

BEGINS SEPTEMBER 11 / MCGINN/CAZALE THEATER

OUR DEAR DEAD DRUG LORD

OUR DEAR DEAD DRUG LORD IS A CO-PRODUCTION WITH WP THEATER
BY SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT WITH BENJAMIN SIMPSON AND JOSEPH LONGTHORNE.

BY

ALEXIS SCHEER

DIRECTED BY

WHITNEY WHITE

In this fierce and feverish world premiere comedy from WP Theater and Second Stage, a gang of teenage girls gathers in an abandoned treehouse to summon the ghost of Pablo Escobar. Are they messing with the actual spirit of the infamous cartel kingpin? Or are they really just messing with each other? A rollercoaster ride through the danger and damage of girlhood—the teenage wasteland has never been so much twisted fun.

A CONVERSATION WITH ALEXIS SCHEER

WHAT WAS THE INSPIRATION BEHIND THIS PLAY?

My plays usually start as three disparate ideas inelegantly smashed together until a story appears. *Our Dear Dead Drug Lord* was born from the 2016 election, comic books like *Paper Girls* and *Bitch Planet*, and the mythology of Pablo Escobar. It's only now after two years of development that I have clarity around what was always driving the play forward, and that's the need to disrupt both figurative and literal spaces dominated by men—politics, treehouses, power, and brutality.

HAS YOUR OWN IDENTITY HELPED SHAPE YOUR CHARACTERS?

I think it's my experience, informed by my identity, that shapes my characters. The girls' fascination with Pablo Escobar stems from wrestling with my own Colombian heritage and the disconnect I feel as an American who only has a Netflix understanding of events my mother and her family lived through. And I also grew up in Miami, so the vibe of that city is deeply embedded into the background and ethos of my characters.

THIS PLAY GIVES VOICE TO FOUR TEENAGE GIRLS. HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THEM, AND HOW DO THEIR VOICES DIFFER FROM THOSE OF TEENAGE GIRLS WE TYPICALLY SEE ON SCREEN AND STAGE?

The four teenage girls that populate my play are relentlessly truthful, hilarious, and vicious. They are deeply attuned to the world around them and far more articulate than you would ever want to admit—but hey, the SAT tutoring is paying off! I definitely pay tribute to some of our favorite teen girl movie tropes, but I think this play sets itself apart by being centered on young Latinas and challenging/subverting stereotypes.

ARE THERE QUESTIONS YOU HOPE AUDIENCES WILL BE ASKING THEMSELVES AFTER SEEING THIS PLAY?

I hope the play sits in your body in a place where words don't live, and after the show all you can do is walk yourself to the bar or home to shower.

WHAT ARE YOU MOST LOOKING FORWARD TO ABOUT WORKING UPTOWN THIS SEPTEMBER?

This is my first New York production, so literally every aspect of this journey is exciting! I'm thrilled to be collaborating with Whitney White and such a high caliber group of artists in this historic co-production between Second Stage and WP Theater. And I'm really excited to introduce myself and my work to a new audience with a play that is so deeply personal to me.

WHAT CAN WE FIND YOU DOING WHEN YOU'RE NOT WORKING ON A PLAY OR AT THE THEATER?

Eating breakfast! My boyfriend and I run an anonymous Instagram account for fun where we review diners—I'm talking greasy spoon, cash-only, neighborhood joints. I also love photography and traveling. My last big trips were Quebec and Israel, and next is South Africa and [back to] Colombia.