

Summer 6-19-2014

Alternative Theatre Festival 2014 postcard

Department of Theatre, Florida International University

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FIU THEATRE PRESENTS

ALTERNATIVE
THEATRE FESTIVAL 2014

JUNE 19 TO AUGUST 02

HERBERT AND NICOLE WERTHEIM

PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

BLACK BOX THEATRE

10910 SW 17TH ST., MIAMI, FL 33199



A MESSAGE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Welcome, everyone, to this summer's edition of FIU Theatre's Alternative Theatre Festival. After last summer's extraordinary experience of FIU Theatre alumni giving back, it is hard not to think that this year might be a little bit of a let-down, but let me assure you that that will not be the case. Although we have scaled back to our more usual 3-show season, the plays we have picked offer a genuine variety of types of theatre experiences. We also continue to use recent FIU Theatre graduates in many capacities for the summer season. The design team of Angie, Samantha and Amanda (aka Sparhawk) is back, as are a number of the actors. I see this as a testament to the quality of the education and experience our students receive while they are earning their degree with

us, because they are not only involved with ATF, but they are also working at other places in the entertainment field.

The first play, *Gizmo Love*, is about the inner workings of the Hollywood money machine that distorts even the most commercial of scripts into whatever will make the most money for the producers. It is a darkly comedic view of what Hollywood has become. The playwright, John Kolvenbach, shows us the lack of morality that comes with going against the establishment, and it isn't pretty.

Producing a brand new play for the first time is always an exciting experience, and this summer's winner of the New Play Development Project is no exception. In fact, as I write this message, the script isn't actually finished yet, although rehearsals have begun. I just spoke to Juan, the playwright for *Catherine's Wheel*, yesterday, and he is very excited about the process of working with the actors and director Michael Yawney that is helping him to shape the script into its final form. Opening night for the premiere of a new play is always very special, so I hope everyone who can will be here for it.

The third play of the summer takes a look at the frustrations of trying to create a new theatre work from an entirely different point of view from that taken in *Gizmo Love*. In this rollicking comedy titled *Play On*, the point of view shifts from the playwright trying not to allow his creative work to get beaten down by the Hollywood commercial machine to that of a theatre company which tries desperately to put on a play while having to endure an arrogant author who just can't seem to stop revising the script. While in *Gizmo Love* the tone is cynical and somewhat dark, in *Play On* it's purely hilarious – a great way to round out the summer season. I'm sure you're going to enjoy this one.

On a personal note, this will be my last message as Artistic Director and Chair of the Theatre Department, as I will be retiring at the end of July. My 32 years here at FIU have been an amazing experience, and I will take with me so many wonderful memories. I have especially enjoyed being a part of bringing to you, our theatre audience, such a wide variety of dramatic productions and theatre experiences. I can't wait to see what the next few years will bring for this theatre program. A number of people have asked me recently what I plan on doing with myself once I retire, whether I'll be moving away, etc. In the words of Superman, when Lois Lane asked him "Where can I find you?" my answer is "I'll be around." (And I'll be watching to see what happens next.)

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10910 SW 17TH STREET
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GIZMO LOVE

BY JOHN KOLVENBACH

DIRECTED BY WILFREDO CABRERA

This dark comedy is about the vicious world of Hollywood. It encompasses the guileless, the ruthless and the reckless.

CAST

Ralph: Allyn Anthony (BFA Performance)
Manny: Brandon Hoffman (BFA Performance)
Thomas: Luis Daniel Ettore (BA)
Max: O'Neil Delapenha

STAGE MANAGER: Patricia Morales (BA); SCENIC and LIGHTING DESIGN TEAM: Amanda Sparhawk (Class of '12) & Sam Transleau (Class of '12); COSTUME DESIGN: Angie Esposito (Class of '11); COSTUME CREW: Barbara Guevara (BA) & Mayle Rodriguez (BA); SOUND DESIGN: Justin Brackett (BA); LIGHT BOARD: Melany Knowles (BA); HOUSE MANAGER: Pia Vicioso-Vila (BA); STAGE CREW: Vyvian Figueredo (BA); PROPS: Melanie Menendez (BFA Performance).

SETTING

A Hollywood production office.

PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THERE WILL BE A GUNSHOT DURING THE SHOW.

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR WILFREDO CABRERA

Theater is willingly allowing yourself to have the rug pulled out from underneath you. You go in expecting something familiar. You want the familiar themes of love, joy, excitement, and hope, all intermingled with sorrow, anger, and hate. It is an extreme reflection of who we are, and who we are is the heart of *Gizmo Love*. I came into this project expecting the familiar: a script that takes a shot at the destructive grasp Hollywood has on anything worthwhile. I've come to learn that it is so much more than just a jab at the uncreative force behind the Hollywood machine – this is a love story. It may not be Shakespearean, but its heights are just as epic and its tragedies are just as painful. I want to thank O'Neil and Luis for showing me the tragedy underlining the words, and I want to thank Brandon and Allyn for reassuring me in the hope hidden behind those very same words. Lastly, my biggest thanks go to Patricia, for wrangling in all the testosterone and for believing in all of us. We couldn't have done it without you – all of you. You've made this project what it is, and without you, without anyone that has come into the web that is *Gizmo Love*, this project wouldn't have succeeded. Thank you!

PERFORMANCE DATES: JUNE 19, 20, 21 & JUNE 26, 27, 28

Please note that flash photography, video recording or other audio or visual recording of this production is strictly prohibited.

CATHERINE'S WHEEL

NEW PLAY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT WINNER

BY JUAN C. SANCHEZ

DIRECTED BY MICHAEL YAWNEY

What the living don't know, the dead can teach

CAST

Catherine: Melissa Ann Hubicsak (Class of '09)
Dezmonique: Danielle Rollins (BFA Performance)
Ricardo: Ernesto K. Gonzalez (BFA Performance)
Andrew: Peter Mir
Gina: Michelle L. Antelo (Class of '12)

STAGE MANAGER: Chantal Denoun (BA); SCENIC and LIGHTING DESIGN TEAM: Amanda Sparhawk (Class of '12) & Sam Transleau (Class of '12); COSTUME DESIGN: Angie Esposito (Class of '11); COSTUME CREW: Melany Knowles (BA) & Shirley Acosta (BA); SOUND DESIGN: Melany Knowles (BA); LIGHT BOARD: Steven Lopez (BFA Scenic Design); HOUSE MANAGER: Madeleine Escarne (BFA Performance) STAGE CREW: Melanie Menendez (BFA Performance) & Pia Vicioso-Vila (BA); PROPS: Nicholas Alexander (BA).

SETTING

Miami, today.

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR MICHAEL YAWNEY

Working on a new play is like trying to find Medley without a map or directions. There are not a lot of signs to tell you where to go and everyone asks if you are sure the trip is worth it.

It takes an extra shot of determination, faith and intelligence to tackle a script that has never been put on its feet before. The cast, crew, design team and stage management of *Catherine's Wheel* have had more than a few extra shots of everything needed.

A special thank you must be given to Juan C. Sanchez, who allowed us to work on his wonderful play and who showed us that you do not need a map, directions...or even a car...to get somewhere when the destination is worth it.

PERFORMANCE DATES: JULY 10, 11, 12 & JULY 17, 18, 19

PLAY ON

BY RICK ABBOT

DIRECTED BY MARINA PAREJA

The hilarious story of a theatre group trying desperately to put on a play in spite of maddening interference from an arrogant author who keeps revising the script.

CAST

Aggie Manville: Sarah Perez (BA)
Geraldine/Gerry Dunbar: Pia Vicioso-Vila (BA)
Louie Perry: Juan Alfonso (BA)
Phyllis Montague: Amy Gonzales (Class of '08)
Henry Benish (Lord Dudley): Paul Steinsland (BA)
Polly Benish (Lady Margaret): Andrea Bovino (Class of '11)
Marla "Smitty" Smith (Doris the Maid): Karen Figueredo (BA)
Saul Watson (Dr. Rex Forbes): Luis Daniel Etorre (BA)
Billy Carewe (Stephen Sellers): Lovanni Gomez (BFA Performance)
Violet Imbry (Diana Lassiter): Chachi Colon (BFA Performance)

STAGE MANAGER: Gaby Lopez (Class of '14); SCENIC DESIGN and LIGHTING TEAM: Amanda Sparhawk (Class of '12) & Sam Transleau (Class of '12); COSTUME DESIGN: Angie Esposito (Class of '11); COSTUME CREW: Juanita Olivo (BA); Lisset Riera (BA); Melanie Menendez (BFA Performance); SOUND DESIGN: Nicholas Alexander (BA); LIGHT BOARD: Melany Knowles (BA); HOUSE MANAGER: Shirley Acosta (BA); STAGE CREW: Justin Brackett (BA) & Barbara Guevara (BA); PROPS: Steven Lopez (BFA Scenic Design).

SETTING

The set of a community theatre, the present.

NOTE FROM THE DIRECTOR MARINA PAREJA

I've been into this theatre shenanigan for many years now, in many different capacities and situations. I love theatre for a million reasons, but especially for what it does to the soul. Theatre is human, it is action, it is life and it is living. But, in moving from the writing on the page to the performing of it on the stage, the theatre artist is thrown into a whirlpool of schedules, rehearsals, long hours, little money, unlearned lines, emotions, frustrations and chaos. In the blink of an eye, everything can go absolutely wrong with no hope of anyone saying CUT! So why do we stay? We stay because theatre is a calling, a vocation, and a way of life. If we are to feel alive we have no choice in the matter. So, when all else fails, I say to you, in the words of the playwright for this show: Play On!

PERFORMANCE DATES: JULY 24, 25, 26 & JULY 31, AUGUST 1, 2

Alumni Spotlight



Juan Espinosa (Class of '08) is a teacher at South Dade Senior High School. He recently wrote an original, award winning one act play entitled, *Amygdala*, which was selected to represent the state of Florida at the Education Theatre Association's Thespians Festival in Lincoln, Nebraska. The play was first performed at a district competition, held at Hialeah High School, along with thirty other participating schools. South Dade Senior High and five other schools were then selected to continue on to the Florida State Thespian Festival in Tampa. This state competition was attended by over seven thousand students and is considered the largest theatre festival in Florida. *Amygdala* received numerous accolades from the judges and was the only play chosen from about 50 productions screened at the festival. The conference in Nebraska allows attendees the opportunity to experience other high school performances, attend workshops/master classes, have their work reviewed by working professionals, participate in student leadership programs, and attend auditions for college admission and Thespian scholarships.

After graduating from FIU Theatre in 2008, Juan began his career as a substitute teacher. In 2009, he joined North Miami Senior High School as a full time faculty member and remained there until he accepted another faculty position at South Dade Senior High School in 2013. When he wrote this one act play, based on an idea he conceived in a playwriting course he took at FIU, he had no idea that it would receive such great reviews. Juan is extremely proud of his work, his students' achievements and the cast, which he chose based on acting ability and the talent they brought to auditions. So far, *Amygdala* has won an award for Best Play in Florida and a Best Actor Award at the district theatre competition. Two of his students, Marco Guerra and Mary Maturana, received superior ratings for their monologues and had the opportunity to perform them and get feedback from experts in the field at the national conference.

As a side note, this is the second FIU Theatre alumnus to have received the distinction of having their production selected to represent Florida at the national Educational Theatre Association's Thespian Festival in recent years. Two years ago Paul Lobeck (Class of '97) and his Miami Southridge High Spartan Players Troupe 1641, with their production of *The Serpent*, in the category of one-act plays, was selected for this honor. Juan's accomplishment is just further evidence of how our graduates are making a difference in the community.

Despite the stellar reviews and praise the play received, getting to Nebraska was no easy feat for Juan and the students of South Dade Senior High School Theatre Magnet Program. All the school's funds and resources were invested into getting them to the state competition in Tampa, leaving the program with insufficient funds to go to Nebraska. For the entire cast of 36 to take advantage of this fortuitous opportunity, they would have to raise \$31,000 in a short space of time. NBC Local News Channel 6 picked up the story and it was posted on various social media pages. The publicity prompted donations from several good Samaritans in the community. These donations along with some students paying their own expenses allowed Juan and thirty students, with chaperones, to be able to make the journey to Nebraska.

The theatre department is extremely proud to call Juan one of our own and we wish him continued success.

2014 ALTERNATIVE THEATRE FESTIVAL PRODUCTION STAFF

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR.....Marilyn R. Skow
 PRODUCTION MANAGER.....Marina Pareja
 TECHNICAL DIRECTOR.....Geordan Gottlieb
 TECHNICAL ASSISTANT.....Robert Duncann
 MARKETING/PUBLICITY.....Natasha Neckles
 OFFICE MANAGER.....Marianna Murray
 SENIOR FISCAL ASSISTANT.....Paulette Rivera

Additional Production Staff: Juanita Olivo (BA), Barbara Guevara (BA) & Vyvian Figueredo (BA), Lisset Riera (BA) & Madeleine Escarne (BFA Performance)



ANNOUNCING THE 2014-2015 MAIN STAGE SEASON

FALL 2014

An Ideal Husband

by Oscar Wilde, directed by Phillip M. Church
 Show Dates: September 26 - 28 & October 1 - 5

Juanita's Statue

by Anne Garcia-Romero, directed by Michael Yawney
 Show Dates: November 7 - 9 & November 12 - 16

SPRING 2015

Six Characters in Search of an Author

by Luigi Pirandello, adapted by Steve Moulds, directed by Wayne Robinson
 Show Dates: January 23 - 25 & January 28 - February 1

The Wild Party

by Andrew Lippa, director TBA
 Show Dates: February 27 - March 1 & March 4 - 8

Tickets and more information at: theatre.fiu.edu



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