

LATINO THEATER COMPANY REINVENTS *PREMEDITATION* FOR YOUR EARBUDS

The acclaimed stage play is now a serialized podcast

BY SHANA NYS DAMBROT

Do you ever wish your partner appreciated you more? Are you worried that the spark has gone out between you? Do you ever just want to kill them for the way they chew gum? How far are you willing to go to make yourself heard — or just skip straight to your revenge? These and other questions are asked and largely answered in a stylish and

witty serialized audio version of Latino Theater Company's *Premeditation*, as two couples who are very different and also have a lot in common try to work it all out for themselves. In a hotel room. With guns.

Written by resident playwright Evelina Fernández (who also stars on this production as Esmeralda, one of the scenarios' righteously indignant women on the verge) and directed



Lucy Rodriguez, Geoffrey Rivas, Evelina Fernández and Sal Lopez

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by Latino Theater Company artistic director José Luis Valenzuela, the work was first staged at LTC in 2014 and revived there in 2017, with acclaimed national productions in between. Like many theater groups, the pandemic pivot inspired the company to reinvent this beloved work as a serial radio play.

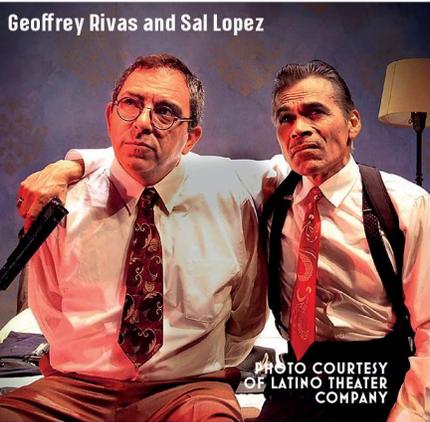
Along with company members Sal Lopez, Lucy Rodriguez and Geoffrey Rivas, the result is a fittingly old-school and fast-paced piece

that evokes the golden age of radio plays without being a 1940's period piece at all. Sprinkled with a few well-placed contemporary culture and technology references along with a total lack of corny old-timey language idioms, the story is definitely *now*, but it artistically exists in a kind of post-war dream aesthetic. The scene and mood are set at the Shangri-La Hotel, and moved by the hard-boiled stylized urgency of the voiceovers, the jokes about a UCLA/USC

Geoffrey Rivas, Lucy Rodriguez, Sal Lopez and Evelina Fernández



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rivalry, the anachronistic pinstripe suits and women in gloves, sexual innuendo, classic movie references and iPhones.

In switching narrative voices and deftly using both flashback/voiceover narration and enacted dialog, the work flirts with camp but never devolves. It's funny without being a comedy, and a thriller without being scary. In the sense that you don't really ever know how it's going to end, the resolution is ultimately both satisfying and oddly plausible. Like any good drama, but especially the noir-inflected variety, the audience's opinion of who is the villain, the victim, or the hero of the story continues to shift right up to the last moment.

Since October 1, a new 15-minute episode has dropped every Friday with the remaining upcoming episodes scheduled for release throughout the end of October; where the first few are ready and binge-worthy. For more information, visit and listen at latinotheaterco.org.