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THE WORLD PREMIERE OF A MOVING AND HUMOROUS
REFLECTION OF LOVE, LOSS, AND FAMILY
BY AND FEATURING MELINDA LOPEZ
DIRECTED BY DAVID DOWER

OCTOBER 27 THROUGH NOVEMBER 20, 2016
JACKIE LIEBERGOTT BLACK BOX THEATRE
AT THE EMERSON/PARAMOUNT CENTER, BOSTON

TICKETS ON SALE NOW

*The press performance is Saturday, October 29, at 8PM.
Email for press tickets, high resolution images, and interviews.*

[Boston, MA – October 12, 2016] Tickets for the World Premiere engagement of **Mala** are now on sale. Written and featuring one of Boston’s most noted playwrights Melinda Lopez, **Mala** puts a sharp focus on what it means to do our best to put our loved ones first, right to the very end, and what happens when we strive to be good, but don't always succeed. Funny, brutally honest and ultimately cathartic, Mala is directed by ArtsEmerson co-artistic director, David Dower and takes place at the at the Emerson/Paramount Center’s Jackie Liebergott Black Box Theatre, located at 559 Washington Street in Boston’s historic theatre district. Tickets are \$60 and may be purchased online at www.artsemerson.org or by calling 617.824.8400. 4-show package, group, student, and senior discounts are available.



Melissa Lopez, photo by Paul Marotta

“Mala’ means ‘bad.’ Not that you have done something bad,” Lopez writes, “but that you are, in your core, bad.” Grounded in Lopez’s distinctive emotional language and sharp humor, **Mala** is an utterly unsentimental journey of how to cope and survive a mother’s final act of dying. This powerful one-woman show by and featuring Cuban American Melinda Lopez transports us into a world which is uniquely first-generation American in its specifics, and universal in its power. Inspired by true events,

Mala forces us to confront the inevitable finality of our last moments with the people who raised us. Rather than depict a “right way”, the play opens the door for conversation in our universal struggle to support those we love in dying, especially when all we’ve ever known in life is how to survive. Click [here](#) to view the video trailer.

“**Mala** is such a moving and humorous play, says ArtsEmerson co-artistic director P. Carl, “from the first time we heard Melinda read a first draft out loud, we knew we wanted to produce it, to offer it as a true gift to any audience member who has, or ever will, care for a dying loved one—in other words, a play for just about everyone. Melinda said this recently ‘plays are about people who do extraordinary things. But the most ordinary thing you can do is die. Right? Everyone does. And the second most ordinary thing is to bear witness.’ Melinda is such an important playwriting voice nationally, and truly a local treasure to Boston, it’s a joy to premiere her play at ArtsEmerson.”

When asked about naming the play “Mala”, Lopez shared “the truth is as funny as it is hard, and I’m not interested in seeing people be successful at being good. It is liberating to return to the solo performance format,” says Lopez. “After creating a dozen new plays both in Boston and across the country, ArtsEmerson is exactly the right place for this visceral piece. The Boston community is where I find friends, family, mentors, and inspiration every day.”

“Melinda has really captured the sense of bewilderment and loss of identity that comes with the territory of caring for loved ones during their transitions,” says ArtsEmerson co-artistic director David Dower. “She captures all the vulnerability and fallibility, all the comedy and heartbreak--and ultimately the resilience both of the dying and their caretakers. Anyone who has stood in the eye of this hurricane will recognize its truths instantly. When she first read it I was laughing and crying right along with her, and my personal experience seemed to meld right into hers.”

Mala Performance Schedule

Thursday, October 27, 2016	7:30 PM	
Friday, October 28, 2016	8 PM	
Saturday, October 29, 2016	8 PM	Press Performance
Sunday, October 30, 2016	2 PM	
Thursday, November 3, 2016	7:30 PM	
Friday, November 4, 2016	8 PM	
Saturday, November 5, 2016	2 PM	
Saturday, November 5, 2016	8 PM	
Sunday, November 6, 2016	2 PM	
Thursday, November 10, 2016	7:30 PM	
Friday, November 11, 2016	8 PM	
Saturday, November 12, 2016	2 PM	
Saturday, November 12, 2016	8 PM	
Sunday, November 13, 2016	2 PM	
Thursday, November 17, 2016	7:30 PM	
Friday, November 18, 2016	8 PM	

Saturday, November 19, 2016	2 PM
Saturday, November 19, 2016	8 PM
Sunday, November 20, 2016	2 PM

Creative Credits

Written and performed by Melinda Lopez

Directed by David Dower

About Melinda Lopez

Melinda Lopez is a playwright, actress and educator, currently living in Boston, MA. She is the inaugural playwright-in-residence at the Huntington Theatre Company and a past Huntington Playwriting Fellow. Her plays, which include *Sonia Flew*, *Becoming Cuba*, *Caroline in Jersey*, and *Orchids to Octopi*, among others, have been produced at venues including the Williamstown Theater Festival, Steppenwolf Theatre Company, Laguna Playhouse, and Central Square Theater. As an actress, she was recently seen in *Appropriate* at SpeakEasy Stage Company, and has previously appeared in *Our Town*, *Persephone*, *A Month in the Country*, and *The Rose Tattoo* at the Huntington. She teaches theatre and performance at Wellesley College and playwriting at Boston University.

The 2016-2017 ArtsEmerson Stage Season

Mala is the fifth production in the 2016/17 ArtsEmerson Season. The season continues with **Our Secrets** from Hungary's Bela Pinter & Company (Jan 19-22, 2017), **The Beauty Queen of Leenane** from Ireland's Druid Theatre Company, **Citizen** by Claudia Rankine (Mar 15-19, 2017), **17 Border Crossings** by Thaddeus Phillips, and **How To Be A Rock Critic** by Jessica Blank & Erik Jensen (May 11-21, 2017).

About ArtsEmerson

ArtsEmerson is the professional presenting and producing organization of the Office of the Arts at Emerson College, and aims to address gaps in Boston's cultural landscape by putting the world on stage and inviting diverse audiences from across the region into its historic downtown venues. Founded in 2010 by Robert J. Orchard under the auspices of Emerson College, ArtsEmerson quickly established a reputation for putting great work from diverse cultures on its stages — work that emanates from the language of theater, yet pushes the boundaries into dance, music, and opera. The organization is committed to building a cultural institution that embraces and reflects the changing demographics of the City of Boston. ArtsEmerson operates from the core belief that the arts are for everyone. In 2015, Orchard moved into the role of Creative Consultant. Currently ArtsEmerson is led by Co-Artistic Directors, David Dower and P. Carl, and Executive Director, David Howse. This shared leadership model reflects the organization's values — that multiple voices are essential to leading a 21st century arts organization. Click [here](#) for more information.

About Emerson College

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Common and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, with sites in the Netherlands and Los Angeles, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has 3,750 undergraduates and 750 graduate students from across the United States and 50 countries. Supported by state-of-the-art facilities and a renowned faculty, students participate in more than 90 student organizations and performance groups. Emerson is known for its study and internship programs in Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., the

Netherlands, London, China and the Czech Republic. The College has an active network of 32,000 alumni who hold leadership positions in communications and the arts. Click [here](#) for information.

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