



# Adrienne Arsht Center

FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS OF MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

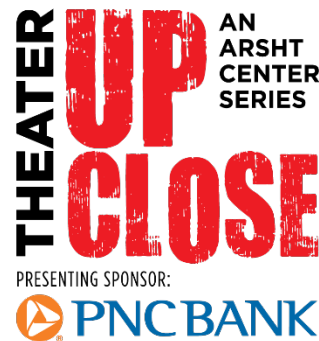
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**Zoetic Stage and the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County Present**



## #GRACED

By Vanessa Garcia

Directed by Sarah Hughes and Victoria Collado

**WORLD PREMIERE!**

In collaboration with Abre Camino Collective

May 4, 2023 – Preview

May 5, 2023 – Opening Night  
through May 21, 2023

Tickets: \$55, \$60\*

Carnival Studio Theater – Ziff Ballet Opera House

Part of the 2022-2023 Theater Up Close series

**Miami, FL – April 21, 2023** – Zoetic Stage ([@ZoeticStageMIA](https://www.instagram.com/ZoeticStageMIA)) and the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County ([@arshtcenter](https://www.instagram.com/arshtcenter)) proudly present the world premiere of **#GRACED** by Vanessa Garcia ([@vanessagarciawriter](https://www.instagram.com/vanessagarciawriter)), in collaboration with Abre Camino Collective ([@abrecaminocollective](https://www.instagram.com/abrecaminocollective)). **#GRACED** runs from May 4-21, 2023 and is part of the Arsht Center's Theater Up Close series presented by PNC Bank.



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Tickets to **#GRACED** are \$55 and \$60\*. Tickets may be purchased at the Adrienne Arsht Center box office by calling (305) 949-6722, or online at [arshtcenter.org](https://www.arshtcenter.org).

Catherine is searching for something authentic as she embarks on a "Lewis-and-Clark-esque" trip across America sponsored by Monteverde Moonshine with her new lover and colleague, Lewis. Along the way, they pick up a wayward nun named Rosalie who has just gone through deep loss, meet a queer homeschooled teenager named Blake and rummage through the layers of migration and gender inequity that make up America. As Catherine travels, she comes to more questions than answers about "the real America," her own identity and what authenticity even means anymore.

PNC Bank is the presenting sponsor of the 2022-2023 **THEATER UP CLOSE** series and WLRN is the media sponsor. The Arsht Center's **THEATER UP CLOSE** series gratefully acknowledges the founding support of Adrienne and Jerry L. Cohen. Funding Arts Network is a supporter of Zoetic Stage.

**#GRACED** was developed with Thinking Cap Theatre, WP Theater, South Florida Theater League, and the Playwright Development program of Miami Dade Cultural Affairs. Thanks to a grant from BOLD Ventures, development toward the production culminated in NYC in December 2022 at WP Theater.

"America (prior to the 2016 election) and my life felt like it was both going through a breaking point that could either tear it up for good or lead to a new light," says playwright Vanessa Garcia. "Even the Nobel Prize Committee was leery of what American art had to offer," she continued. "What the world sees as America isn't the real America, or rather, only just a part of it," she concluded.

"Vanessa Garcia is a playwright of this moment and tomorrow. She is unafraid of colliding worlds & styles to create something abundantly fresh, vivid and intrinsically her own. *#Graced* is a beautiful example of Garcia's muscular approach in creating a play dynamic in reach, funny in approach and deeply relatable in result. Zoetic Stage is very honored to present Vanessa's world premiere of *#Graced* to the community of South Florida," says Stuart Meltzer, Founding Artistic Director of Zoetic Stage.

**#GRACED** features an all-local cast and stars **Melissa Almaguer** as Catherine; **Christopher Anthony Ferrer** as Lewis; **Dalia Alemán** as Rosalie; **Sabrín Diehl** as Blake; **Kristian Bikic** as Gianni; and **Lucy Lopez** as Abby, Marty, Lulu Lemon. For complete cast bios, click [here](#).

## **ABOUT THE WRITER AND CO-DIRECTORS**

**Vanessa Garcia** (Writer/Producer) is a Cuban-American multidisciplinary writer -- screenwriter, playwright, novelist, and journalist/essayist -- who has written and worked for Sesame Street, Caillou, We Are Family, and Dora the Explorer. She's the author of the novel, *White Light*, which won an International Latino Book Award and was one of NPR's best books of 2015. Her first Picture Book for children, *What the Bread Says*, launched October 2022. Theatrically, her work has been produced around the world. She's the author of *The Amparo Experience*, an immersive hit that People en Español called



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"Miami's Hottest Ticket." Other plays include: *Sweet Goats & Blueberry Señoritas*, which she co-wrote with Richard Blanco, and *#Graced*. As well as her radio play, *Ich Bin Ein Berliner*, about the fall of the Berlin Wall and what it meant to her. Her journalism, essays and thought pieces have appeared in *The LA Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Washington Post*, *National Review*, *ESPN*, *The Hill*, *Catapult*, *Narrativel.ly*, and numerous other publications. [www.vanessagarcia.org](http://www.vanessagarcia.org)

**Victoria Collado** (Co-Director/Producer) is a Cuban-American director creating exciting and adventurous storytelling experiences on-stage, on-screen, and in your ears! Named Best Director of 2020 by the *Miami New Times*, Collado is well-known for her direction of the hit immersive theatre piece, *The Amparo Experience* written by Vanessa Garcia, which had a sold out 8-month run and named "Miami's Hottest Ticket" by *People en Español*. She also directed the Inaugural Anthem Award-winning digital piece *Black Feminist Video Game* written by Darrel Alejandro Holnes. Most recently in her film, Victoria directed the Social Media version of *The Amparo Experience* (@theamparoexperience) which was an honoree of the Webby Awards in 2021 and is currently working on multiple documentaries; one of which is based on the life of legendary actor, Ruben Rabasa. Victoria has directed for Repertorio Español, GableStage, WP Theatre, *The Civilians*, *Miami New Drama*, *MCC Youth Company*, *Sheen Center*, *IATI theatre*, *Microteatro Miami*, *Columbia University* and others. Her production *El Burlador de Sevilla* received various nominations from the ACE awards, and won for Outstanding Ensemble. She was a Van Lier Directing Fellow with Repertorio Español, part of the Directing Corps in the *Williamstown Theatre Festival*, and a recipient of the SDCF Observership. She was also a fellow a fellow of the WP Theater's 2018-2020 Lab. Victoria was the assistant director to Tony Taccone in the Tony-Award Nominated *Latin History For Morons on Broadway* by John Leguizamo. [www.victoriacollado.com](http://www.victoriacollado.com)

**Sarah Hughes** (Co-Director) is a New York-based director of new plays, radical adaptations, and devised work focusing on highly collaborative, genre-expanding, innately theatrical projects. Recent work includes the site-specific premiere of *Galatea* by MJ Kaufman in Brooklyn Bridge Park and the audioplay *His Chest Is Only Skeleton* by Julia Izumi for Playwrights Horizons. Sarah is an Affiliated Artist of *New Georges* and *Target Margin Theater*, was a longtime member of NYC ensemble company *Elevator Repair Service*, and teaches at *Purchase College*, *Dartmouth College*, and *NYU*. As Director of Artistic Programming at *Theatre Row*, she created and led the *Kitchen Sink Residency* for new work development. 2023 SDC Barbara Whitman Award Finalist, 2022 Mercury Store Directing Resident, 2019-2020 NNPN/O'Neill National Directors Fellow, 2018-2020 WP Theater Directing Lab Member, 2018 Clubbed Thumb Directing Fellow. Upcoming: *A Woman Among Women* by Julia May Jonas (*The Bushwick Starr/New Georges*), *Lemons* by Sarah Todes (*Neon Caviar*). [www.sarahcameronhughes.com](http://www.sarahcameronhughes.com)



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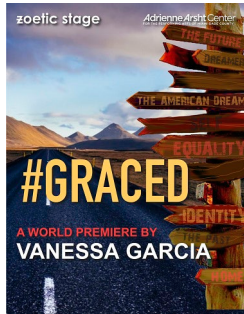


Image of #GRACED – Courtesy  
Adrienne Arsht Center



Image of Vanessa Garcia – Photo  
by Chris Headshots

To download high-resolutions versions of the photos above and cast headshots, click [here](#).

[@ArshtCenter](#)

#ArshtCenter

[@GracedPlay](#)

\*All programs, artists, ticket prices, availability, dates and times are subject to change without notice. Visit [arshtcenter.org](http://arshtcenter.org) for up-to-date information.

*The Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County is made possible by the public support of the Miami-Dade County Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners, the Miami-Dade County Department of Cultural Affairs and the Cultural Affairs Council, the Miami-Dade County Tourist Development Council and the City of Miami Omni Community Redevelopment Agency, as well as the State of Florida, Department of State, Division of Arts and Culture and the Florida Council on Arts and Culture. The Adrienne Arsht Center also receives generous support from individuals, corporations and local, state and national foundations.*

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## AboutUs

Set in the heart of downtown Miami, the Adrienne Arsht Center for the Performing Arts of Miami-Dade County is committed to welcoming and connecting ALL people to the arts, to the Arsht Center and to each other. Our stages are alive year-round with artists from around the world, innovative programming from our resident companies and local arts partners, free community events that reflect Miami's unique identity and arts education experiences for thousands of Miami children each year.

Since opening in 2006, the Arsht Center, a 501C3 non-profit organization, has been recognized as a catalyst for billions of dollars in new development in the downtown area, a leader in programming that mirrors South Florida's diversity, a host venue for historic events and Miami's hub for arts education.



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Each year, we serve more than 60,000 young learners and offer more than 100 culturally diverse and inclusive education programs — many enhanced by the Arsht Center's relationship with Miami-Dade County Public Schools, local teaching artists and Miami-based arts organizations.

The Arsht Center is also a home stage for three resident companies — Florida Grand Opera, Miami City Ballet and New World Symphony — and a launch pad for local artists to make their mark on the international stage. Our 300+ events each year include the Center's Signature Series of classical, jazz, Broadway, local theater and much more. We present a robust series of touring Broadway musicals direct from New York, the largest jazz series in South Florida, a major annual Flamenco Festival and an award-winning Miami-based theater program. In addition, our Family Fest, Free Gospel Sundays, CommuniTEA LGBTQ+ celebration and Heritage Fest are among dozens of free events that bring together people from all corners of our community. For more information, visit [arshtcenter.org](http://arshtcenter.org).

## **About Zoetic Stage**

Zoetic Stage was founded in 2010 to create fresh, bold interpretations of contemporary plays and musicals, and is dedicated to enhancing South Florida's national artistic profile by producing regional premieres and developing new works to become part of the American stage repertoire.

In 2020, Zoetic Stage was named the Best Theater Company by the *Miami New Times*. The theater has been nominated for an impressive 120 Carbonell Awards (of which 15 were for Best Production of the Year) and won 42, including six for Best New Work and four for Best Production of a Play or Musical. Zoetic Stage productions have received over 30 Silver Palm Awards for Outstanding Achievement.

Zoetic Stage is an Associate Member of the National New Play Network, a member of Theatre Communications Group and the South Florida Theater League.

Visit [www.zoeticstage.org](http://www.zoeticstage.org) for more information.

## **About Abre Camino Collective**

Abre Camino Collective (ACC) is an award-winning entertainment company comprised of visual, theatre, literary, and performing artists redefining the American narrative through radical storytelling. Together as artists and collaborators, Victoria Collado and **Vanessa Garcia**, co-founders of Abre Camino, have worked in theatre, TV, journalism, the visual arts, academia, radio, the literary arts, and film. They have master's degrees, doctorates, and have worked on Broadway. Most recently, they created *The Amparo Experience*, the immersive hit play that *People en Español* called "Miami's Hottest Ticket" and had a sold-out 8 month run in 2019. Abre Camino has received numerous residencies and honors including Berkeley Rep's Ground Floor, The Wassaic Project Residence, The Orchard Project, and the Sanctuary of the Arts in Miami. In February 2023, ACC is receiving the inaugural George Cabrera Award (which is given to those who show excellence in the arts in the Miami community). It is presented by the 4ward organization. For more information on Abre Camino Collective, visit [here](#).