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Erlina Ortiz Wins ATC's 2022 National Latine Playwrights Award *Six-Time Barrymore Award Nominee Wins with Dramedy La Egoista*

PHOENIX – Arizona Theatre Company is excited to announce that Dominican-American playwright, performer and theatremaker, Erlina Ortiz, has won the 2022 National Latine Playwrights Award with her dramedy *La Egoista*, for which she will receive \$2,500 and a professional workshop. In conjunction with ATC senior artistic staff, panelists included director, playwright and Associate Artistic Director for Syracuse Stage, Melissa Crespo; Jeff Award recipient, Steppenwolf Theatre ensemble member, and television and Broadway actress Caroline Neff; Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist, Emmy-nominated filmmaker and author of "Dear America: Notes of an Undocumented Citizen" José Antonio Vargas. The company also worked closely with the community and esteemed partners throughout the process to reach this final decision.

La Egoista explores the story of Josefina, a rising stand-up comic who takes nothing seriously, and her very religious sister Betsaida, who is suddenly diagnosed with a chronic illness. This surreal play follows Josefina through her comedic sets as they unfold in conjunction with the deterioration of her sister's health. *La Egoista* uses comedy, puppets, magic, and memory to explore caregiving, the ways we process grief, and how to find balance between the selfless and the selfish. The play was commissioned by Live & In Color and presented at the 2022 LTC Comedy Carnival.

"*La Egoista* found its champions at Arizona Theatre Company," says Arizona Theatre Company Playwright-in-Residence Elaine Romero. "From our very first readers to our high-profile final panelists, all fell in love with the play's inventive storytelling and form. It has often been said that to win the National Latine Playwrights Award, a play must do something that the others didn't do. We found that to be so true here. The humor, pathos, and honesty in '*La Egoista* —the love between sisters and family—kept inviting us back home."

Ortiz is a playwright, performer, and theatremaker from Reading, Pennsylvania. Her heartfelt and humorous plays have been presented with Power Street Theatre where she is proud to be Co-Artistic Director. Her play *Las Mujeres* received The Bonaly Award for Creation of Community Joy. Her play, *Morir Sonyando*, was nominated for six Barrymore Awards, including Outstanding New Play. *Young Money* produced at Azuka Theatre, received an ATCA/Steinberg New Play Award Citation. Ortiz participated in the O'Neill National Musical Theatre Conference with the musical *Siluetas*.

Notable recent winners of the National Latine Playwrights Award include Rachel Lynett with *Black Mexican*, Charise Castro Smith, for *El Huracán*, co-writer of Disney hit *Encanto* (Golden Globe, Winner, Best Motion Picture, Animated), Benjamin Benne for *Alma*, a world premiere in production at the Center Theatre Group, and Eliana Pipes for *Dream Hou\$e*, which received multiple professional productions.

Established in 1995, the National Latine Playwrights Award is unique in both its longevity and prescience. Of the past 26 recipients, 24 have gone on to productions across the United States and around the world.

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ATC's long history of recognizing Latine voices is echoed in its embrace of new work that does not neatly comport to genre, form, or subject. For more information, please visit [ATC.org](https://www.atc.org) and follow the company on [Facebook](#).

About Arizona Theatre Company

Arizona Theatre Company's (ATC) performances bring people together to experience essential stories, from reimagined classics to contemporary plays, original works, and innovative musicals fostering continued conversation beyond the theatre walls. Founded in 1966 and celebrating its 54th season, ATC is led by Kasser Family Artistic Director Sean Daniels and Managing Director Geri Wright. ATC operates in two major cities and is the preeminent professional theatre in Arizona, recognized as the official State theatre.

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