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ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

FLORIDA'S PREMIER PROFESSIONAL THEATRE • SARASOTA

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Asolo Repertory Theatre presents *Hamlet, Prince of Cuba*

*Rep season closer will feature select performances of
Shakespeare's best-known work in Spanish*

(SARASOTA, Fla.)- Asolo Repertory Theatre is proud to announce its final 2012 repertory production, ***Hamlet, Prince of Cuba***, adapted and directed by Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and featuring a Spanish translation by Pulitzer Prize-winner Nilo Cruz. ***Hamlet, Prince of Cuba*** will run March 23 through May 6 in the Mertz Theatre. Previews (in English) will begin March 21. Set in late 19th century Cuba, the show will have two performances in Spanish with English supertitles. Spanish performances will be May 3 at 8 p.m. and May 5 at 2 p.m. After concluding its run at Asolo Rep, the show will move to the South Miami-Dade Cultural Arts Center where it will perform May 11-13. ***Hamlet, Prince of Cuba*** will feature guest artist **Frankie J. Alvarez** as Hamlet, **Gisela Chípe** (of Asolo Rep's *Yentl*) as Ophelia, **Emilio Delgado** as Claudius (known for his performance as Luis on *Sesame Street*), **Mercedes Herrero** as Gertrude and **Andhy Mendez** as Laertes.

"The Cuban relationship to *Hamlet* came out of being in Florida right now, and feeling like there is a great disconnect between the Anglo and the Latino communities," said Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards. "That disconnect is language, so I thought what can we do as an institution to help bridge our reality right now? The setting came from, as so much of my work does, from the actors. It was people driven, rather than just an intellectual idea. It really came about from meeting these actors and wanting to access their artistic and intellectual energy. We want audiences in Sarasota and Miami to have a thrilling time, and to be simply overwhelmed with the beauty and the power of these ideas and this story."

Cuban-American playwright and winner of the 2003 Pulitzer Prize in Drama, Nilo Cruz, will serve as translator for the production. Cruz's 2002 play *Anna in the Tropics* was the recipient of The Pulitzer Prize, The Steinberg Award and two Tony Award® nominations. Cruz will be joining other creative team members to bring productions of ***Hamlet, Prince of Cuba*** to Sarasota audiences in English and Spanish.

"The process of translation is an intricate one," said Cruz. "As artists we are constantly translating images, emotions, states of mind, human behavior to a canvas, a piece of music or the stage. The word 'translation' is analogous with conversion, interpretation, transformation and change. As I began to translate *Hamlet*, I was not only interested in deciphering Shakespeare's language and discerning truth in the realm of his ideas, but also in transmitting the

seductiveness of his words; to honor ‘the thing’ in the play, the arousal of complex and dangerous emotions that are contained deep within the human psyche. In this rendition of *Hamlet*, the nakedness of words, without the ornamentation of iambic pentameters, became more of an irresistible invitation to interpret. Here is a Hamlet in a Cuba that allows him to break from the prism of rhymes to embrace the dark sounds of his restless soul. Here, the ‘academic spectacles’ used in most Spanish translations of Shakespeare’s plays have been removed to allow his tempestuous lyricism to rise for a Latino audience.”

Perhaps the most well-known piece in Shakespeare’s canon, *Hamlet* has captivated playgoers for more than 400 years. Now, Sarasota audiences will be the first to see a distinctively Cuban Hamlet which reveals new perspectives on the classic work, all while staying true to the essence of Shakespeare’s original story. This new adaptation is a fresh and stunning portrayal of a son’s struggle to pursue justice for father, and the consequences that threaten to destroy the lives of those he loves.

Hamlet, Prince of Cuba

By: William Shakespeare

Translation by Nilo Cruz

Directed and Adapted by Michael Donald Edwards

Contains moderate violence

Previews: March 21-22, 2012

Performances: March 23- May 6, 2012

Creative team:

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| Assistant Director | Jesse Ontiveros |
| Set Design | Dane Laffrey |
| Costume Design | Clint Ramos |
| Lighting Design | Anthony Pearson |
| Projection Design | Aaron Rhyne |
| Sound Design & Composer | Fabian Obispo |
| Fight Director | Bruce Lecure |
| Voice & Dialect Coach | Antonio Ocampo-Guzman |
| Resident Hair/Wig & Make-Up Design | Michelle Hart |
| Resident Dramaturg | Lauryn E. Sasso |
| Production Stage Manager | Kelly A. Borgia* |
| Associate Costume Designer | Christopher Vergara |
| Associate Projection Designer | Caite Hevner |
| Stage Management Intern | Dane Urban |
| Assistant to the Director | Ryan McGovern |
| Student Lighting Assistant | Tim Reed |

Cast:

In order of appearance

| | |
|---------------------|----------|
| Frankie J. Alvarez* | Hamlet |
| Mercedes Herrero* | Gertrude |

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| Emilio Delgado* | Claudius |
| Andhy Mendez* | Laertes |
| Gisela Chípe* | Ophelia |
| Douglas Jones* | Polonius/Gravedigger |
| James Clarke* | Santero/Player King/Captain/Priest |
| Luke Bartholomew | Horatio/Ensemble |
| Geoff Knox | Marcellus/Lucianus/Doctor/Messenger/Ensemble |
| Jake Staley | Rosencrantz/Ensemble |
| Jon-Michael Miller | Guildenstern/Ensemble |
| Katie Cunningham+ | Player Queen/Lady/Ensemble |
| Benjamin Boucvalt | Player/Soldier/Osric/Ensemble |
| Tony Stopperan | Officer/Fortinbras/Ensemble |

*Members of Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States.

+ Appears courtesy of Actors Equity Association

Hamlet, Prince of Cuba select bios:

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (Playwright, *Hamlet*) was a British poet and playwright, widely regarded as the greatest dramatist in the English language. His surviving works include approximately 37 plays, 154 sonnets, and two narrative poems. His plays have been translated into every major living language and are performed more often than those of any other playwright. Born in 1564 and brought up in Stratford-upon-Avon, Shakespeare married Anne Hathaway at the age of 18. Between 1585 and 1592, he began a career in London as an actor, writer, and part owner of a playing company called the Lord Chamberlain's Men, later known as the King's Men. He retired to Stratford around 1613 at age 49, and died three years later. Many of his plays were published in editions of varying accuracy during his lifetime. In 1623, two of his former colleagues published the First Folio, a collected edition of his dramatic works that included all but two of the plays now recognized as Shakespeare's. His plays remain highly popular and are constantly studied, performed and reinterpreted in diverse cultural and political contexts throughout the world.

MICHAEL DONALD EDWARDS SIXTH SEASON (Producing Artistic Director, Asolo Repertory Theatre; Director, *Hamlet, Prince of Cuba*) is in his sixth season as producing artistic director of Asolo Repertory Theatre. He was previously the associate artistic director of Syracuse Stage and served as artistic director of Shakespeare Santa Cruz. A Garland Award and Drama Logue Award winning director, Mr. Edwards has directed at Cleveland Playhouse; Indiana Repertory Theatre; Geva Theatre; Syracuse Stage; The Shakespeare Theatre; San Jose Rep; Opera San Jose; the Oregon Shakespeare Festival; the Old Globe in San Diego; Virginia Stage Company; the Virginia Opera; the State Theatre of South Australia; Opera Australia; Victoria State Opera; and the Metropolitan Opera. In previous seasons for Asolo Rep, Mr. Edwards directed *Las Meninas*, *La Bête*, *The Last Five Years*, *The Life of Galileo*, *Perfect Mendacity*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Equus*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Darwin in Malibu*, *Nobody Don't Like Yogi*, *Amadeus*, *The Smell of the Kill*, and pieces in the first and second annual *Unplugged* festival of new plays. In addition to directing his English adaptation as well as Pulitzer Prize winner Nilo Cruz's Spanish translation of Shakespeare's text in *Hamlet: Prince of Cuba* this season, he will direct pieces in the third annual *Unplugged*.

NILO CRUZ FIRST SEASON (Translator, *Hamlet, Prince of Cuba*) is a Cuban-American playwright whose work has been produced widely around the United States and Europe. His work has been seen at McCarter Theatre, New York Shakespeare Festival's Public Theater, Manhattan Theatre Club, Arena Stage, Victory Gardens, Repertorio Español, South Coast Rep, Arena Stage, Mark Taper Forum, The Alliance, New York Theatre Workshop, Magic Theatre, Minneapolis Children's Theatre Company, Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Florida Stage, and many others. Internationally, his plays have been produced in Canada, England, France, Australia, Germany, Belarus, Costa Rica, Colombia, Panama, and in cities throughout Spain. In 2003 he won the Pulitzer Prize and the Steinberg Award for Drama for his play *Anna in the Tropics* and was nominated for a Tony Award. In 2009 he won *The Helen Merrill* and *The Laura Pels Mid-career Playwriting Award* as well as the *Fontanals-Cisneros USA Fellowship in Literature*. Cruz is also an alumnus of New Dramatists and has taught playwriting at Brown, Yale, NYU, and University of Iowa. Many thanks to Teresa Maria Rojas for revising my translation.

Sponsors for *Hamlet, Prince of Cuba* are PNC Wealth Management, Bright House Networks, Gold Coast Eagle Distributing, National Endowment for the Arts, Woman's Exchange INC. and Sarasota County Tourist Development Cultural Arts Program. Special Support for bilingual productions is provided by Mary Ann Robinson, Mike and Renee Silverstein and the Asolo Rep Artistic Excellence Society. Tickets for *Hamlet, Prince of Cuba* are available through the Asolo Repertory Theatre box office by calling 941-351-8000 or toll-free, 800-361-8388. Tickets are also available online at www.asolorep.org.

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Now in its 53rd season, Asolo Repertory Theatre is widely recognized as one of the premier professional theatres in the Southeastern United States. One of the few true repertory companies in the nation, Asolo Rep presents a diverse repertoire of newly commissioned plays, bold reinterpretations of contemporary and classical works, and provocative new musical theatre experiences each season. With its ambitious theatrical offerings and groundbreaking education, outreach and audience development programming, Asolo Rep is more vibrant and its work more relevant than ever before.