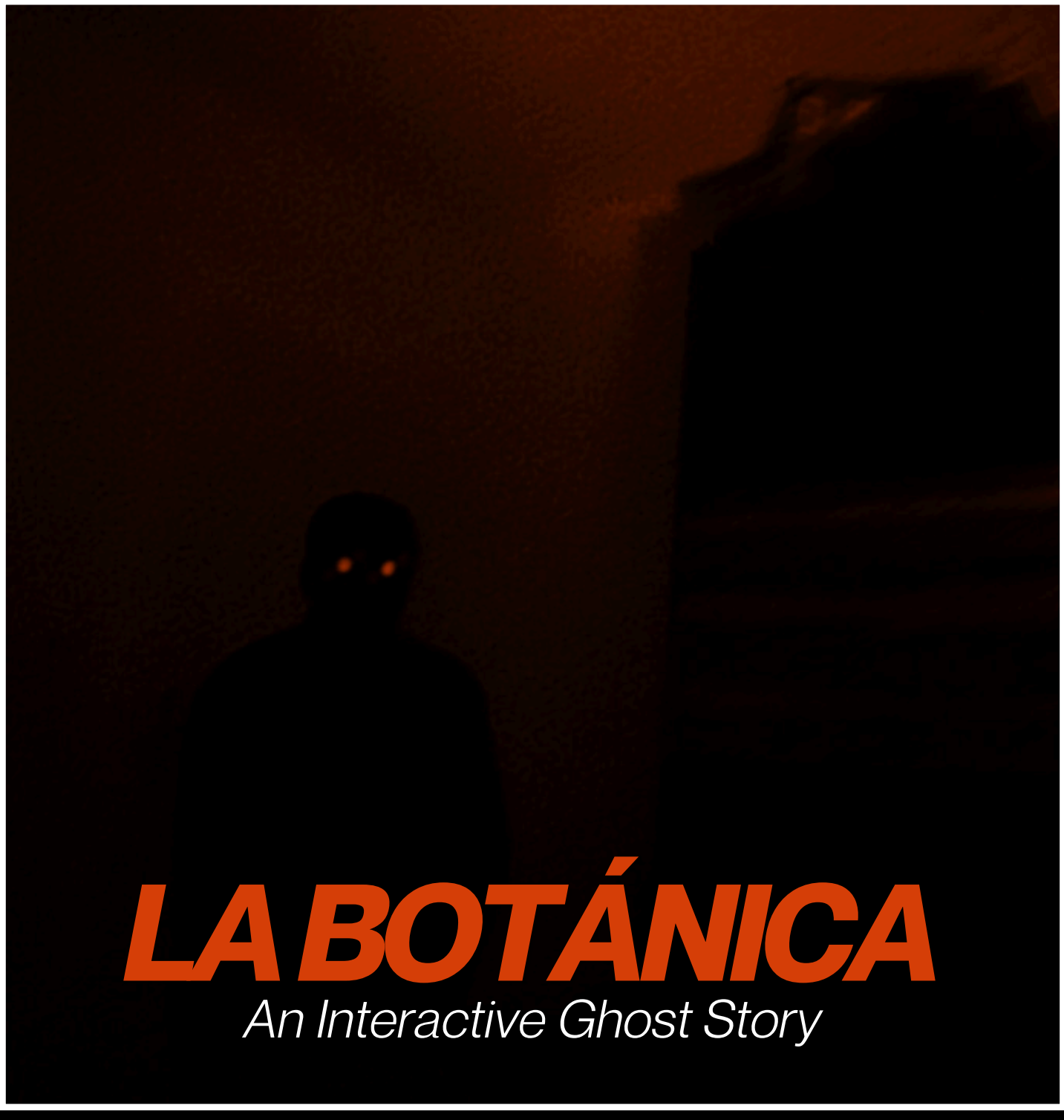
LATINÉ THEATER LAB



LA BOTÁNICA

An Interactive Ghost Story

CAST

CARMEN.....ANNETTE RODRIGUEZ

ESPERANZA.....CRISTINA PLA-GUZMAN

MYSTERIOUS MAN.....BRIAN ESPINOZA

TOUR GUIDE.....LUZ VAZQUEZ GUERRA



SHOW INFORMATION

TIME + PLACE

HIALEAH, FLORIDA
+
1960-2003. LA BOTANICA AND CARMEN'S MIND

RUN TIME

90 MINUTES WITH NO INTERMISSION

WARNING

THIS PRODUCTION IS SET WITHIN A SPIRIT SHOP AND UTILIZES HORROR, SMOKE, LOUD NOISES, GRAPHIC IMAGES, AND MOMENTS OF COMPLETE DARKNESS TO TELL ITS STORY



FROM THE PLAYWRIGHTS



Gian Arellano

As a writer, I've always been drawn to genre extremes, such as camp and horror, because we exist in a world where our emotions often feel larger than life, so art should reflect that. I've written a few pieces in the horror / thriller genre before myself and have even written for large, immersive shows, so when Alex reached out about *La Botánica*, I was very interested in collaborating, especially when the story deals with familial struggles and highlights Latino characters. I hope audiences learn to empathize with characters who aren't wholly good but rather human, explore the mystical world that we've created, and - when a full production comes around - enjoy a theatrical experience that is bound to be much different than anything they've seen before.



Alex Gonzalez

My work is often described as bold and filled with spectacle, and that carries into how I approached writing *La Botánica*. The idea came to me in 2024 during a writing workshop, when a guided meditation meant to be calming instead opened a window into a dark, supernatural world. The piece has evolved since then, but its core remains the same: a story about what happens when parents refuse to see their children for who they are and instead hold onto who they hoped they would be. Bringing this to life led me to collaborate with Gian. I've been a fan of his writing for some time, and I'm glad he said yes! I hope audiences are ready for something dark, a little scary, and unmistakably Latin.

PRODUCTION TEAM

PLAYWRIGHT.....ALEX GONZALEZ

GIAN ARELLANO

DIRECTOR.....ALEX GONZALEZ

SPIRITUAL DRAMATURG....JANILEY MARQUEZ (HONEY)

STAGE MANAGER.....SOFIA DEL CUETO PERÉZ

MULTIMEDIA DESIGNER.....NAT ORDOÑEZ

SOUND DESIGNER.....ALEXANDER TARRADELL

SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR.....PAOLA ESTERAS

DHANI SHANTI



CAST BIOS

ANNETTE RODRIGUEZ

(CARMEN)



Annette Rodriguez (Carmen) is a Miami-based performer who earned her BFA in Music Theatre from New World School of the Arts in 2021. Her past performance credits include Oliver! (Widow Corney), The Little Mermaid (Scuttle), Beauty and the Beast (Silly Girl), In the Heights (Carla), Annie (Lily St. Regis/Star-to-Be), and The Polar Express (Steward). As a Cuban-American artist, Annette is especially excited to be part of La Botánica, a production that celebrates Latiné stories, culture, and community. She would like to thank her family and friends for their constant love and support, with a special thank-you to her boyfriend, Ernesto, for being by her side throughout this process.

CRISTINA PLA-GUZMAN

(ESPERANZA)



Cristina Marie Pla-Guzman is a performer, director, playwright, theatre journalist, and award-winning theatre educator. She has dedicated more than 23 years to theatre education and has received national honors for her work in theatre education, including recognition from the Tony Awards and Carnegie Mellon University, the Educational Theatre Association, The ASCAP Foundation and Stephen Schwartz, and the Kennedy Center and Stephen Sondheim. She is a member of the American Theatre Critics Association, a Theatre Communications Group Rising Leader of Color for Theatre Journalism, a contributor to American Theatre Magazine and a fellow of the Eugene O'Neill Theater Center's National Critics Institute. She is thrilled to perform in the premier of La Botanica and is grateful to her husband and daughters' for their support.

CAST BIOS

BRIAN ESPINOSA

(MYSTERIOUS MAN)



Brian Espinoza born in The Bronx NY, is an F.I.U BFA acting graduate who has spent some time in Atlanta pursuing the craft. Brian is extremely excited to bring La Botanica to life and get the opportunity to explore realistic themes that La Botanica is sure to make the audience come to terms with.

LUCÍA VÁZQUEZ GUERRA

(TOUR GUIDE)



Lucía Vázquez Guerra is a Cuban American artist born and raised in Miami, FL. They recently graduated from Ball State University where they got their BFA in Musical Theatre and BA in Spanish. They have been a part of countless productions, some of their favorites being Lucy the Slut & Others (Avenue Q), Ama (Ama. Egg. Oyá), René Rivera & Others (Sonnets for an Old Century), and Nurse (Medea). Lucía is so excited to go on this eSpOoOoky journey with this cast and crew. Miles de gracias a mi familia querida. Luciavazquezguerra.carrd.co.

CREW BIOS

ALEX GONZALEZ
(DIRECTOR/PLAYWRIGHT)



Alex Gonzalez is a Cuban-American director dedicated to creating collaborative spaces where bold, authentic storytelling can flourish. He is the founding Artistic Director of Latiné Theater Lab, a company committed to uplifting Latiné voices and making theater more accessible to diverse communities. Favorite credits include Eurydice (Director), Reefer Madness (Director/Choreographer), and Aida (Director/Choreographer). With a background in arts education, human resources, and leadership, Alex brings a unique blend of creative vision, strategic thinking, and community-building to every project. He would like to thank his husband, Patrick, for always supporting him and championing his dreams.

GIAN ARELLANO
(PLAYWRIGHT)



Gian Arellano is a queer, Latino playwright and performer, as well as an alumni of the University of Central Florida with a degree in Theatre Studies and two English minors. While Artistic Director of UCF's developmental student-theatre RSO, Project Spotlight, Gian's full-length play Race to Infinity was performed at the Dr. Phillips Center of Downtown Orlando as part of UCF Celebrates the Arts '23. Just two months after graduation, his play, MILK, premiered at the Renaissance Theatre Company, marking his "auspicious debut" in the professional theatre scene (via Matthew Palm, Orlando Sentinel), and he made his fringe debut last summer with The Last Bear. Most recently, he has been on the writing team for Nosferatu three years in a row, the Ren's annual immersive vampire show. He also made his Fringe performance debut this past summer in It's Alive! Live, which won the Weird Award and the Outstanding Specialty Show Award.

CREW BIOS

SOFÍA DEL CUETO PÉREZ

(STAGE MANAGER)



Sofía del Cueto Pérez is a freelance Stage Manager with a Bachelor's Degree from Florida State University. She has previously worked as an ASM for Seminole Theatre, Pompano Beach Cultural Center, & spent a summer as one for the Illinois Shakespeare Festival. As an SM, she has worked with UM Theatre Arts, New Wave Theatre & Fiol Studio. In the last year, one of her most engaging opportunities was working with Coconut Grove Theatre Festival as their PSM. With Latine Theatre, she is excited to further reach the South Florida theatre community with this evocative immersive work.

ALEXANDER TARRADELL

(SOUND DESIGNER)



Alex Tarradell is a Miami-born theatre designer, technician, and visionary. He's a recent graduate of FIU Theatre. Local theatres he's collaborated with include Main Street Players, Gablestage, and Lakehouseranchdotpng. He's excited for you all to experience a piece of theatre that is suspenseful, thrilling, and frightening. He'd like to thank his parents, his colleagues, and his lovely fiancé Julian.

CREW BIOS

NAT ORDONEZ

(MULTIMEDIA DESIGN & SOCIAL MEDIA LEAD)



Nat is a Miami born and raised latina artist with Guatemalan roots, and a love for storytelling. Throughout the years, she has gained a variety of skills in multiple aspects of theatre in formal educational settings, and received her Bachelor in Fine Arts from Florida International University. Her passion for the arts and constant desire to create has shaped her to be the "Jack of all Trades" she is today. Outside of theatre, her professions include photography and content creation for events (you can find her work at natordonez.com and @natrdnz on IG). She would like to thank “Mr. G” for giving her the opportunity to work with a company that represents her and amplifies the voices of the Latiné community!

JANILEY MARQUEZ (HONEY)

(SPIRITUAL DRAMATURG)



I’m Honey, a tarot reader and spiritual practitioner with over 20 years of experience. I’m so excited to be the Spiritual Dramaturg for Botánica. Working on this production has been an amazing experience that has helped me reconnect with my Cuban roots. I’ve truly loved working with the wonderful people behind this show. I hope audiences leave feeling connected to the beauty and depth of our spiritual traditions.

CREW BIOS

PAOLA ESTERAS

(SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR)



Born and raised in Puerto Rico while based in Miami, FL has been enriching with collaboration. I am an actor that loves to use my body to tell stories with or without words. With a BFA in Performance from FIU, working on and off stage, and creating movement compositions on my spare time. Some of my themes include generational curses and a sense of wonder. I'm excited for audiences to step into a different world from our day to day.

DHANI SHANTI

(SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR)



Dhani Shanti is a current Interior Architecture student at Florida International University. He is also an artist who practices graphic design, social media curation, illustration, theatrical design, printmaking, film production design, sewing, and more! Their work is meant to bring fun into the world through the use of bold colors, eye-catching shapes, and striking layouts while also addressing topics and communities that are often left out. They are excited to help the amazing team tell a captivating story!

THANK YOU

Andrew Rodriguez- Triana
Angela Walker
Chloe Baxendale
Hailey Marquez
Josh Davis
Kathryn Garcia
Luka Gotsiridze
Nicole Perry
Patrick Salmasi
Sofia Gonzalez

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El VIP Giving Club

Love what you see tonight? Help us keep making it. El VIP is our monthly giving program, starting at just $5 a month, designed so that anyone can be a philanthropist. Your support compounds with our whole communities to keep Latiné stories alive in South Florida — and we take care of our members in return.

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Give Miami Day: November 14-19

Consider giving during Miami's biggest giving day! Every gift to Latiné Theater Lab is superpowered by matching funds and bonus dollars, so even a small donation goes further than it ever could on any other day of the year. Early giving opens November 14 and runs through Give Miami Day on November 19.

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