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Kory Kelly - Director of Marketing at Pasadena Playhouse:

## ***Little Shop of Horrors*** **Casting Announced**

**George Salazar (*Be More Chill*) as “Seymour,”  
Mj Rodriguez (*Pose*) As “Audrey,”  
and Amber Riley (*Glee*) as “Audrey II”.**

**Tuesday, September 17, 2019 to Sunday, October 20, 2019**  
**Press opening September 25, 2019**

### **TICKETS NOW ON SALE**

PASADENA, CA (July 23, 2019) - Pasadena Playhouse, the State Theater of California, announces preliminary casting for *Little Shop of Horrors* which comes to the Playhouse September 17 through October 20; the press opening is September 25.

**George Salazar**, who is currently starring as “Michael” in the Broadway productions of *Be More Chill* (Lucille Lortel winner and Drama Desk Nominee for Outstanding Featured Actors in a Musical), has been announced for the role of “Seymour Krelborn.” **Mj Rodriguez**, who currently stars as “Blanca Rodriguez-Evangelista” in *Pose* - the Emmy-nominated FX drama series with the largest cast of transgender actors to be starring as series regulars in a scripted show - has been announced for the role of “Audrey.” **Amber Riley**, best known for her portrayal of Mercedes Jones on the Fox comedy-drama series *Glee*, has been announced for the role of “Audrey II.” Additional casting will be announced at a later date.

In *Little Shop of Horrors* (book and lyrics by **Howard Ashman**, music by **Alan Menken**), a power-hungry, R&B-singing, carnivorous plant sets its sights on world domination! Directed by **Mike Donahue** (*The Legend of Georgia McBride*, Geffen Playhouse) with Music Direction by **Darryl Archibald**, this deviously delicious sci-fi musical comedy favorite comes to the Playhouse with some deliciously devious new twists: a brand new puppet concept for Audrey II, and a whole new take on Skid Row.

Danny Feldman, Pasadena Playhouse Producing Artistic Director said, “Our new electrifying production of *Little Shop of Horrors* will give our audiences the opportunity to see a show they know and love in a way they never have before. From a delicious new take on everyone’s favorite singing plant to the stunningly talented cast, this is sure to be a landmark theatrical event for Los Angeles.”

Director Mike Donahue says, "with its gritty early-Motown-meets-B-movie-horror-sci-fi

vibe, *Little Shop of Horrors* has always been a favorite musical of mine, and it is a thrill for me to delve deeply into this rich material with this spectacular, electric cast. I look forward to not only paying homage to this musical theatre classic, but also exploring the themes that are still so much a part of our world today. More than anything, I look forward to Playhouse audiences having the time of their lives, and hearing our *Little Shop* with fresh ears, in a way they never have before.”

The creative team features direction by Mike Donahue, music direction by Darryl Archibald, accompanist and conductor John Gentry Tennyson, choreography by Will B. Bell, scenic design by Dane Laffrey; costume design by Danae McQueen; lighting design by Josh Epstein; sound design by Veronika Vorel; puppet design, direction and choreography by Sean Cawelti; casting by Telsey + Company/Ryan Tymensky, CSA, and stage management by Jill Gold.

Tickets for *Little Shop of Horrors* start at \$25 and are available at [pasadenaplayhouse.org](http://pasadenaplayhouse.org), by phone at 626-356-7529, and at the box office at 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101.

#### **ABOUT LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS**

The original production premiered Off-Off-Broadway in 1982 before moving to the Orpheum Theatre Off-Broadway, where it had a five-year run. It later received numerous productions in the U.S. and abroad, and a subsequent Broadway production, and was also made into a film in 1986.

*Little Shop of Horrors* has devoured the hearts of theatergoers of all ages for more than 30 years.

*Village Voice* critic Michael Feingold contends, “How often do you get to see a musical about a giant plant from outer space that sings, dances, talks jive and eats people?” Mel Gussow in *The New York Times* says that *Little Shop of Horrors* is “a show for horticulturists, horror-cultists, sci-fi fans and anyone with a taste for the outrageous! As entertaining as it is exotic.” Rex Reed summed it up by saying, “I just loved it!”

#### **ABOUT THE PASADENA PLAYHOUSE**

The Pasadena Playhouse is a place where people have gathered for 100 years to experience bold and important theater. It is one of the most prolific theaters in American history with a legacy of profound theatrical impact and courageous new work. In 1937, the Playhouse was officially recognized as the State Theater of California for its contribution and commitment to the dramatic arts. Today it continues that tradition of excellence under the helm of producing artistic director Danny Feldman. Dedicated to enriching lives through theater, community programs and learning initiatives, Pasadena Playhouse is a living force in the community.

#### **Calendar Listing for *Little Shop of Horrors***

Book and Lyrics by Howard Ashman

Music by Alan Menken

Directed by Mike Donahue

Venue: The Pasadena Playhouse, 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Dates: Tuesday, September 17 to Sunday, October 20  
Press opening Wednesday, September 25 at 8:00 p.m.

Performance Schedule:

Tuesday-Friday evenings at 8:00 p.m.

Saturday at 2:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.; Sunday at 2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Tickets: Prices start at \$25  
Online -- PasadenaPlayhouse.org  
By phone at 626-356-7529  
In person -- Pasadena Playhouse Box Office, located at 39 South El Molino Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91101

Information: For more information on all productions at Pasadena Playhouse visit PasadenaPlayhouse.org.

Description: POWER-HUNGRY, R&B-SINGING, CARNIVOROUS PLANT SETS ITS SIGHTS ON WORLD DOMINATION!

This deviously delicious sci-fi musical comedy comes to the Playhouse for the musical theater event of the season with some deliciously devious new twists. Featuring George Salazar (*Be More Chill*), Mj Rodriguez (*Pose*), and Amber Riley (*Glee*) as Audrey II, *This Little Shop* is unlike any you have seen before.

Created by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken (*Disney's The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty And The Beast*, and *Aladdin*), *Little Shop of Horrors* has devoured the hearts of theatergoers of all ages for more than 30 years... and yours is next!

## BIOGRAPHIES

**George Salazar** (Seymour Krelborn) is best known for his work as “Michael” in the cult sensation *Be More Chill*, a role for which he won a Lucille Lortel Award, two Broadway.com Audience Choice Awards, and garnered nominations for both Drama Desk and Outer Critics Circle Awards. His act two showstopper, “Michael in the Bathroom,” has become an anthem for a generation and has been streamed over 50 million times worldwide. His broad spectrum of work in New York includes his Drama Desk-nominated performance as “Grover” and “Mr. D” in another cult-favorite musical: *The Lightning Thief: The Percy Jackson Musical*, the off-Broadway revival of Jonathan Larson’s *tick, tick... BOOM!*, David Byrne and Fat Boy Slim’s *Here Lies Love*, The Broadway revival of *Godspell*, and more. He has appeared on television in *Bull* and *Divorce* and appears on several albums including “Two-Player Game,” a studio recording of his sold-out two-person cabaret act with *Be More Chill* composer, Joe Iconis. For more information, visit [www.thegeorgesalazar.com](http://www.thegeorgesalazar.com) or @georgesalazar on Instagram and Twitter.

Salazar is repped by Principal Entertainment and Jessica Kent & Carolyn Conrad at Schreck Rose Dapello Adams Berlin & Dunham.

**Mj Rodriguez** (Audrey) can currently be seen starring as housemother “Blanca” in Ryan Murphy’s groundbreaking series *Pose* on FX. Currently in its second season, the series was nominated for a 2019 Emmy Award in the category of Outstanding Drama Series, a 2018 Golden Globe Award in the category of Best Television Series Drama and a Writers Guild Award, and won both a Peabody Award and GLAAD Media Award in the category of Outstanding Drama Series. Rodriguez was most recently nominated for an MTV Movie + TV Award in the category of Breakthrough Performance. Born and raised in Newark, New Jersey, Rodriguez made her Off-Broadway debut in New World Stages production of *Rent* as “Angel,” before continuing onto New York City Center to star in Encores! production of *Runaways*. In 2018 she made her Tribeca Film Debut starring in the indie film *Saturday Church*, a performance which garnered her a Tribeca Film Festival Nomination for Best Actress. Her other television credits include *Nurse Jackie* and Marvel’s *Luke Cage*.

Actress and singer **Amber Riley** (Audrey II) is best known for her role as ‘Mercedes Jones’ in the Golden Globe Award-winning musical comedy, *Glee*. She was most recently seen on the big screen in Tyler Perry’s *Nobody’s Fool*, opposite Tiffany Haddish, Tika Sumpter, Omari Hardwick, and Whoopi Goldberg. Riley made her West End debut in 2016 in the revival of *Dreamgirls* in the iconic role of Effie White, where she received the Olivier Award for Best Actress in a Musical. The production marked the UK premiere of the award-winning production. Riley won the Laurence Olivier Award for Best Actress in a Musical for her performance. In 2013, she won season 17 of ABC’s hit competition series *Dancing with the Stars* alongside her partner Derek Hough. Additional recent television appearances include a starring role in the UPtv original movie, *My One Christmas Wish* and a starring role alongside Queen Latifah, Mary J Blige and newcomer Shanice Williams as Addaperle, the Good Witch of the North, in NBC’s live production of *The Wiz*. Riley’s numerous theatre credits include *Alice in Wonderland*, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, *Into the Woods* and *Mystery on the Docks* with the Los Angeles Opera. In November 2012, she made her New York stage debut to rave reviews in New York City Center’s *Duke Ellington’s Cotton Club Parade*.

**Mike Donahue** (Director) is a New York-based director. NYC credits include: world premieres of Matthew Lopez’s *The Legend of Georgia McBride* (MCC, The Geffen and Denver Center, Joe A. Callaway Award, Outer Critics Circle Nomination, Ovation Award Nomination); Jen Silverman’s *Collective Rage* (MCC, Woolly Mammoth, Dramaleague Nomination), *The Moors* (Playwrights Realm - NYC premiere), *Phoebe in Winter* (Clubbed Thumb) and *The Hunters* (Cherry Lane Mentor Project); Jordan Seavey’s *Homos, Or Everyone In America* (Labyrinth); and Ethan Lipton’s *Red-Handed Otter* (Playwrights Realm). Regionally: world premieres of Jen Silverman’s *The Roommate* (Humana, Williamstown, Long Wharf); Rachel Bonds’ *Curve of Departure* (South Coast Rep, Studio Theatre), *The Wolfe Twins* (Studio Theatre D.C.) and *Swimmers* (Marin); Matthew Lopez’s *Zoey’s Perfect Wedding* and Lauren Feldman’s *Grace, or The Art of Climbing* (Denver Center); and Shostakovich’s *Moscow, Cheryomushki* in a new libretto by Meg Miroshnik (Chicago Opera Theatre). Additionally regionally, Annie Baker’s adaptation of *Uncle Vanya* (Weston); Amy Herzog’s *4000 Miles* (Actors Theatre); *Antony & Cleopatra* (Shakespeare Festival St. Louis); and *Assassins, Henry IV & V* (co-directed with Joe Haj) and *A Number* (Playmakers Rep, 2011/12 Distinguished Guest Artist). Select readings/ workshops: MTC, Roundabout Underground, NYTW, Soho Rep (Writer/Director Lab),

McCarter, The O'Neill, Berkley Rep Ground Floor, South Coast Rep's Pacific Playwrights Festival, New Dramatists, The Lark, Ars Nova, Primary Stages, Chautauqua, Cape Cod Theatre Project and Studio 42. Mike is recipient of a Fulbright to Berlin, the Dramaleague Fall Fellowship, The Boris Sagal Fellowship at Williamstown, winner of the Inaugural Opera America Director-Designer Showcase Award, and was the artistic director of the Yale Summer Cabaret for two seasons. Mike is a graduate of Harvard University and the Yale School of Drama. Upcoming: world premieres of Jen Silverman's *Wink* and Kate Cortesi's *Love* (Marin) and Euripides *The Bacchae* (Baltimore Center Stage).

**Howard Ashman** (Book & Lyrics): Best known as a pivotal creative mind behind the renaissance of Disney animation and his work on *The Little Mermaid*, *Aladdin* and *Beauty and The Beast* (which is dedicated to, "Our friend, Howard Ashman, who gave a Mermaid her voice and a Beast his soul...") Ashman's first love was theater. Ashman was a founder of off Off-Broadway's renowned WPA Theater, where he conceived, wrote and directed *God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater*, as well as the classic musical, *Little Shop of Horrors* (both music by Alan Menken). In 1986, he wrote and directed the Broadway musical *Smile* (music by Marvin Hamlisch). Lamented as a lost treasure of the 1980's theater scene, *Smile* remains popular on High School and College campuses throughout the country. Howard Ashman died in 1991 from complications of AIDS. For more information, please visit [howardashman.com](http://howardashman.com).

**Alan Menken** (Music): Legendary composer Alan Menken has created some of the most beloved songs and musical scores of our time. His unique voice, as a composer, a lyricist and a musical theater dramatist has captured the imaginations of audiences for over 35 years. Alan's stage musicals include *God Bless You Mr. Rosewater*, *Patch Patch Patch*, *Atina: Evil Queen of the Galaxy*, *Real Life Funnies*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Dream on Royal Street*, *Kicks*, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Weird Romance*, *King David*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Sister Act*, *Leap of Faith*, and *Newsies*. He has also contributed to such revues as *Personals*, *Diamonds*, and *On the Record*.

His film musicals include *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Newsies*, *Aladdin*, *Pocahontas*, *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, *Hercules*, *Home on the Range*, *Enchanted*, and *Tangled*. His dramatic underscores for films include *Life With Mikey*, *Noel*, *The Shaggy Dog*, and *Mirror Mirror*. He has contributed songs to such films as *Rocky V*, *Home Alone 2 - Lost in New York*, *Life With Mikey*, and *Captain America - The First Avenger*.

Alan's television credits include writing numerous songs for "Sesame Street", composing the score for the ABC mini-series *Lincoln*, contributing songs for the musical *Polly*, the Hallmark adaptation of his musical of *A Christmas Carol* and the songs for an episode of the ABC-TV series *The Neighbors*.

His songwriting collaborators have included Howard Ashman, Tim Rice, Stephen Schwartz, David Zippel, Jack Feldman, David Spencer, Lynn Ahrens, Dean Pitchford, Glenn Slater and Chad Beguelin. Alan won the 2012 Tony and Drama Desk Awards for his score to *Newsies*. He currently has more Academy Awards than any other living individual, including four for Best Score (*The Little Mermaid*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Aladdin* and *Pocahontas*) and 4 for Best Song ("Under the Sea", "Beauty and the Beast", "A Whole New World" and "Colors of the Wind"). He has earned 11 Grammy Awards

(including Song of the Year for "A Whole New World"), 7 Golden Globes, London's Evening Standard Award, the Olivier Award, the Outer Critics Circle Award and the Drama Desk Award. Other notable achievements include induction into the Songwriters Hall of Fame and Billboard's number one single ("A Whole New World") and number one album (Pocahontas). In 2001 he received the distinction of being named a Disney Legend. He has also been awarded two doctorates in Fine Arts from New York University and the North Carolina School of the Arts. In 2010 he received his own star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.