



Sierra Blanco from
New York, NY

Song: "Don't Wanna Know"

Mentor: J. Oconer Navarro

Musical Director: Rose Van Dyne



Sierra Blanco is a winner of the Stephen Sondheim National Young Playwrights Competition, Writopia's Worldwide Plays Competition, and NYC Write A Play! Competition. She received the 2017 Michael Perelstein Discover Your Passion Scholarship for Playwriting and Musical Theater Composition and was a guest playwright for the Eugene O'Neill's Young Playwrights Festival at the National Theater Institute.

She has received gold and silver medals from the Scholastic Art and Writing Awards for playwriting, poetry, and fiction and has had three professionally staged Off-Broadway productions of her work. Her play *The Smallest Heroes* was a finalist at the Blank Theater Competition in Los Angeles and will be published by YouthPLAYS. And she has written and composed a musical, *Farewell Chris Yee* which she has been developing in readings and staged workshops in New York City. She plans to graduate from the Professional Children's School in June 2021.

Song Description: Todd is a high school senior at a pre-eminent high school in Palo Alto, California. Todd is an athlete and, reflecting the high academic standards of the school, is second in his class. Emerging from a mandatory counseling session with an ineffective guidance counselor, he is preoccupied with life's changes, the loss of his friends, and a previously stable world. He meets his girlfriend Heather who

rejects him and he sings the song to himself but for her. As he struggles to accept the messiness and difficulties of reality he sings, "Maybe the world can't be golden but it still can glow."

Blanco's mentor J. Oconer Navarro is a recipient of the American Theatre Wing Jonathan Larson Grant and an alumnus of the Composer-Librettist Studio at New Dramatists. AWAKENING, his musical based upon the novella by Kate Chopin (book by Jenny Stafford, lyrics by Joel B. New) was a finalist for the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Music Theater Conference, the Yale Institute of Music Theatre, the National Alliance for Musical Theatre, and the recipient of the Margo Lion Award. His one-act musical BIRTH DAY (conceived with Diana Glazer) was developed and produced by Prospect Theater Company and was also presented for National Asian Artists Project's inaugural Discover: New Musicals series. ONWARD, a musical triptych (Words by Katie Kring) was developed by Prospect Theater Company and played Off-Broadway's 59E59 Theaters. THE NEW PEGGY (Book by co-lyrics by Drew Larimore) was released in radio play format through the podcast "The Micro-Musical Theatre Show." F.L.I.P.PED, his new musical about the Filipino-American experience, was showcased in Summer 2020 by New York Theatre Barn's New Work Series in anticipation of a Fall 2021 Concert at Feinstein's/54 Below. He was most recently commissioned by Western Connecticut State University to contribute the score to a play with music by playwright Keelay Gipson and directed by Chris Bolan.

J. is widely recognized for his work in music direction. Additionally, he is resident music director for CAMP BROADWAY, contributes to the Education Department at LINCOLN CENTER THEATER, and is resident composer for THE CHURCH OF SAINT PAUL THE APOSTLE, NYC. J. is part of the founding faculty of the New Studio on Broadway at New York University Tisch School of the Arts and on faculty at the Stella Adler Studio of Acting - Musical Theatre Intensive. He holds his MFA in Musical Theatre Writing from New York University. When the industry returns, J. will resume his place in the Music Department for the Broadway Revival of CAROLINE, OR CHANGE at Roundabout Theatre Company.

Blanco's musical director Rose Van Dyne (she/her) is a multifaceted artist based in NYC. Working as both an actor and a music director, Rose strives to infuse all her work with an aim towards equity, diversity, and the empowerment of oppressed voices. Recent acting credits include: *Interstate* (world premiere, Mixed Blood Theatre), *Cambodian Rock Band* (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), *Spring Awakening* (Argyle Theatre). Recent music directing credits include: *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown* (Off-Broadway OOTB Theatrics), *Second Line* (Pace University, OSF).