

¡Dále! Inverted Exclamation D A(con tilde) L E Exclamation:

A Solo Performance Through Mess and Joy

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Abstract

¡Dále! Inverted Exclamation D A(con tilde) L E Exclamation:

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Isa bursts into rooms with light and joy. Until she stops. Her sparkle is fizzling out. One day she decides to *¡Dále!* Go ahead and bring the messy joy back into the room by leaving home and becoming a piñata. In a world where there is hardship, embracing our joy can bring us back to fondest memories of joy with loved ones. We can be connected by one goal, go after that joy from within. *¡Dále! Inverted Exclamation D A(con tilde) L E Exclamation: A Solo Performance Through Mess and Joy* gives La Piñata permission. It gives her permission to arrive from a box, make a mess and share that with the audience. She searches for her family's love and joy through Clowning. Within the audience her family is found. There is a realization that the joy from within La Piñata must be shared with everyone. Surrounded by entrails of streamers, papier-mâché and candy wrappers, she did it. She brought them joy. She created it. She also destroyed herself for them to experience it, but it is all worth it.

Adriana I. Gonzales

Graduate Thesis– *¡Dále! Inverted Exclamation D A(con tilde) L E Exclamation:*

A Solo Performance Through Mess and Joy

Jeffrey Fracé

March 17, 2026

Dále is a Spanish word which means go ahead, do it, come on, or give it. In Mexican slang, it can also carry a variety of meanings such as pass it or hit it. The term fluctuates depending on the environment it is placed in. This show was me giving myself the permission to go ahead. As an actor, I gave myself permission to do the show that I wanted to do. Using the skills I have acquired at the University of Washington School of Drama, I was able to take an inkling of an idea to fully develop a solo show full of joy. Joy is something I authentically bring to rooms and the program gave me skills to hone that into a thoughtful performance.

Go Ahead- Make the List

Lists have always been a part of my personal practice. Bringing that into grad school, I learned to keep track of the ideas because they can be the key to a process or the nugget of inspiration for a new project. When inspiration struck, many solo show ideas emerged, they went ahead and became lists in the back of my school journals and a running list within my phone's notes app. Ideas flowed easily as I was in the creative and artistic atmosphere of Hutchinson Hall. By choosing to exercise my curiosity and creativity, I was training my receptivity to all ideas, even those that "didn't make sense."

Piñata showed up in my April 2024 journal. It was a reappearing idea from 2024 until my current 2026 journal. As other themes eventually surfaced, *dále* joined the list. Some of the ideas that came up were:

- Making a piñata
- Gifts
- Shrek in Spanish
- Voiceover beginning
- I am revealed
- Gathering items
- Piñata creating with family
- Using papers I've printed in grad school
- Names of family members
- Clown
- Breaking control
- Breaking free
- Mask and piñata
- The piñata has to be perfect
- Commentary on ICE
- Mexican folk toys
- We break it and people love it.

Piñata was one of the ideas that I first explored in our Solo Show class with Valerie Curtis-Newton. The pitch was as follows:

The construction of a piñata is a ceremonial act, an act of love. The family is too poor to get a piñata for the upcoming birthday and the mom is willing to work and create something together. Everyone contributes a part of themselves that they no longer want into this piñata. There is a ceremonial breaking together which is a celebration.

In the spring quarter of 2025, I couldn't figure out what the story was. I couldn't figure out why we were getting together and why it was important that we break this piñata. During the exploratory phase and during a discussion with Professor Cathy Madden, the idea of me being the piñata came up. With that, I was asked "Why would we have the audience hit you?" I ultimately was challenged with the objective of the Piñata character and I tabled the idea.

I met with Bradley Wrenn, our Play and Clown professor, in fall of 2025 when I had the thought that my solo show might be a clown show. I talked through my ideas and I was already

trying to get too thinky. I was trying to figure out the meaning and the artistic vision of the piece. Wrenn instructed me to make a list of “25 stupid things.” With excitement, I told my cohort and the list began to grow. I would tell them the idea, we would agree that it was stupid and add it to the list. My creativity began to flow and I surprised myself. With my own personal list and guidance from Wrenn, I found the list as a bridge between my personal practice and a technique. When approaching important projects such as a thesis performance, I try really hard to make it good by thinking and planning a lot. The list opposed that and unlocked a freedom and creativity that was limitless. Something that Wrenn reminded us in Clown, was that we can figure out the logistics later. So, I had my list of ideas along with my list of 25 stupid things, and while getting into the studio was a probable next step, I halted. Time was passing me by and I was avoiding the moment of *dáile* in my own process.

Come On- Do Something

Bridget Connors helped me in my writer’s block in fall of 2025. In her class, I was working on a different play that I was trying to figure out. I had all the pieces, all the ideas. I can go ahead and make the list but taking the list and doing something with it is where I leaned on the faculty for support in how to get from generating ideas to generating the piece. I would halt the movement forward. Connors told me that I just need to go ahead and write. Just let the story come through. I got thinky, I was trying to figure out how the show would work instead of letting my storytelling skills move the story forward to the next step. I sometimes forget the beauty and magic of theatre that there actually is no limit. There are a lot of people that take part in theatre that work to find solutions to what is sometimes framed as a “problem.” Prior to Alexander Technique with Cathy Madden, I would have framed a lot of my roadblocks such as “writer’s block” as a problem. I now can reframe the thoughts to opportunities for solutions or approach

the project with a little more kindness and curiosity. I applied kindness, curiosity and Connors' wise words of "just write," and I wrote a whole other play. That play showed me that when I go ahead and do something, it is the first opportunity for a solution.

I went into my classes with the mindset of thinking of my solo show as I would a scripted production. Getting cast in shows was part of the MFA Acting curriculum at University of Washington, during rehearsal processes I would bring moments into class to work on specifically with the professor or on my own. Suzuki/Viewpoints taught by Jeffrey Fracé was a great place to workshop ideas. In fall of 2025, we had a class that had a longer Suzuki section due to us learning marches for the first time. As a whole, we stayed curious while completing each march. In reflection, we found that the skill that was explored was to do the move fully every time. In preparation for going into Viewpoints, the floor was opened up for questions which is where I asked Fracé how to bring my solo show into the composition. He advised me to investigate the text I have written within the composition and to add my solo show to the palette. A phrase that appeared early on in the creation process was "you created me." This came from *Frankenstein*. Through inspiration from Guillermo del Toro's 2025 film, my interest piqued for creator and destroyer archetypes. That composition explored relationships to the text "you created me" with creator/destroyer in mind. The other actors became characters in my solo show. The Suzuki and Viewpoints that day flowed through my body in an exciting and energized way.

The discoveries in that class led to the first iteration of the story of La Piñata. With a strong tie to imagery, I had Guillermo del Toro's *Frankenstein* in mind. Mexican art has always moved me and the artistry in del Toro's work was beautiful and devastating. It sparked inspiration. Questions arose around my ability to create something that mirrors the artistry in that

film. It also offered a structure of yearning to create, creating something, that something not turning out how it was planned and then leading to abandonment and destruction.

After inspiration hit, the events in the play were written out, along with a list of questions that were still hovering around the piece. In Nikki Yeboah's text analysis class, we use David Ball's *Backwards and Forwards: A Technical Manual for Reading Plays* to discuss and examine plays. The basis of picking this text is to simplify analysis from the set of actions that occur within the play. It's not about the message and feeling. For a play to exist, it needs to have events that lead to action, that's how we play. In the first draft of *¡Dále!*, written in the margins of the script was: should I trigger and heap this? When thinking of events triggers are part one of an event, such as a domino falling. The heap is the second part of the action where the other domino is hit. Each play is a series of these, one event has two parts. *¡Dále!* needed to be distilled down to simple events to ensure one thing led to the next. With this realization, I felt more confident in creating this play because I understood on a technical level how plays worked.

Another course that contributed to my generative process was The Conversation with Adrienne Mackey. The interdisciplinary class introduced me to different styles of artistic process through workshops, conversations and projects. We learned different creative processes to approach both scripted works as well as generative works. Without these discussions and workshops, the holistic and well-rounded artistry that was in *¡Dále!* would not have appeared. The Conversation provided the opportunity to learn from artists from a multitude of disciplines. A specific example of opportunity was unlocking my creative color. Blue became an inspiration color for *¡Dále!* Much of the creative process had shades of blue from post-it notes to writing utensils. Blue also became the color of La Piñata's romp. When speaking with our lighting designer, Alex Taylor, I told him I was imagining warm colors like pinks or reds. The vision in

my head contrasted with what color was actually surfacing in the process. I went ahead and trusted Alex to design and was satisfied with the bright, warm colors that contrasted the cool tones of La Piñata.

In the spring of 2025, Wrenn introduced us to a simple format when making a clown show. Make three columns:

Games	Moves	To Make
Games are games that the clown plays with the audience.	Moves are the thing that the clown does.	All the things that need to be made for the show.

In preparation for workshopping the show, I created lists under the three columns to begin structuring what could happen in *¡Dále!*

¡Dále, Dále, Dále!

Wrenn’s best advice was to get the piece in front of an audience before you think it’s ready. This gives permission to present the work and to be less precious about the product. As opposed to trying to “figure it out,” it is about moving forward with a choice and seeing how an audience may respond. Clown is about learning “in the flop”. The flop is when the clown is failing. For me, it is one of the most visceral feelings of hope and devastation. The flop is a great place for the clown, once you’re in it, you’re in it. It feels scary and like riding a roller coaster without a seatbelt. When you make it to the other side of the flop, it is almost transcendent. Getting to have a relationship with the flop is what makes a clown special. For the first sharing, there was no entrance plans but instead three move cards to explore:

UNO, DOS, TRES

BAT

DÁLE

I set a timer for ten minutes and workshopped the ideas in front of a crowd. The audience is a vital part of the clown's experience, navigating what they would respond to was a game for me in a way. I was teaching them how to respond and also learning how to have a relationship with them as La Piñata. There were moments when the audience responded but it did not land at all. That was okay, I was in the room and workshopping ideas.

Throughout my time in the program, learning to navigate notes was an important part of the process. Learning when to take what is helpful and leave what is not serving the process is important to having artistic ownership. A skill I use in my teaching of acting at the School of Drama is Liz Lerman's Critical Response Process which allows for a framework to ask for feedback while also allowing for questions to be at the heart of the response to a piece. A simplified version of this practice I like to implement is asking the audience what stood out from the performance and then offering space for them to ask questions about the piece.

I continued working ideas and had a coaching session with Bradley Wrenn where we discussed potential entrances which was my biggest concern. He offered *many* ideas. With the ideas, I felt overwhelmed. With the feeling of not enough time or space to work the opening moment, I reminded myself that if there is a "problem" there are also many possibilities that can arise with curiosity. I discovered that a rope was needed for the entrance moment. At this point, going to the School of Drama Production team helped find solutions and alleviate worries of how the rope would function in the show.

Through my final workshopping phases, I got new audience members, people who are supportive of my work but whose opinions I trust and value. Through that workshop we found

the move of the noise makers and how exciting it is to play. Watching adults explore their curiosity of a noisemaker was exciting. In *Mexican Folk Toys : Festival Decorations and Ritual Objects*, R. and F. Pettit discuss how Mexican families have responsibilities from a young age but in adulthood, they embrace a joy and levity that radiates through the family, “they also clearly have an endearing capacity for explosive gaiety when the occasion is an auspicious one” (33). My own audience got to experience a surprising moment of joy and delight in making noise.

Challenges I encountered through the workshop process really made me think whether or not this was even a clown show. After sharing, I walked away thinking the show could possibly be Bouffon which was intimidating considering I had not trained in Bouffon. I wrote a note:

Uncertain if this is even a clown show.

Sometimes you go into a process thinking it is one thing.

Turns out, it is something very different.

The reception from my workshop audience was positive but there were a lot more questions to be answered. One of the responses was a concern by Wrenn which was the challenge of performing a clown show in the round. Performances were set for the Glenn Hughes Penthouse Theatre using the theatre in the round architecture. There needed to be a justification for having *¡Dále!* in the round. After workshopping in front of an audience it was time to go back to the drawing board and dále, do it again with a sense of levity and curiosity.

Pass It- The Passing of Artistic Influence

To deepen the understanding of dále within my solo show, I explored my curiosity of Mexican art in pop culture, community and in art history. A family trip to México was scheduled for Winter break 2025. I used this trip to explore Mexican culture and the relationship of

celebrations and family. In the weeks I visited, streets were lined with papel picado, piñatas and vendors selling fireworks. In a small town where there isn't easy access to water, there was an abundance of access to piñatas and other celebratory trinkets. They were ready to celebrate.

I knew I could also find live performances to inform the struggles that were present in my current iteration of *¡Dále!* I specifically was in search of performances in arenas to support the choice of having my solo show in the round. I went to a Jaripeo which is a Mexican Rodeo that has live bands, big crowds and bull riding. Rodeos are in an arena with an audience in the round. It's a theatrical experience without being labeled as theatre. At the end of the Jaripeo there is a "Toro de Fuego," translated to "Bull of Fire," it is a medium-sized wooden structure with fireworks that shoot off from it. A person from the crowd is chosen to hold this Toro de Fuego and run around with the fireworks going off. They dance, chase kids, and point the bull at the audience. For me, that was the most abandon of joy and fear and excitement from everyone involved. I wanted that impact with *¡Dále!* Being in Mexico was a gift prior to my performance. It was a reminder that while skills and training are important to my process, experiencing life is also a part of my artistic voice. It was also important to the cultural significance and impact of my show.

There was a choice to be made about the piñatas for the show. You can't have a show about piñatas with zero piñatas present. Knowing my artistic voice, I knew I wanted to create them with my own hands instead of outsourcing them. Getting to create something from scraps with my own hands made a statement in this environment of polished displays of performance.

An artistic inspiration for me was Justin Favela. In July of 2025, he began sharing news of his newest solo art installation of self-portraits through piñatas, *EVERYTHING MUST GO*, *Justin Favela's Closeout Blowout Re-Grand Opening*. Favela was introduced to me by a friend

who listened to the podcast *Latinos Who Lunch*. We both became fans of their work and I continued to follow Favela's artistic career which centers art installations and experiences through piñatas. In *Fantasia/Fantasy*, Abad states "Justin takes the piñata out of Party City or *el mercado* and puts it inside a museum. These paper structures say our party is high art, bitch" (222). His art moved me and the self-portraits inspired me and my connection to La Piñata character in my solo piece. The presence of culture, resilience and clear evidence of can do it all attitude reflects in each piñata made. Piñatas are created out of materials such as cardboard, paper scraps, glue and tissue paper. All things that are traditionally designed to be used and thrown away.

Doing shows at University of Washington opened up my eyes to the amount of resources that a place could have. It also opened my eyes to the amount of consumption and waste we create due to the nature of our work. Productions are short lived events. Items are constructed and bought for a two week run. There were multiple productions during my time at the School of Drama that refashioned materials in a way that was supposed to give the effect that they were "found" pieces but in reality were bought for the purpose of the show. For example, in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, the Governor's Wife wore a cape constructed from bubble wrap; however, this bubble wrap was specifically sourced and bought for the singular production. The idea of rasquachismo was there.

Rasquache is a saying I learned while working at Su Teatro Cultural and Performing Arts Center in Denver, CO. A local artist and vendor who we purchased jewelry pieces from identified her pieces as Rasquache. She refashioned recycled pieces into statement jewelry pieces. Not only is it a Chicano art form, but it is an act of expression. "Chicana artist and curator Amalia Mesa-Bains emphasizes, rasquachismo is both material and attitudinal: 'In its broadest

sense it is a combination of resistant and resilient attitudes devised to allow the Chicano to survive and persevere with a sense of dignity. The capacity to hold life together with bits of string, old coffee cans, and broken mirrors in a dazzling gesture of aesthetic bravado is at the heart of rasquachismo” (Gutiérrez 186). In producing *¡Dále!* I was interested in merging the fine arts of my training to the resourcefulness of rasquachismo.

Due to my connection to my prior employer, I was able to acquire many boxes to use for my performance and for the construction of the piñatas. I used resources I found in the designer lab such as poster paper and other cardboard. The paper that was used as papier-mâché were the ones I accumulated over my time at University of Washington. I had articles, old scripts, assignments and resources that I tore up and used to create the various piñatas in the show. This was special for me. It gave an extra life to the paper that typically would be thrown out and recycled. The paper was given the opportunity to transform into something else though it was destined for recycling.

*“Paper- a mundane material in most countries- goes far to make Mexico a festive place”
(F. Pettit and R. Pettit 99)*

A theme from my show is my transformation to bring joy. The piñatas were a physical representation of that. Throughout the piñata creation process, I also would invite Alexander Technique into the process by running lines and visualizing the world these piñatas would live in. We would do an exercise with Cathy Madden called “House of Beauty,” when constructing the entrance box, I felt the house of beauty come to life for the character of La Piñata. I cared deeply about the world for these piñatas and found my life began to intertwine with the story of *¡Dále!* In February 2026, I got to speak with Favela and discuss his self-portrait project. He spoke on artistic burnout. He spoke of being an artist and how you are giving part of yourself away to the

point of having nothing left. This conversation is relevant in works from the global majority. We are constantly putting a part of ourselves in front of an audience to be perceived.

Give it- To the Audience

During the solo show class with Curtis-Newton, I created my solo show *Mis Quince Años*. In sharing my work with Curtis-Newton, I was consistently prodded with the question of “who is this for?” When I think about my relationship to theatre, I crave theatre that is accessible intergenerationally and economically and for majority and minority communities; however, I learned that accessibility and having a specific audience are two different things. Throughout my time in the Professional Actor Training Program, I was consistently asked who my audience was and I did not have a specific answer. In a conversation with Adrienne Mackey, she asked if specific people were in attendance of my show, what would be my response? With specific people in mind, I had clear answers of who I wanted and did not want in my audience. I understood how important it was to distinguish access and audience in creating a piece. With a clear audience in mind, I knew exactly how I would approach clowning to that audience. I cast my family in the audience and therefore was able to use clear tactics with each family member.

A term we use in Alexander Technique is “Inviting the audience,” which is meant to have the audience with you for each step of the process. It allows for a connection to the end goal and makes it easier when there is a live audience. Because they have been with you the whole process- figuratively! I specifically invited in my family. Ultimately, the creation of this show was for them. My family and family values have been interwoven into my process. *¡Dále!* became a love letter to all of my joyful moments with them. From the initial pitch in Spring of 2025, my family coming together to experience the piñata was what this piece was always about.

There was a responsibility I felt to ensure the audience felt as if they were invited to the party. The noisemaker was the first gift to physically give them permission to hold joy and make noise together in the room. I love Mexican culture. The music. The colors. The joy. Under that joy there are a lot of hardships families have to deal with. I love piñatas. From childhood, we would build these as a family. As an adult, it brings out the inner child. The most accomplished I have felt in my artistic journey has been seeing a crowd of students, professors, friends, and theatre goers rush the stage for candy. A powerful release of inhibition because they were given the permission to.

Hit It- The Performance Begins

Leading up to the performance I reminded myself of the purpose of this performance. It was for me to bring joy to myself, give myself permission to go ahead and do the thing that I love. Go ahead and share that with the audience. ¡Dále!

¡Dále uno! Step one is to create the show.

¡Dále dos! Step two is work on it. Make all of the things. Prepare my tool to do the work of a professional actor. Eat well, get enough sleep, breathe, invite in the audience, have my 3-step process of getting into character. For *¡Dále!*, it started with my feet and how my feet were agile and ready to go in any direction at any time. It was then getting connected to my piñata romp which was a constructed piñata butt that transformed me into La Piñata. It was me relaxing my jaw, feeling my noble ease and reminding myself yet again to let my breath flow. Prior to the show starting, I created the event that started right before the start of the play. I waited eagerly in my box, listening to the audience. My anticipation grew because the audience was so alive and patiently waiting for me to explode out of the box.

¡Dále Tres! Jump out of the box. Notice what is happening. Notice where I am. Listen to the audience. Respond to the audience. Flow. I reassured myself: I know this script better than anyone else. I know this world better than anyone else. I am La Piñata.

Post performances, I was highly satisfied with my work. I discovered the importance of a clear audience. Our Saturday performance had many Spanish speakers and people of Latino descent. My show was for my family and therefore also for people who grew up with the *latiné* experience. After performing for my specific audience, I felt as if I was transcending. The experience of performing for them was magical. In preparation for this performance, my audience was clear which made me feel connected to the people in the audience who it was meant for. That energy then radiates to others. Themes from my show such as being the eldest child and having to figure it out stood out. Audience members were given permission to see themselves as La Piñata.

The audience gets to eat the candy and take part in the ritual of joy and sharing that moment with La Piñata. With my same intention for the second performance, the audience had less response but I stayed steadfast and made sure to go after my objective. Plenty still responded but it didn't land the way I had hoped and experienced with the first audience. In reflection, I realized this is okay! I stayed true to my goal and responded to the audience and avoided doing more than what I had rehearsed in hopes the audience would understand.

Overall, this performance of *¡Dále!* has informed my artistry in embracing the culture and stories I want to tell. I trusted the Clown process- flop and all. The solo performance came alive in a way that deeply resonated with the audience, leaving them wanting more and feeling conflicting feelings of joy and guilt. *¡Dále!* transports audiences to an environment of nostalgia, joy and big feelings. Smashing through barriers and bringing joy to La Piñata's family, the

entrails of streamers are reminders of what was sacrificed for that joy to be experienced by everyone. It's where chaos and catharsis collide, and it was worth it.

Dále Gracias

To honor those who have come before me, walked alongside me and those who will come after me, it is important to honor the names of those who have contributed to this process. Thank you to my mom, Celina. If it wasn't for her, this clown would not be here. Thank you Jj, Abby, Alfonso and Rafael for always listening and being my muses. Thank you Papo and Grandma. Thank you to every person who saw an iteration of this show and offered feedback: Bradley Wrenn, Mya Hariri, Nour Afifi, Ricky German, Megan Gurdine Thornberry, Zoë Carr, Zo and Shannon Eisenbrey, Haley Thomas, Jeff Larson, Roman Valdez and the PATP Class of 2026. Thank you Sammy Weinert, Alex Taylor, Finley Brown and UW School of Drama for production support. Thank you to Aqui Mercado in Seattle for piñata donations. Thank you Justin Favela for your time. Thank you to my professors for inspiring me.

¡Dále!

Created and Performed by Adriana Gonzales

For her family.

ISA leaves her family. They are poor. So sickenly poor. They do everything they can just to make ends meet. She is the oldest of five, but still only a child herself. At 11 years old, she cooks, cleans, and takes care of the younger ones. She changes diapers and makes them their food when the adults aren't around. This can't be how life continues. She is a bright light, she sees so much fun and joy and good in the world. She has big dreams of changing the world. But moment after moment, her family reminds her: there is no time for fun. We must survive. We must sacrifice our joy for survival. No time for fun. No time for games. How can she change the world when she can't even change the circumstances for the people she loves? They want big things for her, she constantly over achieves. She's never doing anything for herself. She left home to live up to the expectations. The expectation to be great. To be successful. She is the family clown. They think it's ridiculous. "You want to be something and you choose to be a clown?"

Transition

Enter LA PIÑATA in a box from entrance vom. She is doing the transition for the show. As she is coming in she is handing out noise makers. She crosses to archery vom.

*Audience is left to their devices. A good 90 seconds.
Each minute represents a year's passage of time. PIÑATA cues SM to start music!*

No Bailes de Caballito plays softly under the announcer then gets louder when announcer done.

ANNOUNCER

Atención muchachos. Damas y caballeros, aplauso por favor. Después de 3 años, ella esta aquí, en Seattle, Washington. Ella es la luz que brilla en la oscuridad! Ella es la bella de Colorado. Ella atravesó altas montañas para estar aquí contigo. Es la piñata...

(music stops) Ohhh se me olvido. I forget, I need your help, repeat after me: Dále! (Dále). Very good now say it with me Dále! Dále! Dále!!

Silence. Slight moaning sound comes from the box at the vom. We thought it was just a set piece.

ISA enters from inside box. The box gives birth to her. She is grown. She is different. She is... LA PIÑATA? From one entrance, she appears. Her arms are piñata arms and she needs help getting them off so she can move more freely. It is slightly painful.

LA PIÑATA

It's fine. Don't worry.

Streamers flow from her hands as she waves them over the audience. APLAUSO. The crowd goes wild.

Dance moves. Spinning like crazy. The iguana but donkey. Donkey bumping. Como los torros.

She does a dance to the song. She reaches up to the ceiling. One piñata falls and a piece of candy. BAM. She reaches up to the ceiling. A second piñata falls and a second candy. BAM. She picks up the candy. It is a treasure! She is so excited that there was some surprise candy.

She reaches up to the ceiling, a third rope falls and this one she climbs and swings on. The crowd goes even more wild. She tries to reach the piñatas for more candy, there isn't anything in them.

(Candy Game) She eats a lollipop. She thinks on this. "Where can I find more? Can I share this with everyone?" She hands the lollipop to someone special in the audience.

She continues with the dance. She leads a clap and dance and she is center doing the best choreography ever. Cues audience to release streamer poppers.

LA PIÑATA

Wow! Very good at taking directions. So I think we need to find more of that stuff! For everyone. But those things up there are empty.... OHH I have something else though! I have something very special for you. It's from the romp! Get it because you romped the piñata and it's my romp. No? Okay. Tough crowd I see/Oh you all are so smart.

Pulls small piñata out of behind.

LA PIÑATA

Can you take care of this please? I made it myself. Okayyyy... Another thing “From... the.... Romp!”

Presents another baby piñata, presents to another audience member.

LA PIÑATA

Can you take care of this one? Thank you very much! Ohhh una más From the..... back? Let me go get it.

Presents the large piñata. Looks like ISA as LA PIÑATA. Places it with the other family of piñatas.

LA PIÑATA

Tú conoces mi familia?

Mi familia?

No! No son piñatas.

They look like me! (*Hide behind, cover ears*)

Hellllloo Family. Family? You miss me? Family? Where are my little brothers? Hermanitoooo!!! Look, you showed up. I'm surprised you left your bedroom. Where's your brother?

Awww rafai, miraloooo. Stand up. He's supposed to be my little brother. Jimmy. Where's my mom? Where's my grandma, did she make it? Oh good. And Papo? Watch out for him, he will try and steal the show. He also might start chanting some crazy sana sana colita de rana. Seriously. Watch him. Abby's not here? Why isn't Abby here? Yeah of course she would say that. Where's my mom? Mommy!!! Ahhh!!! You made it! Look you guys, my mom is here! Aplauso for my mom!

I asked you all to be here because I wanted to show you something very special that I have been creating. You know I really had to leave because it was getting to be too much being at home. I was losing all my magic. You know all that special stuff inside of me that makes me me. Makes me shine. I had to leave because I was feeling really sad. And I remember we all had so much joy together. We would create it. But it hasn't felt that way in a long time. And I hate to see you guys like this. Needing to just survive and not being able to be happy. Like you (to brother 1), you were such a happy child. No really. He was. Anywayyyyyy I thought I could make it all better! Look what I did! Remember how we used to make piñatas together? Well I did this all by myself for you!!! Vamos a empezar!!

Transition to Dale call and response.

LA MIGRA

Hey son. You got your papers? Give me your papers?

I kid. I'm kidding. I'm not la migra. Is anyone here la migra?

Better not. But seriously, can I have those papers? You're going to have to hold them because *(indicates to flimsy arms.)*

Dále call and response.

It's important we know what dále means! Okay! Dále means go ahead or do it or come on or give it. So when we say dále, it can mean any of those things. But when I say it for the piñata. It means, HIT IT! Piñatas are full of candy on the inside. And this is very special candy. You know what they say: how beauty comes from the inside? So all the beautiful things in this world, all the beautiful things you say and feel, that's right inside of you. These piñatas have it too. They're full of love and joy and laughter. They're made from all the good that I have found. Everything nice. So we can share these nice things together. So we don't have to worry about all the bad, terrible things. We can celebrate just being with each other.

I created this for you. It took me a while to do all this. A lot of paper cuts. A lot of time. A lot of sleepless nights. But I spent a lot of time on this because it's important to me that my family comes together to celebrate and be happy and laugh together.

Bat drops from the ceiling. It's time.

A moment.

It's time. Alright. I need someone to break this piñata so we can all have some of the beauty and joy that is on the inside.

Okay, you know the words Dále Uno. Dále dos. Dále tres. Y TU TIEMPO SE ACABÓ. Okay. Understand? Only 3 hits and then your time is up. One more thing.... FROM THE ROMP!

Has them pull out blindfold and put it on themself. Does fake punches to see if they can see anything. Ask someone to help put up the donkey piñata. Shake piñata. It's empty.

It's empty. Go sit back down. Sorry, just a minute. Just making sure we have the candy and all.

Discovers that the only candy is in the romp. The piñata must be broken.

You have to hit it. It's okay. I spent a lot of time on it because I wanted it to be special for you. Are you excited? Are you sure? Do you want the candy? Okay! Listo? Ready?

Piñata game. 1st with blindfold. They must hit PIÑATA but they don't know it yet. Piñata game with someone who will actually break the piñata.

(To 2nd person) It's very important that you break this piñata for me and my family! We want to experience joy. And I think everyone here wants that magic candy! So we can all have that magic inside ourselves.

Piñata game.

ISA

(Recovering from losing romp and all of its candy) I... I made myself this way for you. I wanted to bring my family joy. I didn't know what else to do. I hate to say when I don't know things. I am the oldest. I'm supposed to be the smartest. I'm supposed to have things in control. But I don't. I am just a product of your making. Used up. Ready to be discarded. No one will want a broken piñata. Just the sweet treats that are on the inside. I'll be shoved into a garbage bag. Maybe recycled. Or maybe someone will use me to start a fire. But that's it. Did you have fun breaking the piñata? Are you enjoying the candy? That's good.

Really taking in the mess that is surrounding her. Maybe acknowledging the audience and them opening up their candy.

(Grunts in pain) Go ahead, you can eat the candy. No really. It's okay. It is good because you are enjoying yourself. I had a lot of fun too! No really, I did! I never thought that I could be made into this. A spectacle. But here I am. And now my time is done. I have no more joy to offer you. And you all have the beauty, the treasures, the joy from inside me. That's a good thing. No really, it is a good thing. It's what they call cathartic. It's a powerful release. This is good for all of us. Sorry about the mess.

For the love of my family, for the love to see joy on their faces, I am my own creation and I am my own destruction.

BLACKOUT

End of play.

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