The Cook

Department of Theatre, Florida International University
FIU Theatre presents a benefit performance

THE COOK
By Eduardo Machado
Directed by Sheldon Deckelbaum

January 31, 2009 | 2PM | Herbert and Nicole Wertheim Performing Arts Center | Main Stage

FIU Architecture + The Arts
FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY
**The Birds**
Freely adapted from Aristophanes by Len Jenkin Directed by Michael Yawney

By a free-flying musical adaptation of the classic Greek comedy with showgirls, computer geeks, and a Vegas lounge act.

**FEB 12–22, 2009**

**DIRECTOR’S NOTE**

The inspiration for Eduardo Machado’s play “The Cook” apparently came during a visit to Havana in 2000. During that visit, he frequented a *paladar* (restaurant in a home) in a grand art deco villa run by a woman named Gladys. In his 2007 memoir, *Tastes Like Cuba: An Exile’s Hunger for Home*, Machado writes: “I sat and ate, and when I was done Gladys made café and sat down with me... And then something caught my eye. I noticed a picture on the dining room wall of a striking blonde dressed in fifties couture. “Gladys,” I asked, “who is that?” “The lady who owned this house,” she answered. And then she looked at me. Her eyes said, “That’s it. Stop there,” and I knew that I was not permitted to ask anything else. That night I sat down and began to write “The Cook.” This brief exchange sparked the artist’s imagination that clearly didn’t stop there. Rather, it led him to dramatize the dreams, relationships, conflicts, and hopes of those who, like his own family, fled the Castro revolution, as well as those, like Gladys, who remained in Cuba.

Good plays engage us, invite us into their worlds, play with us, challenge us, maybe provoke us, and certainly ask questions of us. “The Cook” asks, “Whose house is it?” The play also poses some difficult questions about loyalty to people and devotion to ideas. How tightly do you hold on to the beliefs that have sustained you and when do you let go?

In his book, Eduardo describes how during that 2000 visit to Cuba, Gladys (the cook) sent him a plate of tamales. He writes, “They were unbearably delicious... Without knowing it, Gladys closed a circuit inside of me. She gave me a foundation that would build my entire play on: the power of food. I ate her tamales like I had eaten other tamales, but the experience was different. The little bundles of corn told a story, my story, the story of those that came before me, and the story I was trying to tell through my play.”

In “The Cook” Gladys’ story spans four turbulent decades in Cuba. It is a story of struggles and aspirations. It is a story about world politics and its impact on everyday people. Above all, it is a story about a kitchen and the indomitable spirit of survival, resourcefulness, reinvention, and optimism that characterizes Cuban people, wherever they may live.

Sheldon Deckelbaum

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**PERICLES**

By William Shakespeare Directed by Wayne Robinson

Shakespeare’s timeless adventure tells of a family separated and reunited by the power of the sea.

**MAR 12–22, 2009**

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For tickets or more information 305.348.0496 carta.fiu.edu
CAST

Gladys
Carlos
Elena
Adria
Julio
Rosa
Lourdes

Melissa Hubicsak
Ryan Rodríguez
Maribel Martínez
Natalie Ceballos
Paul Perez
Carolina Pozo
Janine Granda

PLACE

A mansion in El Vedado, a district of La Habana, Cuba.

TIME

Act I
1958

Act II
1972

Act III
1997

INTERMISSIONS

10 minute intermission after Act I
10 minute intermission after Act II

Please note that flash photography and videotaping, or other video or audio recording of this production is strictly prohibited.
FIU Theatre would like to thank all the donors whose generous support is making it possible for the cast and crew of this production to travel to Greensboro, NC to compete in the Regional Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival. We are honored and humbled by your support. Every one of you is making our participation in this competition possible and we are extremely grateful that your generosity has enabled us to seize this opportunity.

Enjoy the show!

Congratulation to the cast and crew of *The Cook.*

The FIU community will be cheering you on at the Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival in North Carolina.

**Break a leg!**

From the Office of University and Community Relations

**FIU FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY**
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For tickets and event information please call 305.348.0496 or visit carta.fiu.edu

Congratulations to the faculty, staff and students of FIU Theatre. We are proud of your achievements!

Dean’s Office
FIU Architecture + The Arts
President Modesto A. Maidique congratulates the cast and crew of

*The Cook.*

Thank you for representing FIU with pride and distinction at the
Kennedy Center
American College
Theatre Festival.

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**Contact:**
Alex Falcon
Ph: 305.779.7914 Cell: 786.566.0215
falcona@sharpusa.com
Congratulations to the cast and crew of “The Cook” from Preferred Care Partners on their invitation to the Regional Kennedy Center American College Theatre Festival.

All the best!