struggle with eternal human relationships in the acclaimed ***La Esquinita, USA*** at the Temple of Music & Art from Jan. 14 through Feb. 4 in Tucson and from Feb. 9-26 at the Herberger Theater Center in Phoenix. The 2016-17 season is sponsored by I. Michael and Beth Kasser.

An Arizona premiere from the famed El Teatro Campesino and directed by its Producing Artistic Director Kinan Valdez, ***La Esquinita, USA*** tells the story of people seeking identity, connection and peace.

What happens to a small border town when big promises from big business are broken? At a bus stop on the 40A Red Line, in cross-cultural hip-hop fueled language at once poetic and powerful, González, one of the Southwest's premier Mexican-American writer/performers, presents a tour-de-force of interlocking stories: ten characters on a passage through a once-booming town, now forgotten.

The main source of employment in town, the Thompson Tire Factory, has gone overseas, leaving the town's infrastructure in disarray. Told by the wise, omniscient custodian, Lencho, and experienced through the eyes of 18-year-old Daniel, *La Esquinita, USA* connects the disparate stories of those left behind – of the people we, as a society, systematically choose to avoid – into a captivating new American narrative of self-identity, unity, and peace.

La Esquinita, USA is a virtuoso solo performance – a gorgeous, brave story of love, forgiveness, and ultimate redemption.

"Rubén C. González shape-shifts lives like *el gato* in his many-hued kaleidoscope of the imagination," Alexandra Bonifield wrote in Theatre Jones. "His live stage art is transcendent, exhilarating in its simplicity, yet full of emotional depth. ... (His) adeptness at lightning-fast transitions from one character to another, never losing

a beat or dropping a line or the story's thread, and inhabiting each character with a full stage role's dedication, is a marvel to behold."

González, who trained at the London Academy for Performing Arts and Circle in the Square Theatre School in New York City, created ***La Esquinita, USA*** under El Teatro Campesino's New Work's Lab and it was included as part of Encuentro 2014, the largest Latino theatre arts festival in the United States.

La Esquinita, USA is performed in English and contains mature language and subject matter.

Ticket prices are \$30-\$75 and are available in-person in Tucson at the Temple of Music and Art box office or by calling (520) 622-2823. Tickets are available in-person in Phoenix at the Herberger Theater Center, or by calling (602) 256-6995 or online for performances in both cities at www.arizonatheatre.org.

For more information call (520) 622-2823 in Tucson, (602) 256-6995 in Phoenix or visit www.arizonatheatre.org.

CREATIVE TEAM

Director: Kinan Valdez

Assistant Director: Alexandra Meda

Scenic Design: Regina Garcia

Lighting Design: Michael Oesch

Sound Design: Anahuac Valdez

Resident Sound Designer: Brian Jerome Peterson

Dramaturg: Elaine Romero

Production Stage Manager: Glenn Bruner

Biographies

Rubén C. González (Playwright and Performer) is one of five children of Mexican immigrants. He is a critically acclaimed solo performer, actor, writer and director who hails from Los Angeles via Colima, Mexico. He is a 25-year veteran actor of the prestigious El Teatro Campesino. He received his training at The London Academy for the Performing Arts, Circle in the Square Theatre School (NYC), El Teatro Campesino and holds an MFA in Dramatic Arts from the University of California, Davis. *La Esquinita, USA* has toured off-Broadway at the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, Aurora Theatre, Su Teatro Denver, CaraMia Dallas, The Guadalupe Cultural Center San Antonio, Teatro Bilingue de Houston, La Pena Cultural Center and at The Los Angeles Theatre Center as part of the inaugural Encuentro 2014, the largest Latino Theatre Festival in the U.S. in over 40 years. His previous solo works, *Diary of a Mad Mexican* and *The Messiah Complex* have garnered him much critical and audience praise and have toured all over the U.S. and Poland. He has graced the stages in various productions at The Mark

Taper Forum, South Coast Repertory, Pasadena Playhouse, The Kennedy Center, The Lincoln Center Institute, Intar, HB Studios, New Dramatist (NYC) and Primary Stages, among others. His television and film credits include *Veronica Mars*, *Medium*, *Air America*, *The Minor Accomplishments of Jackie Woodman*, *Selena* starring Jennifer Lopez, *The Master* starring Jet Li, *La Mission* starring Benjamin Bratt, *Barrio Murders*, *Food Stamps*, *Suckers*, and *The Perfect Game* starring Ed Asner.

Kinan Valdez (Director) Recent credits include Off- Broadway: *La Esquinita USA* (Pregones/Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre); Regional credits: *Heart of Heaven* (Center Theatre Group), *Corridos Remix*, (San Diego Repertory); Other theatres: *Zoot Suit* (National Tour), *Popol Vuh Trilogy*, *Mummified Deer*, *Victor in Shadow* and *Sam Burguesa & The Pixie Chicks* (El Teatro Campesino). Film: *Ballad of a Soldier* (ETC/CTR Productions). Mr. Valdez currently serves as Producing Artistic Director of the world-renowned El Teatro Campesino, is an educator at the University of California Santa Cruz and San Jose State University, and is a national organizer for the Latina/o Theatre Commons.

Tickets for *La Esquinita, USA* start at \$30 and are subject to change depending on time, date and section, and are available at www.arizonatheatre.org or by calling the box office at (520) 622-2823 in Tucson or (602) 256-6995 in Phoenix. Discounts are available for seniors and active military. A \$10 student ticket pricing is now available for all performances. Half-price rush tickets are available for balcony seating for all performances one hour prior to curtain at the ATC box office (subject to availability). **Pay What You Can** performance is Tuesday, Jan. 18 at 7:30 p.m. in Tucson and Sunday, Feb. 12 at 7 p.m. in Phoenix. Tickets are available for a suggested \$10 donation. (Tickets must be purchased at the Temple of Music and Art or Herberger Theater Center starting one hour prior to curtain. Tickets are first-come, first served. *Cash only*. Two tickets maximum per person.) For discounts for groups of 10 or more, call (520) 622-2823 in Tucson or (602) 256-6995 in Phoenix.

Arizona Theatre Company offers accessibility services for patrons with disabilities for select performances. **Audio Description** provides patrons with vision loss a running audio description of the movement and activities onstage through an infrared broadcast system. An Audio-Described performance is offered in Tucson on Thursday, Feb. 2 at 2 p.m. and in Phoenix on Wednesday, Feb. 22 at 7:30 p.m. and Thursday, Feb. 23 at 2 p.m. Interested patrons with vision loss may request a tactile tour one hour prior to curtain. **American Sign Language Interpretation** is presented by professional, theatrically-trained ASL-interpreters for people who have deafness or hearing impairment. An ASL-interpreted performance is offered in Tucson on Thursday, Feb. 2 at 7:30 p.m. and in Phoenix on Saturday, Feb. 25 at 4 p.m. **Open captioning** allows patrons to read the play's dialogue on an LED screen as the play progresses. An open captioned performance is offered in Tucson on Thursday, Feb. 2 at 2 p.m. and in Phoenix on Sunday, Feb. 19 at 1 p.m. For open-captioned or ASL-interpreted performances, patrons should request seats best suited to ASL interpretation or captioning when purchasing tickets. Large print and Braille playbills and infrared listening amplification devices are also available at every ATC performance with

reservation. TTY access for the box office is available in Tucson at (520) 884-9723 or via Arizona Relay at (800) 367-8939 (TTY/ASCII).

Fact Sheet:

La Esquinita, USA

Written and performed by Rubén C. González

Directed by Kinan Valdez

Tucson Venue:

Temple of Music and Art

330 S. Scott Ave.

Tucson, Arizona

Previews Begin: Saturday, Jan. 14 at 8 p.m.

Opening Night: Friday, Jan. 20 at 7:30 p.m.

Closing Performance: Saturday, Feb. 4 at 8 p.m.

Phoenix Venue:

Herberger Theater Center

222 E. Monroe St.

Phoenix, Ariz.

Previews Begin: Thursday, Feb. 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Opening Night: Saturday, Feb. 11 at 8 p.m.

Closing Performance: Sunday, Feb. 26 at 1 p.m.

Ticket Info:

Ticket prices are \$30-\$75 and are available in-person at the Temple of Music and Art box office or via phone at (520) 622-2823; or at the Herberger Theater Center box office or by calling (602) 256-6995 in Phoenix. Tickets also can be purchased online at

www.arizonatheatre.org.

Contact:

Steve Carr, The Kur Carr Group, Inc., (602) 317-3040

About Arizona Theatre Company:

Arizona Theatre Company (ATC) is the preeminent fully professional theatre in the state of Arizona committed to inspiring, engaging, and entertaining - one moment, one production, and one audience at a time. Boasting the largest seasonal subscriber base in the performing arts in Arizona, ATC is the only resident company in the U.S. that is fully based in two cities providing its wide array of programming and community outreach across the region. Now in its 50th season, more than 130,000 people a year attend our performances at the historic Temple of Music and Art in Tucson, and the elegant Herberger Theater Center in downtown Phoenix. Each season of home-grown productions reflects the rich variety of world drama—from classics to contemporary plays, from musicals to new works—along with a wide array of community outreach programs, educational opportunities, access initiatives and new play programs.

Designated The State Theatre of Arizona, ATC is led by Artistic Director David Ira Goldstein and a dedicated Board of Trustees.