

THE MARSH TRANSFERS
**WHY WOULD I MISPRONOUNCE MY
OWN NAME?
TO BERKELEY**

Written and Performed by Irma Herrera
Developed with David Ford
Directed by Rebecca Fisher
Character Development with Julia McNeal
February 3 – March 24, 2019

BERKELEY, CA (16 January 2019) – Due to popular demand, Irma Herrera’s *Why Would I Mispronounce My Own Name* will transfer from The Marsh San Francisco to **The Marsh Berkeley** in February. Weaving history and comedic insights into stories about names, this hit solo show sheds light and throws shade on societal prejudices and assumptions. When giving her name its correct Spanish pronunciation, she often gets the “where are you from?” question. The assumption: that she is a foreigner. Irma’s family has been in South Texas for generations, and the award-winning social justice activist, lawyer, and journalist thinks of herself as American as apple pie. Irma’s notes from American history and laugh out-loud humor invite audience members to consider what it will take for everyone to get along. Originally scheduled to close January 26 in San Francisco, *Why Would I Mispronounce My Own Name?* will transfer to Berkeley for an extended run **February 3 – March 24, 2019** with performances 2:00pm Sundays and 5:00pm Saturdays (beginning March 2) at **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley. For tickets (\$20-\$35 sliding scale, \$55-\$100 reserved) or for more information, the public may visit www.themarsh.org or call The Marsh Box office at 415-282-3055 (open Monday through Friday, 1pm-4pm).

Herrera is praised by *TheatreEddys* as an “ever-smiling, sparkly-eyed dynamo,” pulling from her own experiences to portray the stories of her life with heart and humor. Lauded by the *Mercury News*, the show “speaks volumes about the ingrained power structures in American society” and offers “food for thought about how the dominant culture asserts and imposes its dominance.”

THE MARSH BERKELEY PRESENTS “WHY WOULD I MISPRONOUNCE MY OWN NAME?”

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Described as “A must-see for anyone who wonders what it will take for us to get along” (*Colorlines*), ***Why Would I Mispronounce My Own Name?*** was originally presented in The Marsh’s “Rising Series” in late 2017, ***Why Would I Mispronounce My Own Name?*** returned to The Marsh San Francisco in October for a seven-week run before being extended. The show earned a Best of 2017 San Francisco Fringe Award and is always evolving with new material related to current social justice issues.

Throughout her 30 plus years as a civil rights lawyer, **Irma Herrera** (Writer/ Performer) fought on behalf of marginalized communities: farmworkers, students of color and women (of all backgrounds, but in particular women of color). A writer, former journalist, and visiting professor of social justice and education law, Herrera’s notable accomplishments include the Margaret Brent Women Lawyers of Achievement Award from the American Bar Association’s Commission on Women in the Profession, National Person of Distinction by Santa Clara University School of Law, and California’s NOW Safety, Health and Equal Opportunity (S.H.E.) Award for promoting educational opportunity.

There will be free talkback engagements following all performances of ***Why Would I Mispronounce My Own Name?*** Leaders in the Bay Area’s social justice community will join Herrera on-stage for half-hour conversations about their work addressing discrimination. A listing of guests will be available on The Marsh website (www.themarsh.org) and at www.irmaherrera.com.

David Ford (Developer) has been collaborating on new and unusual theater for three decades and has been associated with The Marsh for most of that time. The San Francisco press has variously called him “the solo performer maven,” “the monologue maestro,” “the dean of solo performance,” and “the solo performer’s best friend.” Collaborators include Geoff Hoyle, Echo Brown, Brian Copeland, Charlie Varon, Marilyn Pittman, Rebecca Fisher, Wayne Harris, and Marga Gomez. As a director, Ford has directed both solo and ensemble work regionally at The Public Theater, Second Stage, Theatre for the New City (NY), Highways (LA) and Woolly

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Mammoth (Washington, DC) as well as at theaters around the Bay Area including Magic Theatre and Marin Theatre Company. He is also a published playwright.

Rebecca Fisher (Director) is the creator of The Marsh’s Writing Cabaret and the co-producer of the long-running Marsh series *Tell it on Tuesday*. Her solo performance work has been called “smart, challenging, and unmistakably affecting” by the *San Francisco Chronicle* and has won a San Francisco Best of Fringe award. She has directed solo shows in national fringe festivals, as well as Mark Kenward’s *Nantucket*, and Diane Barnes’ *My Stroke of Luck*, both presented at The Marsh. Fisher was a teaching artist with The Lincoln Center affiliated arts education program in Bay Area schools and has directed theater camps with the Berkeley Playhouse/Julia Morgan Center for the Arts and The Marsh.

Julia McNeal (Character Development) is an award-winning actress and teacher whose distinct technique for Playing Multiple Characters is highly regarded and employed by numerous solo theater artists. She works with solo performers at The Marsh Theater and privately.

The Marsh is known as “a breeding ground for new performance.” It was launched in 1989 by Founder and Artistic Director Stephanie Weisman, and now annually hosts more than 600 performances of 175 shows across the company’s two venues in San Francisco and Berkeley. A leading outlet for solo performers, The Marsh’s specialty has been hailed by the *San Francisco Chronicle* as “solo performances that celebrate the power of storytelling at its simplest and purest.” The *East Bay Times* named The Marsh one of Bay Area’s best intimate theaters, calling it “one of the most thriving solo theaters in the nation. The live theatrical energy is simply irresistible.”

FOR CALENDAR EDITORS:

WHAT: Due to popular demand, Irma Herrera’s *Why Would I Mispronounce My Own Name* will transfer from The Marsh San Francisco to **The Marsh Berkeley** in February. Weaving history and comedic insights into stories about names, this hit solo show sheds light and throws shade on societal prejudices and assumptions. When giving her name its correct Spanish pronunciation, she often gets the “where are you from?” question. The assumption: that she is a foreigner. Irma’s

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WHEN: February 3 – March 24, 2019

SHOWS: 2:00pm Sundays
5:00pm Saturdays (starting March 2)

WHERE: **The Marsh Berkeley**, 2120 Allston Way, Berkeley
Parking: Allston Way Garage, 2061 Allston Way between Milvia & Shattuck
The Downtown Berkeley BART station is one block away on Shattuck

TICKETS: \$20-\$35 sliding scale, \$55-\$100 reserved

INFO: For information or to order tickets visit **themarsh.org** or call **(415) 282-3055** (Monday through Friday, 1pm-4pm).

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PRESS: Contact Sydney Albin, Carla Befera & Co.
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PHOTOS: Downloadable high-res photos are available here: <http://cbpr.co/press/whywouldi>