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# The Formula

Department of Theatre, Florida International University

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It was not until Christopher Bishop experienced several musical shows from the perspective of production and performance, that he began to sketch out the format of *THE FORMULA*. Most people would agree that the world of musical theatre invites a fantastical suspension of disbelief. Reality is given an interpretation that embraces the expression of song to include most of our human emotional climaxes.

Accepting the premise that the majority of our most enduring musicals have been born of certain time-honoured conventions and traditions, Christopher Bishop posed the question, "What if a musical presented an audience with the inner workings of the writer's world, battling with their own creations, the characters," which in this case are the traditional conventions of the American musical; vis-a-vis LM (Leading Man), OI (Other Interest), Polly (Female Ingenue) and PC (Philosophical Context) etc. *THE FORMULA* is in fact a musical about musicals, or more accurately, a musical about itself.

The dramatic issue remains "Style versus substance". Many musicals have been condemned for presenting sheer entertainment value, at the expense of intellectual integrity and credibility. This fact interested Mr. Bishop, and he began to weave the conflict of "Style over substance" into representational characters, thus offering a musical with all the entertaining values, something of a serious subject. A paradox was conceived; the formula of the musical was challenged while at the same time maintaining a veneration for its preservation.

Eight months ago, Mr. Bishop teamed up with Bernie J. Harding, and together they composed the score. It has been a solid collaboration. The writers worked with myself, the director of the show, developing the "Play-within-a-play" concept between the characters of the collaborators and the director in performance. The show began to evolve a "Meta-theatrical" life; at times a Pirandellian landscape filtered with characters with frustrated identity problems, a theatrical scene which seemed to mirror its own creation.

*THE FORMULA* is in many ways a spoof of American Musical Theatre, yet, by developing the loss-of-identity theme among the characters, the characters are able to look at their own sense of humanity, unlike most characters in musicals. Ferret & Moose transcend the roles of stand-up comics, dwelling on deeper emotions, even while they represent only a comedic convention necessary to any musical formula.

The writing and the producing of a new musical is perhaps one of the most perilous of theatrical ventures. Source and inspiration are collected from a myriad of areas, most importantly from the musicals of the past. The journey is made more secure by the support and faith of fellow professionals and friends. To the following, the writers of this musical wish to express boundless thanks to: Sid Welsh, James Ewing, Polly Bishop, Therald Todd, Rhoda Simmons, Rolfe Bergsman, Carolyn Brochu and Nick and Betty. Enough thanks cannot be expressed to the cast for their timeless energy and commitment.

Resources making this production possible fell to the generosity of our producer,

Finally, Thanks must be given to Florida International University for overall support. Playwrights cannot remain on paper alone, they must be given arenas to exercise the true and total collaboration. We hope you enjoy the product as much as we have enjoyed giving it to you.

Philip Church  
Director

1985-86 FIU THEATRE SEASON

*MACBETH* by William Shakespeare. An exciting new interpretation of the famous "Scottish Play" that will include original music composed by FIU music faculty member John Augenblick.

Directed by Philip Church  
October 16-19, 23-26

FIU DANCERS IN REPERTORY

An evening of dance ranging from modern and jazz to ballet performed by FIU students, faculty and guest choreographers.

Artistic Director: Lee Brooke, assisted by Leslie Neal  
November 21-23

*THE GHOST SONATA* by August Strindberg. One of the most original and influential of modern theatre masterpieces, this play is a phantasmagoric blend of realism and surrealism.

Directed by Therald Todd  
December 5-7, 12-14

*BUSTER KEATON'S JOURNEY* by Federico Garcia Lorca. A combination of a performance of a little known Lorca play with dance, poetry, film, jazz and choral works. Poems from Lorca's *Poems From New York* will be dramatized and along with dance choreographed by Leslie Neal and music composed by Joseph Rohm and John Augenblick.

Directed by Philip Church  
February 20-22, 26-March 1.

*THE MIKADO* by Gilbert and Sullivan. This most loved of Gilbert and Sullivan's operettas is set in a Japan that never was. It features W.S. Gilbert's wicked wit and Arthur Sullivan's wonderful music presented by a host of delightful characters.

Directed by Therald Todd and John Augenblick  
April 9-13, 16-20

Season tickets will soon go on sale. Be sure you are on our mailing list so that you will receive our sales announcement.

DEPARTMENT OF MUSIC

"*JUDAS MACCABEUS*" an oratorio by G.F. Handel. November 21 at 8:00pm.  
AT 100. General Admission: \$3.00  
All students FREE.

*MADRIGAL DINNERS*: Annual recreation of an Elizabethan Feast. December 5, 6, 7. Tickets: \$20.00. Call 554-2896 for reservations.

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A New Musical Comedy

# THE FORMULA

FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

IN ASSOCIATION WITH

SIDNEY L. WALESCH

PRESENTS

THE FORMULA

Book and Lyrics by Christopher Bishop  
 Music by Bernie Jay Harding and Christopher Bishop

CAST

LM (Leading Man) ..... Paul Thompson  
 Polly ..... Melissa Brown  
 Ferret ..... Keith Blaney  
 Moose ..... Jose Angel Garcia  
 Paul ..... Edgar Allen Poe IV  
 Chet ..... Fermin Rojas  
 Imelda, Queen of the Palace Somewhere.... Karen Nagy  
 Joy Poloy..... Nina Mazey  
 Albert the Arm ..... Mark Gray  
 OI (Other Interest) ..... John Morrow  
 PC (Philosophical Context).....Hubert Ferguson  
 RG (Running Gag) ..... Ralf Holst  
 Director ..... The Director  
 Conductor ..... The Conductor  
 The Herald.....Jorge Amado  
 The Preacher.....Tony Macy  
 Joy Poloy's Entourage .....Christine Barnes  
 Shirley Chevrement  
 Imelda's Entourage.....Jorge Amado  
 Ellen Soldo  
 Tim Vaccaro  
 Albert the Arm's Entourage ..... Darci Osiecky  
 Tony Macy  
 Merry-Jo Cortada

Special Guest Appearance by Jack Metzger

Director..... Philip M. Church  
 Musical Director..... Bernie Jay Harding  
 Choreographer.....Christopher Bishop  
 Conductor.....James Ewing  
 Set Design.....Rolfe Bergsman  
 Costume Design ..... Rhoda Simmons  
 Lighting Design.....Therald Todd  
 Orchestration ..... James Ewing  
 Alan Fetterman

Orchestra

Trumpet ..... Chris Case  
 Woodwinds..... Chris Alpiar  
 Trombone..... Richard Dowda  
 Bass ..... Tim Baur  
 Drums.....Jim Weinfurtner  
 Mallets.....Danny Katsikas

MUSICAL NUMBERS

ACT 1

The Formula ..... LM, Ferret, Moose  
 & Company  
 I've Got a Part to Play ..... Polly  
 Mr. Gag's Rag ..... Orchestra  
 Musical Comedy Ingenue ..... LM, Ferret,  
 Moose, Polly  
 She's Unacceptable ..... Company  
 All the Way ..... LM, Ferret, Moose  
 A Box of Biscuits ..... LM, Ferret, Moose, Polly  
 She's Changing ..... LM, Ferret, Moose, Polly  
 & Company

THERE WILL BE ONE TEN MINUTE INTERMISSION

ACT II

This is What She Must Be ..... Imelda, Joy Poloy,  
 Albert the Arm & Company  
 Falling in Love ..... LM, Polly  
 One Song ..... Polly & Company  
 She's Unacceptable (Reprise) ..... Company  
 You're a Guy Who Could Do  
 Very Well For Himself ..... Polly &  
 Other Interest  
 Prince And The Pauper ..... PC  
 What We Want Is A Wedding ..... Company  
 Sword Fight ..... Orchestra  
 Style/Mr. Gag's Reformation ..... Mr. Gag  
 Finale ..... Company

NO FLASH CAMERAS ARE TO BE USED DURING THIS PERFORMANCE

THANK YOU

PRODUCTION STAFF

Dance Captains ..... Merry-Jo-Cortado  
 Jose Angel Garcia  
 Rehearsal Pianist ..... Paul Feyer  
 Stage Manager ..... Susan Winter  
 Marcos Rodriguez  
 Assistant to Set Designer ..... Mark Mindel  
 Property Mistress ..... Judie Berger  
 Lighting Board Operator ..... Mark Mindel  
 Christ Prokost Jr.  
 Follow Spot Operators..... Alex Fernandez  
 Dee Bells

Set Construction:

Mark Gray  
 Marcos Rodriguez  
 Alex Fernandez  
 Melissa Brown  
 Fermin Rojas  
 Karen Nagy  
 Shirley Chevrement  
 Keith Blaney  
 Jose Angel Garcia

Lighting Crew

Blanche Janki  
 Dee Bells  
 Alex Fernandez  
 Marcos Rodriguez  
 Christ Prokost Jr.

Running Crew ..... Susan Garrahan  
 Box Office and  
 Secretarial Assistance..... Carolyn Brochu  
 Publicity..... Della Nelson, FIU  
 Information Service  
 Photography .....Therald Todd

SPECIAL THANKS

C-RITE OPTICIANS INC ..... DR. KEITH B. KASHUK  
 FALLS HOME FURNISHING ..... BET SHIRA CONGREGATION  
 BUD STOP FLORIST ..... RALF BOFARULL

