

UMD School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies presents

# A BICYCLE COUNTRY



SCHOOL OF  
THEATRE, DANCE, &  
PERFORMANCE STUDIES



Friday, November 10–Friday, November 17, 2023

KOGOD THEATRE

AT THE CLARICE SMITH PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

# THEATRE DANCE

## **THE PROM**

Book & Lyrics by Chad Beguelin  
Book by Bob Martin  
Music by Matthew Sklar  
Based on an Original Concept by Jack Viertel  
Directed by Nathaniel Claridad '04  
Produced by Randall "Randy" W. Lord '77  
and Stephen "Steve" Fessler  
KAY THEATRE

**SEPTEMBER 29–OCTOBER 7, 2023**

## **A BICYCLE COUNTRY**

By Nilo Cruz  
Directed by Fatima Quander  
KOGOD THEATRE

**NOVEMBER 10–17, 2023**

## **MEN ON BOATS**

By Jacklyn Backhaus  
Co-Directed by KenYatta Rogers and  
Elena Velasco  
KAY THEATRE

**MARCH 1–9, 2024**

## **ARE WE AT WAR YET**

By Mikhail Durnenkov  
Directed by Yury Urnov  
KOGOD THEATER

**APRIL 19–26, 2024**

## **FALL M.F.A. THESIS DANCE CONCERT**

Choreographed by Gerson Lanza  
and Javier Padilla

KOGOD THEATRE  
**OCTOBER 12–15, 2023**

## **FACULTY DANCE CONCERT**

Directed by Alvin Mayes  
Choreographed by Adriane Fang, Kate  
Ladenheim, Ama Law, and Alvin Mayes

KAY THEATRE  
**DECEMBER 8–10, 2023**

## **SPRING M.F.A. THESIS DANCE CONCERT**

Choreographed by Brit Falcon, Mary  
Kate Ford and Rebecca Steinberg

DANCE THEATRE  
**FEBRUARY 16–18, 2024**

## **UMOVES: UNDERGRADUATE DANCE CONCERT**

Directed by Ama Law  
DANCE THEATRE  
**MAY 3–5, 2024**

SCHOOL OF THEATRE, DANCE, AND PERFORMANCE STUDIES

**A BICYCLE COUNTRY**

*By Nilo Cruz*

*Directed by Fatima Quander*

Director ..... Fatima Quander  
 Dramaturg..... Katie Quinn  
 Movement Coach..... Javier Padilla  
 Intimacy Director..... Jenny Male  
 Scenic Designer ..... Sofía Olivar  
 Costume Designer ..... Becca Janney  
 Lighting & Projection Designer ..... Luis Garcia  
 Sound Designer ..... Justin Schmitz\*  
 Stage Manager ..... Mel Mader

\*The sound designer in this production is represented by  
 United Scenic Artists, Local USA-829 of the IATSE.



**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 10–FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2023**  
 KOGOD THEATRE

***The performance will last approximately  
 2 hours 15 minutes with a 15 minute intermission.***

*Please take this opportunity to silence your cell phones, and anything else that might beep or buzz. Photography and audio or video recording are prohibited. And finally, please take note of the nearest exit from the venue in case of emergency.*

**VIDEO OR AUDIO RECORDING OF THIS PRODUCTION IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**

**CAST**

Julio ..... Alex Diaz-Lopez  
Ines..... Gracie Guzman  
Pepe ..... Nelson Chen

**UNDERSTUDIES**

Julio ..... Tito Silva  
Ines..... Kayla Harvey-Ali  
Pepe ..... Cyrus Escalera

...Las lluvias me desplazan sin desagregarme, el viento me empuja sin romper mi contorno, mi identidad; sigo siendo yo misma, pero perdiéndome constantemente de mi centro...O de lo que yo creía mi centro...O de lo que no será mi centro nunca...

...The rains displace me without washing me away, the winds push me about without breaking my form, or my identity. I remain myself, but I constantly lose my center, or what I thought my center was, or what my center will never be...

Dulce María Loynaz, Cuban poet.  
 “Poema XC” from *Poemas sin nombre*  
 (*Poems Without a Name*). 1953.

My grandmother fled her native Dominican Republic in 1940. She escaped 1st-hand encounters with the infamous dictator Rafael Trujillo’s men and was granted asylum here in the United States. Two generations later, though this aspect of my origin story doesn’t perfectly align with that of the three characters in Nilo Cruz’s *A Bicycle Country*, I very much see myself and feel my history in this play. I wholly relate to the warmth of friendship and familiarity; the triumph of overcoming challenges and feelings of hopelessness; and fully connect to the notion of loss and fear of the unknown. My hope is that you too will find aspects of yourself reflected in this evening’s performance and that it may also give insight into why *some* of our families sacrifice it all to leave their native countries for this one. This play isn’t about immigration, but it certainly gives a face and experience to the plight.

*A Bicycle Country* is a truly beautiful play. There is a beauty in its simplicity and there is a beauty in its complexity. Though specifically set in Cuba in 1993—during a time known as the “Special Period”<sup>1</sup>—it is a story that many can relate to and understand. It begins on land where there exists a spirit of familiarity juxtaposed by a reality of isolation. The characters move through their day-to-day, making do to overcome the now, whilst dreaming of ways to escape their varying forms of stagnation. The second half moves into fantastical territory as the characters drift through the vastness of endless open water and endure experiences that are beyond their comprehension. The characters are still confined, but in a different way. It is in these restless moments where they encounter a true deterioration and must come to terms with the heartbreaking reality that things are not always as they seem.

One might leave the performance unsure about what is real and what is imagined. If that, I invite you to let the experience linger. Perhaps share your theories and relish in your own journey through the magical realism that is the sea. Or, maybe, just allow the characters to continue to live in the fantasy.

—Fatima Quander, director

Special thanks to the cast, crew and design team who seamlessly worked together to bring this beautiful piece to life.

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<sup>1</sup> After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 and the resulting loss of Soviet subsidies, Cuba plunged into an economic crisis that roughly lasted through the year 2000. This “Special Period” was marked by food shortages and strict rationing, the disappearance of medicines, suspension of gas sales, and the distribution of bicycles to be used as the main form of transportation. “The Special Period.” *Cuba Platform*, [cubaplatform.org/special-period](http://cubaplatform.org/special-period).

Many Americans today have ingrained in them the sentiment of “communism bad” by modern politics. This sentiment has wormed its way into many classrooms and affected what history is taught to students today and how. For example, growing up, I (and many other 20-somethings) cannot recall learning in detail about any places affected by communism, especially Cuba.

Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright, Nilo Cruz, on the other hand, grew up in 1960s Cuba and immigrated to Miami in the early 1970s. As he had lived through and was surrounded by much of Cuba's influence, Cruz writes with a compassion and complex understanding of a topic often overlooked when studying history: the people involved. *A Bicycle Country* takes place during a time in Cuba known as The Special Period. This period, starting in 1991, saw significant economic decline and social disruption due to the fall of the Soviet Union, a major trade partner and supporter of Cuba. Without economic and political support from the USSR, the country saw a 40% decrease in food production, a halt in gas sales to individuals and energy blackouts of up to 20 hours per day. This resulted in major declines in the living conditions for most in the country. The Cuban government declared this time a “Special Period in a Time of Peace.”

The rich, individual lives of Cuban people are often overshadowed by the systems they live in. The decades-old cars, food rations and government-sanctioned bicycles tend to permeate the minds of outsiders, rather than the types of isolations felt and freedoms hoped for by the people who actually lived with these things. One year after *A Bicycle Country* premiered, the name Elián González quickly became known around the world. A young boy, whose family wanted the best life possible for him, was caught in a political and media whirlwind. Rather than be cared for and given to relatives in the U.S., the child was used as a political pawn. Elián currently lives in Cuba and is an industrial engineer and incumbent of the National Assembly of the People's Power.

So rarely do audiences see society reflected so explicitly in art than in this play. Julio, Ines and Pepe are true reflections of real people, like Elián. Without stories like *A Bicycle Country*, their faces and stories would simply turn into those of food rations and old cars, forgotten and untold.

—Katie Quinn, dramaturg

**Khara Basden** (Assistant Stage Manager) undergraduate English major.

**Nelson Chen** (Pepe) is a senior theatre major and Asian American studies minor. CAPA Scholar. UMD Credits: *The Late Wedding* (Narrator/General/Sailor), *By the Way, Meet Vera Stark* (Slasvick/Brad), *Eggs and Tomatoes*, Fearless New Play Festival (Playwright).

**Alexander Diaz-Lopez** (Julio) is a senior theatre and political communications double major. UMD credits: *Fefu and her Friends* (Camera Operator), *As You Like It* (Charles/Silvius), *The Book Club Play* (Alex).

**Cyrus Escalera** (Pepe u/s) is a senior theatre performance major. UMD credits: *Much Ado About Nothing* (Balthasar). Outside credits: *Hello Dolly*, *The Somewhat True Tale of Robin Hood* (Sheriff), *Right Road Lost* (Chris), *Navigation* (Ryley).

**Gracie Guzman** (Ines) senior theatre and dance double major. CAPA Scholar, Arts Scholar. UMD credits: *The Book Club Play* (Ana Smith), *As You Like It* (Celia u/s), *Fefu and Her Friends* (Christina), *Little Women* (Amy March u/s), *The Revolutionists* (Charlotte Corday u/s).

**Kayla Harvey-Ali** (Ines u/s) is a second-year theatre major. Outside credits: *Working* (Kate/Roberta), *Antigone* (Eurydice/Chorus member), *Suburbia* (Sooze), *Ascension Day* (Faith).

**Christian D. Henriquez** (Associate Lighting Designer) third-year lighting design M.F.A. candidate and certificate candidate in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. UMD lighting design credits: *The Prom*, *As You Like It*, *The Book Club Play*, *Stick Fly*. Professional lighting design credits: *Baño de Luna*, *La Valentía*, GALA Hispanic Theatre. Assistant/associate credits: *Fun Home*, Studio Theatre; *Incendiary*, Woolly Mammoth.

**Becca Janney** (Costume Designer) is a third-year costume design M.F.A. candidate. Other costume design credits include *Cinderella*, Creede Repertory Theatre; *HMS Pinafore*, Victorian Lyric Opera Company; *Don Giovanni*, Maryland Opera Studio; *Last Dance Lost Dance*, *Lost Patterns*, *Fefu and her Friends*, UMD; *Peter and the Starcatcher*, Baylor Theatre; *Everything is Wonderful*, *Godspell*, *Harvey*, WaterTower Theatre; *Ada and the Engine*, Stage West Theatre. Gratitude to this wonderful design team.

**Mel Mader** (Stage Manager) is excited to be stage managing her first theatre production at UMD! Previous credits include *The Prom* (Assistant Stage Manager), Faculty Dance Concert (Stage Manager), and *Hookman* (Assistant Stage Manager). She'd like to thank everyone who has taught her something at The Clarice.

**Sofía Olivar** (Scenic Designer) is a second-year scenic design M.F.A. student born and raised in Mexico. She has a background in film and themed entertainment design, and is excited to be making her theater debut with TDPS. Previous work experience includes show set design at Universal Creative and exhibition design at the Smithsonian Institution. Outside credits: *Damn Things Will Kill You*, American University.

**Fatima Quander** (Director) is a lecturer of acting for live digital performance at UMD's School of Theatre, Dance, and Performance Studies. Last semester, she directed *The Book Club Play* by Karen Zacarías here at UMD. Other performing and directing credits include FRESHH Inc. Theatre Company, DC Hip Hop Theatre Festival, Rep Stage, Everyman Theatre, Baltimore Center Stage Education, Theater of the First Amendment, Folger Elizabethan Theatre, Imagination Stage, Discovery Theater, Transformation Theatre, and Howard Community College; she has also performed in house and on tour with The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Fatima also works as a theatre educator with a number of programs throughout the DC area including FRESHH Inc.'s Griot Girls and The Vanguard, Everyman Theatre, Poetry Out Loud, Folger Shakespeare Library's McKee Fellows and Secondary School Shakespeare Festival, Capitol Hill Arts Workshop, Sitar Arts Center, Jr. Discovery at Georgetown University and Young Playwrights' Theater. She is a proud member of Actors' Equity Association and the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

**Katie Quinn** (Dramaturg) is a fourth-year theatre and agriculture science major. UMD TDPS credits: *As You Like It* (Lord), *Fefu and Her Friends* (Fefu u/s). Outside Credits: *Head Over Heels*, Wildwood Summer Theatre (Dramaturg/Musidorus); *A Chorus Line*, UMD 32 Bars (Dramaturg); *The Lightning Thief*, Wildwood Summer Theatre (Choreographer); *Heathers: the Musical*, UMD 32 Bars (Co-Choreographer). She'd like to thank her loved ones for their support in her shenanigans.

**Justin Schmitz** (Sound Designer) is grateful to be back with TDPS having previously designed: *The Heidi Chronicles*, *Little Shop of Horrors*, *The Wild Party*, *Antigone* and *The Call*. Justin is a proud member of USA 829, TSDCA and USITT. Additional credits include productions at: The Kennedy Center, Signature Theatre, Round House, Woolly Mammoth, Studio Theatre, Olney Theatre Center, Constellation Theatre Company, Imagination Stage, amongst many others. He has collaborated Off-Broadway with 59E59 Theaters and Round House Theatre, The Dixon Place Theatre. Regional credits include Cincinnati Playhouse In the Park, The St. Louis Black Rep Theatre Company and others. He has been the designer of three national touring productions through the Kennedy Center's Theatre for Young Audiences including: *DARIUS AND TWIG, ME, JANE...THE DREAMS AND ADVENTURES OF YOUNG JANE GOODALL* and most recently *DON'T LET PIGEON DRIVE THE BUS, THE MUSICAL!* in collaboration with Mo Willems.

**Tito Silva** (Julio u/s) is a junior theatre and communications double major.



## ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, DESIGNERS AND STAGE MANAGERS

Assistant Director .....	Katrina Marinelli
Assistant Director .....	Katie Quinn
Assistant Stage Manager .....	Khara Basden
Associate Lighting Designer.....	Christian D. Henriquez
Associate Projection Designer .....	Jerran Kowalski

## PRODUCTION MANAGEMENT

Assistant Director of Production and Operations .....	Jennifer Schwartz
Production and Operations Coordinator .....	Devin Kohn
Production and Events Coordinator.....	Kate Wander

## PRODUCTION

### SCENIC

Assistant Technical Director.....	Michael Driggers
Scene Shop Coordinator.....	Reuven Goren
Lead Carpenter.....	Earl Browne
Carpenters .....	Christopher Anderson, Keshav Gulati, Eliana Kindred, Kelley Li, Gabriella Loshin, Sarah Mack, Zach McKay, Ryan Nock, Terence Ngwafor, Harsh Senjaliya, Dhairya Shah, Sophia Tiedt
Carpenter Graduate Students.....	Trey Pope, David Wilson
Student Carpenters.....	Preston Jones, Precious Ogunsoła

### SCENIC PAINTING

Scenic Charge Coordinator .....	Ann Chismar
Graduate Students .....	Thea Luo, Margarita Syrocheva
Scenic Artists .....	Tifani T. Carnes, Bobbie Carter Dewhurst, Aiden Galbraith, Sherri Howells, Nicole Panebianco
Student Scenic Artists .....	Mars Burggraf, Kayla Harvey-Ali, Guinivere Roberts

### PROPS

Prop Shop Manager.....	Timothy Jones
Prop Shop Artisans.....	Tyra Bell, Mercedes Blankenship
Props Graduate Student.....	Amanda Lee Henney
Prop Shop Student Artisans.....	Adam Hawley, Robert Pang, Sabrina Rachel Lenett

### VENUE OPERATIONS

Stage Crew Leads .....	Steven Bronocco, Alex Hayes, Cole Owens
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### TECHNOLOGY

Technology Shop Manager .....	Jeffery Reckeweg
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**LIGHTING**

Lighting Coordinator ..... Carrie Barton  
 Technology Shop Technician ..... Cameron Smith  
 Lead Electricians ..... Max Abramovitz, Eli Bendel-Simso,  
 Alex Bryan-Taff, Buruk Daniel, Isaac DeMarchi,  
 Malory Hartman, James Newman, Liza Raney, Trey Wise  
 Student Electricians ..... Briana Bush, Mariah Faulkner,  
 Jadyne Fine, Ella Gammel, Alana Isaac,  
 Jerran Kowalski, Mel Mader, Royal Miller, Drew Okoye,  
 Emily Pan, Erin Sanders, Ronak Shah, Pranav Shinde,  
 Dylan Speiser, Amelia Talbot

**PROJECTIONS**

Projections Coordinator ..... Zachary Rupp  
 Projections Technician ..... Cassandra Saulski

**AUDIO**

Assistant Manager of Audio ..... James O'Connell

**COSTUMES**

Costume Shop Manager ..... Jen Daszczyszak  
 Assistant Costume Shop Manager and Crafts ..... Lisa Burgess  
 Costume Tailor and Draper ..... Tessa Lew  
 Costume Drapers ..... MJ Hromek, Steven Simon  
 First Hand ..... Dennis Kitmore  
 Costume Graduate Assistant ..... Olivia O'Brien  
 Costume Technicians ..... Mackenzie Gardiner, Ilana Mongilio, Jasmine Voon  
 Costume Student Crew ..... Gabrielle Loshin, Emma Meisel,  
 Layla Nordrum, Wendy Saltzberg

**SHOW CREW**

Assistant Stage Manager ..... Khara Basden  
 Light Board Operator ..... J. Royal Miller  
 Sound Board Operator ..... Sophia Cichetti  
 Projection Board Operator/automation ..... Emma Callagy  
 Dresser ..... Ava Susser-Stein  
 Dresser ..... Briana Bush  
 Deck ..... Sabrina Lenett  
 Deck ..... Hudson White

**FACULTY**

Jennifer Barclay  
Amith Chandrashaker  
Andrew Cissna  
Dan Conway  
Sam Crawford  
Crystal Davis  
Carla Della Gatta  
Adriane Fang  
Leslie Felbain  
Frank Hildy  
Helen Huang  
James Harding  
Misha Kachman  
Kate Keeney  
Kate Ladenheim  
Ama Law  
Maura Keefe  
Alvin Mayes  
Jared Mezzocchi  
Lisa Nathans  
Sara Pearson  
Kendra Portier  
Fatima Quander  
Scot Reese  
KenYatta Rogers  
Van Tran Nguyen  
Patrik Widrig

**STAFF**

Gabrielle Ching  
Crystal Gaston  
Isiah Johnson  
Devin Kohn  
Renee Nyack  
Jenn Schwartz  
Susan Miller  
Catalina Toala  
Kate Wander  
Teri Zillmer

**GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Ronya Lee Anderson  
Bailey Hammett  
Breeanah Breeden  
Christina Collins  
Britney Falcon  
Colin Franz  
Mary Kate Ford  
Marissa Kennedy  
Mher Kandoyan  
Kevin Clark  
Luis Garcia  
Christian Henririquez  
Mariah Faulkner  
Leo Grierson  
Tim Kelly  
Jerran Kowalski  
Gerson Lanza Ruiz  
Rashonda Lazar  
Kaela Lawrence  
Margaret Lapinski  
Gianinia Lockely  
Thea Luo  
Sofia Olivar  
Brandon Roak  
Jalen Rose  
Mike Riggs  
Javier Padilla  
Peter Pattengill  
Doni Rotunno  
James Sivert  
Christina Smith  
Rebecca Steinberg  
Melissa Sturges  
Patrik Saunders  
Margarita Syrocheva  
Sophia Tepermeister  
Caitlin Woods  
Zoe Walders  
Cody Von Ruden  
Rebecca Janney  
Amanda Henney  
Shartoya Jn. Baptiste  
Gavin Mosier  
Scott Monnin  
Matre Grant  
Mina Kawahara  
Eran Eads  
Yasmin Eubanks  
Kristopher Pourzal  
Atiya Dorsey

