



For Immediate Release

NOT FOR CHILDREN ONLY
**MIAMI'S PLAYGROUND THEATRE OPENS SPRING
REPERTORY SEASON JANUARY 25–MAY 27**
**SEVEN DIFFERENT SHOWS ROTATE FOR YOUNG
AND ADULT AUDIENCES**

Plays by Hans Christian Andersen, Gabriel García Márquez and Nilo Cruz, Melissa James Gibson, Mikhail Gindin and Victor Sinokevitch, Carlo Gozzi, Maria Clara Machado and Arthur Miller

The musicians are warming up. The designers are almost finished setting the lights. The actors are applying their last bit of make-up. Hold your breath. It's January 25 and the opening of Miami's PlayGround Theatre's 2007 season, which takes the troupe to four venues in addition to its home season in Miami Shores. Shhh, the curtain is about to rise!

Co-directed by Stephanie Ansin and Oleg Kheyfets and built on the European model of repertory theater, PlayGround's rotating line-up is uniquely designed for children, teenage and adult audiences. Hans Christian Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier," Gabriel García Márquez and Nilo Cruz's "A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," Melissa James Gibson's "Brooklyn Bridge," Mikhail Gindin and Viktor Sinokevitch's "The Beast," Carlo Gozzi's "The Love of Three Oranges," Maria Clara Machado's "Pluft, The Little Ghost" and Arthur Miller's "The Creation of the World and Other Business" form the funny, poetic, dramatic and international heart of The PlayGround Theatre's riveting 2007 season repertory.

The costume and set designers for most productions—Margarita Demianova, Galina Solovyeva, Simon Pastukh and Emil Kapelush—are recipients of Russia's highest theatrical honors including multiple Golden Mask awards (Russia's Tony) and have designed productions for the Kirov and Bolshoi's opera and ballet companies and the Maly Theatre. The shows, which are primarily performed at PlayGround's own 350-seat Art Deco theater in Miami Shores, will also be seen in theaters throughout the Miami area.

Hans Christian Andersen's "The Steadfast Tin Soldier" is a witty love story that peeks into a playroom after the children are tucked in bed. It is then that a brave toy soldier faces danger to prove his love for a beautiful ballerina. The show, adapted and directed by Vyatcheslav Dolgachev, was translated from the Russian by Aleksandr Kheyfets. The sets

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and costumes are by Margarita Demianova and the lighting design by S. Ryan Schmidt. Dolgachev, artistic director of Moscow's New Drama Theatre, and Demianova previously spent 10 years working for the Moscow Art Theatre.

"A Very Old Man with Enormous Wings," written by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Nilo Cruz and based on a short story by Nobel Prize winner Gabriel García Márquez, tells of a magical moment when a mysterious creature inexplicably tumbles from the sky. The play is directed by Stephanie Ansin. Set and puppet design are by Emil Kapelush and costume design is by Yana Glushanok. Lighting is by S. Ryan Schmidt.

In Melissa James Gibson's "Brooklyn Bridge," Sasha, a latchkey kid, encounters a series of adventures in her race to finish her homework. Directed by Oleg Kheifets, the play's set is by Simon Pastukh; the costumes are by Galina Solovyeva and lights by Jeff Quinn with an original song by Barbara Brousal.

Mikhail Gindin and Viktor Sinokevitch's "The Beast," which had been censored by the Soviet government for 10 years, has been critically described as Russia's "Romeo and Juliet." The set and costume design for this dark, Soviet version of the classic tale of star-crossed lovers is by Margarita Demianova with lighting by Jeff Quinn. The production was translated from the Russian by Aleksandr Kheifets and directed by Oleg Kheifets.

Carlo Gozzi has turned Prokofiev's classic comic opera "The Love of Three Oranges" into a colorful, fun-filled children's production. PlayGround's telling of Prince Tartaglia's hilarious search for three enchanted oranges is directed by Stephanie Ansin, whose adaptation includes rap, live drumming and stand-up comedy. The translation is by Dr. John Louis DiGaetani. Emil Kapelush is the set and costume designer and S. Ryan Schmidt, the lighting designer.

Renowned Brazilian children's author and playwright Maria Clara Machado's "Pluft, The Little Ghost" is a modern fairy tale of pirates, replete with treasure and adventure, and set on the frosty Arctic seas. Directed by Oleg Kheifets, the production features Emil Kapelush's set and costumes and Jeff Quinn's lighting design.

Arthur Miller's "The Creation of the World and Other Business," directed by Oleg Kheifets, with sets and costume design by Simon Pastukh and lights by S. Ryan Schmidt, combines comedy and tragedy to retell the story of Genesis as an examination of good and evil.

The company's resident actors are seen in all productions. They are: Melissa

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Almaguer, Meshawn Labrone Arnold, Jeff Keogh, Sandie Luna, John Page, Jesús Quintero, Valerie Stanford and Ricky Waugh.

The PlayGround Theatre was founded three years ago to ensure that children, like adults, receive a high-quality theater experience, one that will entertain and educate them now, and turn them into discerning theater-goers in the future. Oleg Kheyfets, who did his doctoral studies at Moscow's Vakhtangov Theatre Academy, began his career directing plays for young audiences in his native Russia. The recipient of a series of international festival awards for his production of "The Beast," he had six productions broadcast on Russian National Television. After moving to the United States in 1993, he directed the off-Broadway revival of "The Creation of the World and Other Business," and taught acting and directing at Stella Adler Conservatory, Emerson College, Columbia University and Miami's New World School of the Arts. A graduate of Brown University in theater arts and a recipient of an M.F.A. in theater directing from Columbia University, Florida native Stephanie Ansin has performed in and directed many productions for off-Broadway theaters in New York City and various venues in South Florida.

The PlayGround Theatre's home performances take place at its own Shores Performing Arts Theater, which is located at 9806 NE 2nd Avenue. The troupe also performs at Amaturio Theater in Fort Lauderdale, Colony Theatre in Miami Beach, Dave and Mary Alper JCC at the Morton-Levinthal Campus in Miami and Rinker Playhouse at Kravis Center in West Palm Beach.

Tickets for all performances are now available. Admission is \$15, or \$10 each for groups of 20 or more. To purchase tickets and for further information, please call 305-751-9550 or 800-813-6527, email info@theplaygroundtheatre.com or visit www.theplaygroundtheatre.com.

**A PRODUCTION SCHEDULE AND ITINERARY IS ATTACHED. FOR
PHOTOGRAPHS AND FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE
CONTACT ELLEN JACOBS ASSOCIATES.**

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