

Chapter 1 : Maria Irene Fornes Marathon - The Rest I Make Up

María Irene Fornés (May 14, - October 30,) was a Cuban-American avant garde playwright and director, who was a leading figure of the off-off-Broadway movement in the s. Always an iconoclast, each of Fornés's plays was its own world, all vastly different from each other.

How great the gift to have been in the presence of, taught and befriended by this extraordinary artist. Irene came into my life at the moment when I was most lost as a writer. She facilitated a journey for me that reminded me there was no writer to become, only to be the writer that I was. To listen to the sound of my own voice, to nurture it, to allow it to express itself. The three hours in workshop every day were not enough. It was those minutes afterward, when she still had her mother by her side, and she would speak to me in Spanish will I ever hear my name, Luisito, the same way again? And I always wondered if she was speaking in generalities or directly to me. The last time I brought Irene out to L. I tell the story of the morning I get a call from the hotel in Pasadena, where I had put her up, informing me that Irene had checked out. Roaring down the freeway, in tears, afraid of where she might be, this person who for a time had become a second mother to me, a mentor, the amazing teacher and artist that she was. And I am racing through the hotel looking for her. I find her out next to the pool, standing with her little suitcase, fully dressed, with hat and coat on, waiting. She looked like one of her paintings. I am the one deep in feelings. I tell her that she is scheduled to teach a workshop later and I am wondering if she can do it. For many of us, people who had been in workshop with her, it was the last session with Irene. I drove everyone to the airport the next day. We all hugged goodbye and Irene reaches up to kiss me and holds on to my face with both hands and looks deep into my eyes. Maria Alexandria Beech When the bus carrying Mexican and Latinx writers emptied in front of the Teotihuacan pyramid, two of us remained, a woman in her sixties and me. Much older than me, she was affable and relaxed in her smooth, freckled skin. Later as we checked into our hotel rooms, we smiled as we looked over and realized that our rooms were adjacent to each other. One of us suggested meeting for dinner and after dinner, we hung around the bar drinking tequila. She was a playwright and I was a Columbia student with ambitions of being a fiction writer. I was there to study under novelist Cristina Garcia. She was there to teach a playwriting workshop. Both countries are former Spanish colonies on the Caribbean so our people chatter in a fast Spanish that permuted on the trading ships that travelled on the sea. In the days leading to the workshops, we became friends. I had never heard her name but within days, I gleaned that she was a big deal. One student had been promised an A in a class if she shared o meal with her and wrote about it. Other students deferred to her during meals, laughing at her jokes and hanging on her every word. While she enjoyed the attention, she seemed to appreciate that she had found a Latin American friend who treated her like a regular person. She told me her life story, including what brought her as a young painter from Cuba to the US. She told me about her failures as a secretary and her challenges finding teachings gigs at universities in New York. Some interviews were conducted by famous assholes. She still sounded hurt by it all. We were drinking tequila a night or two before the workshops began when she said: By then, I was taken by her storytelling, by the hypnotizing movement of her arms and fingers as she spoke, each word deliberately chosen and spoken. She was a master. For many Latin immigrants, English is a language we acquire a survival skill! A second language requires a new persona and identity based on the culture attached to the language. So when we meet others who speak Spanish, we are that child who still trusts, that mother who scolds and advises, that grandmother who loves and nurtures. And so I took her workshop and learned to write plays from the inside out instead of from the outside in. I learned to detach my characters from myself so that they were separate people whose words I was simply transcribing though I had the privilege of imbuing their thoughts with poetry. I learned to create entire humans from scratch, instead of fragments and caricatures. I learned to trust that if I knew what happened at the beginning, the middle and end would reveal itself eventually. I learned to write plays. I just find characters who have something to say to each other. Her skin was thin like rice paper. Later, she told me that she wanted me to return to Columbia and ask her former pupil, Eduardo Machado, to continue teaching me to write plays. When I returned to New York, I called her. We met in the West Village at

a coffee shop and chatted. I noticed that she had forgotten little details that we had discussed in Mexico but thought nothing of it. I had an urgent need to tell her how much she had changed my life, to thank her for teaching me to make humans which was essentially like making fire. She had taught me creation: I cannot describe how I loved her for that. She was almost a deity. I returned to Columbia with its rigors and lost touch with her. A few years later I asked a friend to drive me to her, my heart beating with every hour that we drew closer. When we finally arrived at the nursing facility, we were told that a flu outbreak would prevent us from seeing her. Still, the drive reminded me how much I loved her and appreciated what she had taught me. Often, I brought friends to meet her. Once we celebrated her birthday. My best friend played the keyboard and another young actor played the guitar. She was animated and happy. She clapped and sang the chorus of Cielito Lindo. During those times, I just held her hand and her eyes remained closed. It was then that I realized that she knew, a part of her knew, that I was there. I owe her everything. I owe my playwriting and screenwriting to her. I owe my commitment to my own version of events to her. I owe my zest for living and curiosity to her. She left her family behind to be an artist in New York. And so I write these words grateful that she was my teacher. Theater is the stuff of gods. I can honestly say that I met one and that we became friends. Ahora si que puedes descansar en paz. Poem I learned upon hearing of her death It was a long night Like a tumultuous sea.

Chapter 2 : Forn s, Mar a Irene | www.nxgvision.com

Maria Irene Forn s, (born May 14, , Havana, Cuba died October 30, , New York, New York, U.S.), Cuban-born American www.nxgvision.com family moved to the United States in , and she became a painter before beginning to write plays in the early s.

As she recalled in a interview that appeared in the New York Times, "We had no means of support in Cuba. We came here for economic reasons. It might not be ideal, but you can work here and earn a living. When we came here, there was no sadness whatsoever. My mother loved it. I thought I was in a Hollywood movie. Tiring of this rather quickly, she enrolled in English-language courses and eventually found work as a translator. She also worked as a doll maker before she turned her energies to painting, and spent three years in Europe. Her first experiences with the theater came in the late s, when she found work as a costume designer for two local theater and performance groups. She won a John Hay Whitney Foundation fellowship soon afterward that enabled her to devote her time to writing more works for the stage, Her next work was *Tango Palace* in , a chronicle of the battles between two male lovers before one slays the other in a bullfight. It was followed by a musical, *Promenade*, a comic tale of two prison escapees who return to their cells, dissatisfied with the chaos of life on the outside. *Kheal* was the first of her plays to be seen by a London audience, a solo show in which the eccentric title character expounds his views about the origins of the universe. Critics liked the Surrealist elements in her style, a legacy of her previous career as a painter. *Molly* is a saloon waitress whose shift is interrupted by dream sequences of herself as s actress Marlene Dietrich. It was home to the debut of another enduring work of hers, *Fefu and Her Friends*. The ensemble piece is set in in a New England home at which eight friends have gathered. She continued to produce new works regularly, such as the *The Danube* from , another favorite of fans of her work. The story is set in Budapest in , and follows the doomed romance between a Hungarian woman and American man. Near the end, they come down with mysterious skin spots possibly a reference to Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome AIDS  and the play ends with a blast that might be nuclear. She followed it with *Mud*, another tale of a trio of lovers. Its lead, Mae, is dispirited by her humdrum life in a small, Middle America town, and spurns one lover for another man; both prove slow-witted and abusive, however. Another one of her better-known works, the story follows a brutal Latin American army officer whose wife believes his job may be to torture political dissidents. He mistreats her and enslaves a year-old girl in their basement. After seeing a New Orleans revival of it, American Theatre critic Nicole LaPorte found that its "scenes flow into one another like drifting thoughts. Yet amid these ambiguous spaces, the relations between the women in the play come vividly alive in a melding of realism and idealism that gives the play its force. Theater in the Present Tense a work by Diane Moroff. No major playwright who has lasted so long can make the same claim. Both are obsessed with the play, re-reading its scenes and delving into the characters. Two female friends struggle to convince him otherwise. Elsewhere, on a rooftop in Cuba, her brother Luis reads her letters and also rues the political quagmire that separates their family. Rafael is the oldest and I am the youngest of six brothers and sisters. In the play, he is called Luis. I guess in some ways I have wanted to write about Cuba but I did not know exactly how. Otherwise, she told the Advocate, "people put claims on you and expect things of you. Books Contemporary Dramatists, sixth edition, St. Dictionary of Hispanic Biography, Gale, International Dictionary of Theater, Volume 2: Periodicals Advocate, May 26, ; November 9, American Theatre, September Nation, April 6, ; April 23, Variety, October 11, ; March 6, Cite this article Pick a style below, and copy the text for your bibliography.

Chapter 3 : Maria Irene Fornes Biography - www.nxgvision.com

News about Maria Irene Fornes. Commentary and archival information about Maria Irene Fornes from The New York Times.

Irene has two older sisters, Margarita and Carmencita, and three older brothers, Rafael noted cartoonist , Hector and Raul. She became a U. Dissatisfied, she took classes to learn English and became a translator. At the age of 19, she became interested in painting and began her formal education in abstract art, studying with Hans Hofmann in New York City and Provincetown, Massachusetts. They became lovers, and she moved to Paris to live with Sohmers and study painting. This was the moment when she realized the powerful impact that theater could have, but she did not actually start writing until the early s. In a Village Voice profile, Ross Wetzsteon recounts how on a Saturday night in the spring of , Fornes and the writer Susan Sontag were hanging out in Greenwich Village looking for a party. When Sontag voiced frustration about a novel she wanted to write, Fornes insisted that they give up their evening plans, go back to the apartment they shared, sit down at the kitchen table, and just set to work. When they got home, as if to prove how simple it was, Fornes sat down to write, as well. With no experience and no idea how to start, she opened up a cookbook at random and started a short story using the first word of each sentence on the page. She turned the letters into a play called *La Viuda The Widow* , which was never translated into English, but it was presented in Spanish in New York. Isidore, a clown, and Leopold, a naive youth. Like much of her writing, *Tango Palace* stresses character rather than plot. Four sets a lawn, a study, a bedroom, and a kitchen are used in Act II. The audience is divided into groups to watch each scene, then rotated to the next set; the scenes repeat until each group has seen all four scenes. A lot of people have said to me about "Mud" and "Sarita" that they like it, they feel very much, but they feel at the very end there is a hole. The piece also explores the way the mind experiences poverty and isolation. The play focuses on a young Cuban dancer living in New York who corresponds with her brother in Cuba. *Letters From Cuba*, too, earned an Obie. She received an honorary doctor of letters degree from Bates College in

Chapter 4 : Maria Irene Fornes, Writer of Spare, Poetic Plays, Dies at 88 | KwK Media

From left, playwrights Arthur Miller, John Guare, Maria Irene Fornes, Edward Albee and Horton Foote before a roundtable discussion at the Signature Theater Company in

Plot[edit] *Fefu and her Friends* is set in New England in the spring of The play is split into three parts. Part 2 is set in four different areas of the house: The audience is divided into groups to watch each scene, then they rotate to the next set, as the scene is repeated until each group has seen all four scenes. Each character plays a role in this event. Before and after their rehearsal, the women interact with one another, and with male characters, and share their thoughts and feelings about life along with their personal struggles and societal concerns. Fefu originally played by Rebecca Schull [1] is the main character who has many male characteristics. She struggles against her femininity with her relationship with her off-stage husband, Phillip. Her biggest scene is during Part 3 in her confession with Julia. Fefu states, " I need him Julia. I need his touch. I need his kiss. I need the person he is I am frightened and I am overbearing. In the end, she shoots and kills a rabbit. At the same time, the shot affects her friend Julia, who mysteriously dies from a head wound. Cindy originally played by Gwendolyn Brown [1] is one of the first characters introduced in the country house. She was present when Julia was paralyzed the day a hunter almost shot her a year prior. The majority of her actions are with her friend, Christina including their conversation together in the study of Part 2. In this act, Cindy describes a dream she had of taking control while a young doctor attempted to fondle her. Her character appears disturbed and confused by the actions of Fefu and must suck on an ice cube with Bourbon to relax. She practices her French with Cindy in Part 2. She became unconscious when a hunter shot a deer that was in the same area she was. She had convulsions and suffered a concussion with a bleeding wound on her forehead. Julia does have scar in her brain called petit mal that causes her to blank out. Julia has her own scene in Part 2 of the bedroom where she has mild hallucinations. Julia states, "If a man commits an evil act, he must be pitied. The evil comes from outside him, through him and into the act. Woman generates the evil herself. It is revealed that Julia can walk when she chooses to. She adds humor to the play as well with her antics. In Part 2, she has a conversation with Fefu about genitals and why people act as if genitals are not there. Her character also recites poems in the play. Her main lines occur during part 2 in the kitchen. She has a conversation with Sue on love affairs and how long they last. Sue exits with a tray of Bourbon ice cubes and Cecilia Johnson enters. At first the conversation is awkward and then it is revealed that the two have an old romantic relationship together. She has minor conversations with Julia and Paula and appears as the helpful friend. She tries to give Julia her soup in Part 2 and gives Paula advice in Part 2. She had a romantic relationship with Paula and has intimate moments with her throughout the play. She exits the play after the rehearsal is finished. Her use of the gun and her overall organization of the rehearsal for the play places the other characters in positions of submission. Fefu has two sides according to Kelda Lynn Jordan- the controlling trait and the motherly trait. Jordan also comments on the meek stereotypical weakness of the other characters such as Paula, Sue, Christina, and Cindy. The only woman who stands against Fefu is Julia and this makes Fefu more aggressive toward her, leading her to kill the rabbit that symbolizes her loss of power and control. The groups of spectators rotate until they have seen all four scenes. Any interactions with male characters are done offstage and no established male characters are seen to portray how women behave when not in the presence of men. Women who step too far outside of the boundaries that society has set for them are considered to be overly aggressive, and take on traits that are generally considered to be those of a man, and the women who possess these traits find that they are perceived as having these traits in excess, simply because the traits are exhibited at all. He says that all women have been constrained in life choices to some extent. Fefu is imprisoned in her unhappy marriage, and because she is a woman, she does not possess the power to escape it, and is beginning to slide deeper into depression. Paula recently was left by Cecilia, her lover, and Cindy broke up with a man. Julia received emotional trauma when a deer was shot, suffered convulsions, and is now paralyzed. Julia symbolizes how the other women are trapped in their own way. Almuth Fricke has translated the work into German.

Chapter 5 : Maria Irene Fornes (Signature Theatre's Legacy Program)

This article was originally developed as a monograph for Chance magazine.. Maria Irene Fornes's work creates worlds onstage, not just through her play's texts but through her acutely tuned sense of design.

Chapter 6 : Chicago Tribune - We are currently unavailable in your region

Rest in Power, Maria Irene Fornes, Playwright and Maestra. Maria Alexandria Beech When the bus carrying Mexican and Latinx writers emptied in front of the Teotihuacan pyramid, two of us remained, a woman in her sixties and me.

Chapter 7 : María Irene Fornés - MuckRock

Maria Irene Fornes was born in Havana, Cuba, in She immigrated with her family to the United States in and was naturalized in From to , she studied painting in Europe.

Chapter 8 : María Irene Fornés - Wikipedia

María Irene Fornés (May 14, - October 30,) was a Cuban-American avant garde playwright and director, who was a leading figure of the off-off-Broadway movement in the s. Fornés was born in Havana, Cuba, and immigrated to the United States at the age of 15, with her mother, Carmen.

Chapter 9 : María Irene Fornés |

Playwright and teacher Maria Irene Fornés died on Oct. 30 at the age of 88, leaving a legacy that includes the plays Maria Irene Fornes Post navigation.