

EDITOR'S LETTER



Welcome back to *Inspicio* e-Magazine, which is one part of the arts publication platform sponsored by Florida International University's College of Communication, Architecture + The Arts (CARTA).

Inspicio is currently offered as a website (<http://inspicio.fiu.edu>), where we continuously publish content about all art disciplines, and as a periodic e-Magazine that can be read on iPads and iPhones.

Contributors to *Inspicio* (FIU students, faculty, and talented people of interest) are focused on arts activities outside of the immediate FIU community.

Inspicio supports CARTA's mission by providing a platform and process for FIU students to critically examine and comment upon the art communities and activities of South Florida, and have the opportunity to publish their work alongside professional writers who are regularly published in the world's best publications like *The New Yorker*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and the *New York Times*. In addition, *Inspicio* aspires to be a sophisticated enabler of the arts that becomes a "must-see" resource for a global audience interested in the Miami-South Florida art scene.

THE CURRENT EDITION OF *INSPICIO* features a video interview with cover person Lourdes Lopez, the former principal dancer for the New York City Ballet, who has been the Artistic Director of Miami City Ballet since 2012. Lourdes was born in Havana, raised in Miami, and at the age of 14, moved to New York City with her 19 year-old sister to study dance at the School of American Ballet. As you will see in our video interview, Lourdes is a rare blend of intelligence, empathy, discipline, good humor, beauty, and entrepreneurship, with a devotion to dance and community.

A long time ago I founded the Outer Cape Cod Repertory Film Society (a non-profit cinema only open in the winter in Provincetown, Massachusetts). One of my programming delights was a double feature of Orson Well's *Macbeth* and Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* – Shakespeare's classic set in two wildly different feudal cultures. So I am pleased to publish an *Inspicio* double feature of two articles about the world-renowned architecture firm, Arquitectonica. The first article was written in 1981 by Jayne Merkel for the now-defunct *Miami News*. The second article is a 2016 video interview with Bernardo Fort-Brescia, the co-founder of Arquitectonica, who brought innovation, sophistication, and functional elegance to the Miami cityscape, and created a formidable global organization. Two interesting aspects of the articles is the consistency of vision and foresight inherent in Arquitectonica's adherence to the maxim "form follows function." The buildings designed by Arquitectonica became a character in the TV series *Miami Vice*, and helped bring Miami's status as an emerging cultural community to a worldwide audience.

This issue of *Inspicio* also features an article about another giant of the architecture world – Zaha Hadid – with remembrances written by Claudia Busch and Alastair Gordon. Zaha, who died unexpectedly in Miami in March, 2016, was a supporter of FIU's Miami Beach Urban Studies (MBUS), where friends and colleagues like Claudia Busch, John Stuart, and Alastair Gordon hang out. Hadid was an inspiration to all who knew her.

Alfredo Garcia, a PhD candidate from Princeton University, has delivered an incredible story of self-discovery by artist Jonatas Chimen. Chimen immigrated to Miami from Brazil when he was 16 years old, and to his dismay, people started asking him if he was Jewish. Chimen had long thought that his Christian family and community practices included some unusual observances, but he didn't know why. So Chimen began a ten-year journey of discovery that led to the documentation of his family's identity as Crypto-Jews – Jews who were forced to convert to Catholicism in 1492 during the Spanish Inquisition. Chimen used the multitude of documents he accumulated during his research to create beautiful and moving works of art, many of which are displayed in this issue of *Inspicio*.

Two-time Pulitzer Prize winner Jim Morin's career took off when he became the political cartoonist for the *Miami Herald*, where his cartoons still appear daily (although he is also syndicated internationally). Jim recently moved year-round to Maine, but he agreed to sit down for an *Inspicio* video interview in Norman Mailer's first house on the water in Provincetown, Massachusetts (a house sold to Mailer by John Dos Pasos) – a double dose of Pulitzer intensity.

While on the subject of journalism, we are thrilled to publish our video interview with Kerry Sanders, the NBC News correspondent who is based in Fort Lauderdale, and primarily reports on the Southeast region of the United States for NBC's *Today* show and *Nightly News*. During 2016, Kerry broadcast from the first U.S. cruise ship to travel from Miami to Havana, and the first scheduled U.S. airliner to fly to Cuba. A veteran of covering catastrophic weather-related incidents, Sanders was also recruited to cover the Presidential campaign whirlwind of 2016.

David Axelrod is best known for being Barack Obama's winning Chief Strategist for the 2008 and 2012 elections. But he is also a terrific writer, which shouldn't come as a big shock because he was hired by the *Chicago Tribune* as a reporter before he had even graduated from the University of Chicago. My wife and I listened to Axelrod read his well-written memoir, *Believer: My Forty Years in Politics*, on a three-day drive from the tip of Cape Cod to Miami, and were inspired by his compelling life story. Since moving on from the Obama White House, Axelrod has been a regular political commentator on CNN, a contributor to *The New Yorker* magazine, and serves as the director of the non-partisan Institute of Politics at the University of Chicago. I had the great pleasure of doing a video interview with Axelrod at the Miami Book Fair.

One of the recurring themes of *Inspicio* is the exploration of climate change and rising sea levels on the arts, and on South Florida in particular. Judith Ann Isaacs, the mother of environmental performance artist Elizabeth Doud, chronicles the evolution of Doud as someone who was always conscious of the natural environment, and developed performance art to build public awareness of the harm we humans cause our only planet.

Finally, we offer a video conversation with award-winning poet, essayist, memoirist, teacher and author Mark Doty, who has lived in the desert and lived by the sea, and offers sublime insight into mankind's struggle for dignity.

I hope what you read, hear, and see in *Inspicio* adds value to your appreciation of the arts in Miami.

– Raymond Elman