

ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE

PRODUCING ARTISTIC DIRECTOR MICHAEL DONALD EDWARDS MANAGING DIRECTOR LINDA DIGABRIELE

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Asolo Repertory Theatre Announces Addition to its 2014-15 Season: Pulitzer and Greenfield Prize Winning Playwright Nilo Cruz's *Sotto Voce*

(SARASOTA, June 20, 2014) — Asolo Rep's 2014-2015 season Historic Asolo Theater production will be Pulitzer and Greenfield Prize winning playwright Nilo Cruz's lyrical new play, *Sotto Voce*. This exquisitely observed metaphysical romance will be co-directed by Asolo Rep's Producing Artistic Director Michael Donald Edwards and playwright Nilo Cruz, who crafted the Spanish translation for *Hamlet, Prince of Cuba* at Asolo Rep in 2012. *Sotto Voce*, which had its world premiere at the Theater for the New City in February 2014, opens **Thursday, April 2, 2015** in the Historic Asolo Theater and runs through **Sunday, April 26**, with previews on **Tuesday, March 31** and **Wednesday, April 1**. The title of this celebrated new work is an Italian musical term that means to speak in a soft manner with purpose.

Cruz examines the resiliency of true love and the indelible power of memories in this spiritual masterpiece. Bemadette Kahn, a German-born novelist, lost the love of her life when he fled Nazi Germany aboard the SS *St. Louis*, a ship carrying 937 Jewish refugees seeking safe haven in North America. Both Cuba and the United States turned the ship away, leaving many of the ship's passengers to return to Europe and perish in Nazi Concentration Camps. The pain of her past resurfaces when Saquiel Rafaeli, a 28-year-old Jewish Cuban writer, contacts the now 80-year-old reclusive Bemadette to research the ship's tragic voyage. Their relationship deepens into a transcendent romance based on her memories of her great lost love.

"Set at the beginning of the 21st century, *Sotto Voce* is an imaginative, moving and wonderfully theatrical story of memory and love," said Michael Donald Edwards. "Sharing a deep connection with the heartbreaking 1939 journey of the SS *St. Louis*, an elderly German-born novelist living in NY and a young Cuban journalist unexpectedly connect. In producing this beautiful new play by Pulitzer Prize and Greenfield Prize winning Nilo Cruz, we at Asolo Rep are so proud to recognize Nilo as one of the true American dramatic poets of our time and as part of our creative family."

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"The world of this play is lush and devastating at once, exploring the complex relationship of an elderly German-born novelist and a young Cuban man and the miracle that imagination possesses, which allows them to transcend the dimensions of time and space, youth and old age," said Nilo Cruz. "For me, the act of writing is getting in touch with the subconscious mind, the realm of dreams and imagination."

SELECTED ARTISTIC BIOS

NILO CRUZ (Co-Director of *Sotto Voce*) was born in Cuba and raised in Miami, Florida. Cruz is best known for his play *Anna in the Tropics*, which won the Steinberg award, the 2003 Pulitzer Prize for Drama and received a Tony nomination. His other plays include *Dancing on Her Knees*, *Night Train to Bolina*, *A Park in Our House*, *Two Sisters and a Piano*, *Beauty of the Father*, *Lorca in a Green Dress*, among others. Cruz has translated Federico Garcia Lorca's *The House of Bernarda Alba*, *Doña Rosita the Spinster*, and Jose Sanchez Sinisterra's *Ay Carmela*. He also adapted Gabriel Garcia Marquez's *A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings* for the stage. Nilo has been the recipient of other awards and fellowships, including two NEA/TCG National Theatre Artist Residency grants, a Rockefeller Foundation grant and the San Francisco's W. Alton Jones award. In 2009 he won The Laura Pels Mid-Career Playwriting award and a Helen Merrill award for Excellence in playwriting. He also received the USA Ella Fontanals-Cisneros award. He has taught playwriting at Brown, NYU Gallatin School, Yale School of Drama, and the University of Iowa. He recently co-wrote the screenplay *Castro's Daughter* with Oscar winner Bobby Moresco and adapted Anne Patchett's *Bel Canto* into an opera for the Lyric Opera in Chicago. This year he was awarded the Greenfield Prize and will be an artist-in-residence at the Hermitage.

MICHAEL DONALD EDWARDS (Producing Artistic Director of Asolo Rep; Co-Director of *Sotto Voce*) is in his eighth season as producing artistic director of Asolo Repertory Theatre. This season, he directed Asolo Rep's production of *The Grapes of Wrath*. 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 Play House, Indiana Repertory Theatre, Geva Theatre, Syracuse Stage, The Shakespeare Theatre, San Jose Repertory Theatre, Opera San Jose, the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, the Old Globe in San Diego, Virginia Stage Company,

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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 has directed his English adaptation as well as Pulitzer Prize-winner Nilo Cruz's Spanish translation of Shakespeare's text in *Hamlet, Prince of Cuba*; as well as *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 several pieces in the annual Unplugged festival of new plays.

2014 - 2015 Asolo Rep Season

New Stages Tour: A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

By William Shakespeare

Adapted by Lauryn E. Sasso

October and November 2014

SOUTH PACIFIC

Music by Richard Rodgers

Book by Oscar Hammerstein II and Joshua Logan

Lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein II

Directed by Rob Ruggiero

November 14 - December 28

Previews November 11, 12, 13

THE MATCHMAKER

By Thornton Wilder

Directed by Peter Amster

January 9 - April 11

Previews January 6, 7, 8

GOOD PEOPLE

By David Lindsay-Abaire

Directed by Greg Leaming

January 16 - March 1

Previews January 14 & 15

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BOTH YOUR HOUSES

By Maxwell Anderson

Directed by Frank Galati

January 23 - April 12

Previews January 21 & 22

OUR BETTERS

By W. Somerset Maugham

Directed by Michael Donald Edwards

March 13-April 19

Previews March 11 & 12

SOTTO VOCE

By Nilo Cruz

Co-Directed by Nilo Cruz and Michael Donald Edwards

April 2-26

Previews March 31 & April 1

IT ONLY TAKES A MOMENT

WORLD PREMIERE

Featuring the Music of Jerry Herman

Directed by Gordon Greenberg

May 1-24

Previews April 28, 29, 30

SUMMER PRODUCTION

June 5 - June 21

Previews June 2, 3, 4

TICKETS

Season subscriptions for the 2014-15 season are on sale now and available by visiting the Asolo Rep Box Office, located in the lobby of the theatre, 5555 N. Tamiami Trail in Sarasota, or by calling 941.351.8000 or 800.361.8388.

Subscribers will be able to purchase single tickets beginning Monday, September 8 both online and at the box office. Single tickets will be available to the public online only Saturday, September 27 at 12:01 a.m. and Sunday, September 28. Single tickets will be available to the public at the box office and by phone beginning on Monday, September 29 at 10am.

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SPONSORS

Asolo Rep's season sponsors are Florida State University, Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Designing Women Boutique, Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, and The Woman's Exchange, Inc. Asolo Rep's artistic programs are paid for in part by Sarasota County Tourist Development Tax revenues. Asolo Rep is sponsored in part by the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Cultural Affairs and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture.

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