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Miracle Tomato

Department of Theatre, Florida International University

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FIU THEATRE presents

Miracle Tomato



A TALE OF LOVE, BIOENGINEERING, AND THE SEARCH FOR HOME

**Written and Performed by
JESSICA CERULLO**

January 18 & 19, 2008

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
WERTHEIM PERFORMING ARTS CENTER MAINSTAGE
SW 107th Avenue and the 16th Street Entrance
Miami, FL

COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE + THE ARTS
School of Theatre, Dance and Speech Communication

PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES

I am interested in theatre as an art form which is vulnerable, non-repeatable and dependent on an audience. Three years ago, I began to see the tomato as something more than food. I followed the fruit/vegetable until, little by little, it revealed to me its history, its nature and, surprisingly, its theatricality.

Miracle Tomato was made possible due to the generosity of seed savers and tomato growers around the world. Each interview I conducted, whether with a farmer harvesting thousands, or a home gardener with her precious few, was a gift from those willing to tell their stories. It was not long before their gifts reminded me of the gardens of my own upbringing. I was raised in an Italian-American family and food (often tomato-based) was at the center of all activity.

In the beginning I struggled to complete the script, but once I began to perform it for colleagues and friends, I stopped typing on my computer and started listening to the audience. Now sometimes, while performing, I see in a face the invitation to tell more; and so I do. Sometimes I see in a face the invitation to tell less, and so I move on. Miracle Tomato is continuously evolving and exists as an ever-changing discourse with the people who sit in their seats laughing, yawning, crying, questioning, looking...

Behind Miracle Tomato is my desire to transform my own joys, fears and confusions about the political, agricultural, and familial experiences of my life into a one-hour piece of art. In its most pure form I like to think of it just as I received it –as a gift. Like the stories I was told, like the seeds that were planted, like the plate of food that made its way from one end of the table to the other. Thank you for coming.

-Jessica Cerullo

WHO'S WHO



Jessica Cerullo is a New York-based actor, writer and teacher. Recently, her play, *Miracle Tomato*, opened at PS 122 in New York City in May 2007 as part of the soloNOVA festival. It earned an encore performance at the Boulder International Fringe Festival and continues to tour in the US throughout 2008. As an actress, Jessica has performed regionally and is a former member of the Stanislavsky Theater Studio. She teaches with MICHA, the Michael Chekhov Association, both nationally and internationally. Jessica received her MFA in contemporary performance from Naropa University and studied at the National Theater Institute in the USA, London and Russia. -JessicaCerullo.com

Asli Ayata (projection image design) graduated from Emerson College in 1997 with a BS degree in Communication Studies. Since that time she has worked on the production of TV/Print/Press commercials at advertising agencies and in 2002 started her own practice as a Graphic Designer. She studied design at Rhode Island School of Design, School of Visual Arts (NYC) and Parsons, The New School for Design (NYC). She has collaborated with theater groups to represent and visualize their work graphically on the basis of an artistic idea. Asli Ayata lives in NYC where she continues her practice as a designer with a unique balance of creative and technical expertise.

Liz Stanton (sound design) has performed Off Broadway at Lincoln Center Institute, Raw Space and The Culture Project as well as at many regional theaters around the country. Liz is also a founding member and resident sound designer/composer for Holderness Theater Company in New York City. Past sound designs include: *The Life of Spiders*, *Einsteins Dreams*, *What You Will*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *The Rover*, *The Changeling*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winters Tale*; for NATIONAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY: *The Tempest*, *As You Like It*. REGIONAL: *Romeo and Juliet* at Burning Coal Theater, Raleigh, NC, Liz toured with the bowed piano ensemble for 5 years and studied new music and electronic music composition with Steven Scott at Colorado College.

MIRACLE TOMATO

A TALE OF LOVE, BIOENGINEERING,
AND THE SEARCH FOR HOME

Written and Performed by
Jessica Cerullo

Sound Design
Liz Stanton

Projection Design
Asli Ayata

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS GRAZIE!

Miracles are, by nature, inexplicable. And so to begin with a list of thanks to the people who made this production possible is not an easy task. The interviews, road-side-stand sellers, meals and nods of encouragement are too many to count but gratitude can begin with the terraNOVA collective, PS 122, BAX, the Michael Chekhov Association, Naropa University and the town of Breckenridge, Colorado who supported early productions of the play. Also thanks to the faculty and staff at FIU THEATRE and the audience who help to shape each performance. As well as to John Capalbo, Ragnar Freidank, Annie Lanzillo, Fern Sloan and Ted Pugh with whom the piece was rehearsed. Also to Joan Bruemmer, Leigh Fondakowski, Ashley Hughs, Moises Kaufman, Liz Stanton and Pam Traynor who were there at the start. It must be noted that much of the text is influenced by the research, opinions and written experiences recorded by Belinda Martineau, Barbara King-solver, Kirkpatrick Sale and Pablo Neruda.

CAST

Angelina.....Jessica Cerullo

PLACE

Here

TIME

Now

The play is in one act with an uninterrupted run time of 70 minutes.

Flash photography and the videotaping or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE ADMINISTRATION

Chair/ Artistic Director.....Lesley-Ann Timlick
Administration.....Marianna Murray
Marketing Coordinator.....Laverne Cuzzocrea
Box Office Manager.....Bryan Rivas
Office Assistant.....MoniqueTavares

PRODUCTION STAFF

Technical Director.....Celso Peruyera
Assistant Technical Director.....Geordan Gottlieb
Stage Manager.....Michelle Cote
Floor Crew.....Matthew Mur, Natalie Birriel
Graphic Design.....Morgan Howland Cook
Marketing and Publicity.....Deanna Drayton, Raiza Licea,
Yesenia Lauzurique
House Manager.....Alain Mesa
Usher.....Michael Leone

PHOTOGRAPHY CREDITS

Production Photographs.....Zach Brown
Playbill Cover/Poster/Postcard PhotographPamela Traynor
Portrait.....Jeffrey Weiss

ABOUT FIU THEATRE

FIU Theatre offers a Bachelor of Arts (BA) and a Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) degree. The program offers a wide range of courses taught by qualified faculty and provides an environment for a well-rounded education through academia and hands on experience with our productions. FIU Theatre currently presents four productions annually. In addition, our theatre organization, Dramatic Paws, presents at least one student- produced show per year.

The Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center is home to FIU Theatre and includes a beautiful 200 seat proscenium theatre, a large black box studio theatre, a costume shop, a scene shop, two dressing rooms and a green room.

If you are interested in learning more about the program, our course listings, theatre rental or how to be involved with FIU Theatre, please call or write to:

FIU Theatre, WPAC 131
11200 SW 8th Street
Miami, FL 33199
305.348.2895

Opportunity has availed itself...

FIU THEATRE

presents

Contacting Michael Chekhov's Acting Technique

a workshop for actors by Jessica Cerullo

**January 21, 2008 • Camposition Studio
801 W 3rd Ave., 2nd Floor, Miami, FL 33130**

Cash only fee of \$35

7:00AM-10:00AM

15 spaces available

There is no artistic work without contact. In this workshop we will explore Michael Chekhov's technique by looking at the different ways we make contact with our creative impulses, the space around us and with our fellow actors on the stage. By inviting our creative intellect into the rehearsal room we will explore the basic principles of Chekhov's psycho-physical approach as it relates to inner and outer movement and to the subtle exchange of giving and receiving. No previous experience with Chekhov's technique is required. Those who are interested may want to read his book 'To the Actor'. Please come prepared with about a minute of memorized text from a play of your choosing. To learn more about Jessica Cerullo, please visit

JessicaCerullo.com

**For Workshop Details please call
305.348.2895**

**FIU THEATRE PRESENTS ITS
2007-2008 SEASON**

ELECTRICIDAD – FEBRUARY 7 – 17, 2008

Luis Alfaro's brilliant and caustically funny "hispanicized" retelling of Euripedes' classic tale of vengeance and matricide. ELECTRA updated and set in the Barrios of east LA.

THE UNDERPANTS – APRIL 3 – 13, 2008

Adaptated by Steve Martin from the original playwright, Carl Sternheim. A Housewife receives unsolicited attention when her underpants fall to her feet in public, much to the dismay of her husband. Boarders show up at the door to rent their spare room for a glimpse, and more, of the attractive wife.
