

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 Robert Battle, the Liberty City-raised dancer, choreographer, and Artistic Director of Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater. Battle describes his improbable and inspiring journey from wearing leg braces as a young boy to the apex of the dance world. And he continues to inspire new generations by bringing his dance company back to Miami every year, performing a free concert for young K-12 students, and offering free dance workshops and master classes to underserved communities.

The movie *Scarface* starring Al Pacino, and the TV series *Miami Vice*, were consequences of the cocaine wars in Miami during the 1970s and 80s, but nobody did a better job of documenting those bloody times than Billy Corben in his classic documentary, *Cocaine Cowboys*. We were fortunate to corral Corben one afternoon and video record a conversation about the making of *Cocaine Cowboys* and the general state of filmmaking in Miami. Corben grew up in Miami Beach and while still a teenager, started seriously exploring movies with his friend, Alfred Spellman, who later became his co-founder of Miami-based rakontur, a film production company. Early critical success with the movies *Raw Deal* and *Cocaine Cowboys* afforded rakontur the opportunity to relocate to Hollywood or New York, but they opted to stay in Miami, despite the fact that the Florida legislature eliminated movie industry tax incentives. They wanted to represent a Miami perspective, be known as "those Miami guys," (like the Baltimore guys – Barry Levinson, John Waters), instead of "two more schmucks from Hollywood."

Alfredo Garcia, a Ph.D. candidate from Princeton University, offers his second article for Inspicio, *Free Art*, which explores the world of Wynwood Art District wall art and why the artists who create it are not paid for their work. This story is a part of Garcia's dissertation, which focuses on how the global art market shapes small neighborhoods.

Are you a fan of the Showtime series *Billions*? We were lucky to talk with the multi-talented Eric Bogosian, who made his debut on *Billions* this season as Lawrence Boyd, the poker-playing, salacious financier, regarded as Wall Street royalty. We were introduced to Bogosian by poker-playing author Peter Alson, whose wife, Alice O'Neill, is one of the writers of *Billions*, and our conversation with Bogosian includes a discussion of poker as a metaphor for life. However, Bogosian's career as an award-winning actor, dramatist, and author goes way beyond the worlds of TV and poker. He burst into national consciousness starring with Alec Baldwin in the film *Talk Radio* (1988), written by Bogosian and directed by Oliver Stone. And he continues to dazzle with his most recent book, *Operation Nemesis: The Secret Plot that Avenged the Armenian Genocide*.

While on the subject of writing, we are thrilled to publish our video interview with Larissa MacFarquhar, who has been a staff writer for *The New Yorker* for close to 20 years. MacFarquhar discusses her new book, *Strangers Drowning: Impossible Idealism, Drastic Choices, and the Urge to Help*, which explores the world of "do-gooders" who are driven to do as much for strangers in need as for their own families.

With this edition of Inspicio, we are introducing a new poetry section, which will become a regular feature of the magazine. When we asked FIU professors and poets Denise Duhamel and Campbell McGrath to recommend a poetry editor for Inspicio, they provided two candidates: Annik Adey-Babinski and Michael Martin. We all know that two heads are better than one, so I opted for the duo. And they selected poets Ricardo Pau-Llosa, Cherry Pickman, Yaddyra Peralta, Ashley M. Jones, and Nick Vagnoni for our inaugural poetry section.

We are also introducing Ellen Salpeter, who moved from a position at the Jewish Museum in New York to become the Director of the Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami. As you will see in our interview, Ellen draws on a depth of experience in collaborative projects and programs in the New York area to reach out to the diverse art communities of Miami. In October 2016, ICA Miami's new Art + Research Center began month-long workshops and related public programs in collaboration with FIU's CARTA.

FIU student José Toledo traveled to Nicaragua's La Venada island (part of the Solentiname archipelago) to visit with artist Rodolfo Arellano and record his story. We are happy to provide a platform for viewing Arellano's lush paintings.

Lush is another adjective that could be used to describe the career of Barbara de Vries, designer and brand guru, who wrote *STUPID MODEL*, a fictionalized memoir, to chronicle her early days as a top model. Wendy Townsend offers us an engaging book review and interview.

Alan Dershowitz has also had a multi-faceted career. He grew up in an orthodox Jewish community in Brooklyn to become the youngest full professor of law in the history of Harvard Law School (at age 28). He is mostly a vocal liberal and protector of underserved communities, a liberal defender of Israel, and an active opponent of anti-Semitism. He is a ubiquitous commentator on TV news programs, but is also the author of 30 books, including *Reversal of Fortune: Inside the von Bulow Case* (1985), which was made into an Academy Award winning movie starring Jeremy Irons (Best Actor), Glenn Close, Uta Hagen, Annabelle Sciorra, and Ron Silver (as Dershowitz). It also features Norman Mailer's son, Stephen, as Elon Dershowitz. Dershowitz' most recent book is *Abraham: The World's First (But Certainly Not the Last) Jewish Lawyer*.

Finally, we are very pleased to announce that we have discovered a young Miami-based cartoonist, thanks to an introduction by FIU Professor Gretchen Scharnagl. Alex Rocky Ferrer has an elegant line and a great eye/ear for humor. We are proud to publish his cartoon, *Price Tag*, in the Last Laugh section of Inspicio, and we are looking forward to many collaborations.

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

– Raymond Elman