

Bringing the Story to Life

THE STORYTELLER'S TOOLBOX

In a storytelling style of performance, you won't see a lot of scenery or costumes. But as long as you bring your imagination, a good storyteller like David can single-handedly bring to life all the characters and their actions and emotions. Watch for how he uses changes in his voice, movements, and facial expressions—a storyteller's main tools—to portray Pablito and his family and everything that happens in the story.



THE SOUNDS OF THE STORY

Music plays an important role in this story, too. Pablito sometimes sings and plays guitar to express feelings, like joy after he calls his dad. Pablito also learns about his Cuban heritage from the guitar. You'll also hear live music by composer and musician Daniel Kelly featuring beats and styles (like funk and rock) that were popular in the 1970s. During the performance, listen for sound effects and some recorded Cuban music.

PLAYING WITH TIME

To tell this story, David sometimes stops time! Well, not exactly, but David uses two ways to show Pablito's feelings and why the character acts a certain way:

- dream sequences, where time "stops" and you hear Pablito say out loud what he imagines in his head
- flashbacks, where the storytelling goes back to a past event to explain what is happening in the present

During the performance, watch and listen for clues for dream sequences and flashbacks.



A Few More Things

MEET DAVID

David Gonzalez is an award-winning master storyteller and also a poet, actor, musician, writer, and music therapist who has performed for audiences worldwide. In creating *Man of the House*, he wanted to explore how people begin to understand their heritage, using his own experience searching for his Cuban father.

YOUR ROLE

Watch for...

- how words, movement, music, video, and lighting help you understand each characters' personalities and feelings
- a wide range of feelings or emotions, including nervousness, anger, happiness, shame, and fear
- how David performs conversations between two characters

Listen for...

- sound effects like ticking clocks and creaking doors
- how music and sound effects signal a flashback
- when Pablito asks to be called Pablo

And remember...

To be a good audience, there are just a few things you need to do:

- turn off and put away your phones and electronics
- turn on your imagination
- stay quiet once the performance begins
- clap at the end!

WHAT ABOUT YOUR STORY?

Try searching your own history for story ideas. To start, David suggests asking yourself:

- Where do you come from?
- How did you learn about your history?
- What questions do you have about your family?

Then start imagining. How might a "pretend you" go into the world to discover more about yourself? Write down your ideas for a story and share them with family and friends, and try performing a short part of it.

PHOTO BY ENID FARBAR

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MAN of the HOUSE

Written and performed by
David Gonzalez

Music by Daniel Kelly

Directed by Karen Jenson

Video Design by
David Gonzalez and Karen Jenson



"Son, I've got to go. Now you are the man of the house."

Pablito never forgot those words from his father. Now it's time to do something about them.

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THE STORY OF A BOY ON A PERSONAL JOURNEY

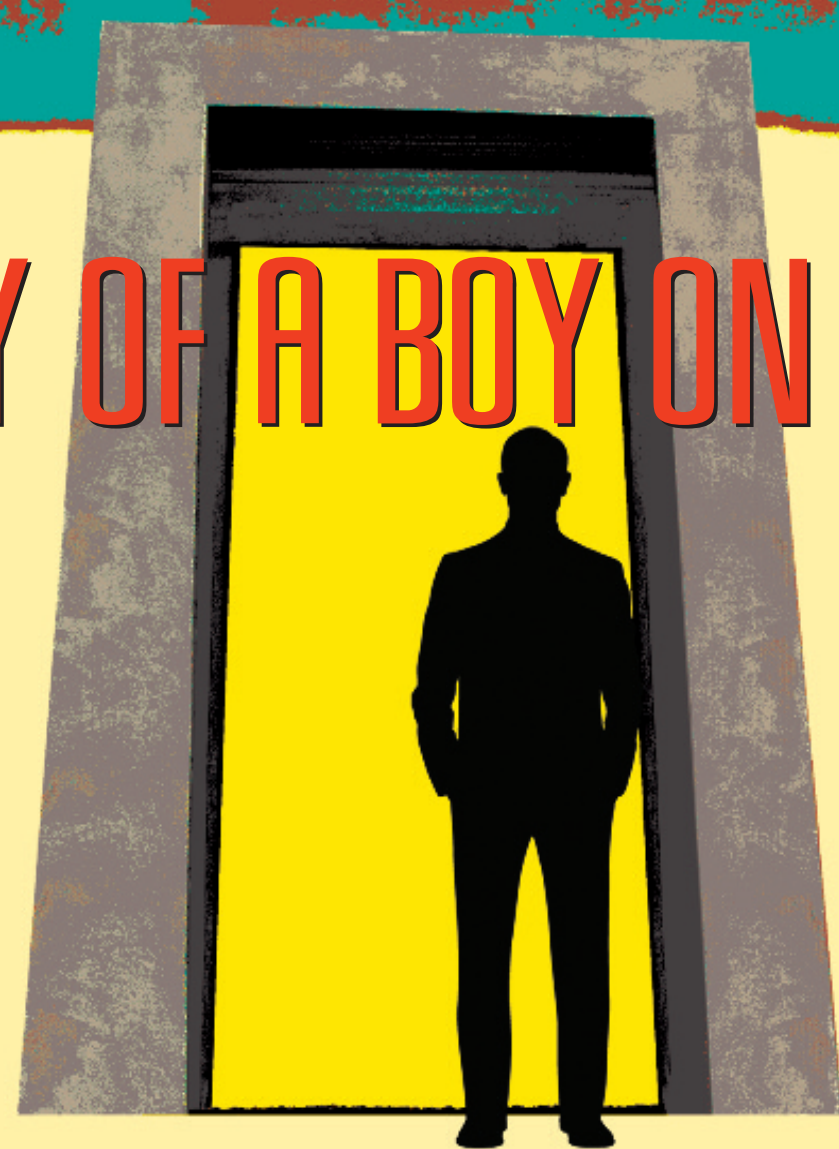
WHAT HAPPENS IN THE STORY

It's the early 1970s, and 13-year-old Pablito has questions. *Where* is his father? *Why* did he abandon Pablito and his mother six years ago in New York City? *Who* is this man from Cuba?

Now Pablito is ready to find the answers. Visiting his aunt in Miami, Pablito gets his big break when he tracks down his dad's phone number. Once he calls, both father and son begin a sometimes funny and often difficult journey to learn about each other. Can Pablito truly reconnect with his father and rebuild his family?

ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

Man of the House is Pablito's story...but it also belongs to David Gonzalez. That's because David wrote this play—a story told on stage with video, lights, and objects—based on real events from his own childhood. And such a personal tale comes with a special telling of it. In a storytelling style, David will narrate the story and portray all five characters (yes, it takes a lot of talent). You'll also hear plenty of music and sound effects. And just one more thing—you are the first people to see this brand new show!



THE BIG IDEAS

In following Pablito's journey to learn about his father, the story explores some big ideas, or themes. They include determination and not giving up despite difficulties, understanding and accepting your parents, and growing up. During the performance, make sure to watch and listen for these themes.

BIG SHOES TO FILL

"Son, I've got to go. Now you are the man of the house." These are the words Pablito heard when his father left. The expression, "man of the house," usually refers to the person in charge of things in a family, but it can also mean growing up and becoming aware of who you are and how you affect the world. During the performance, think about why David chose this expression for the title.

CUBA'S CULTURE

Pablito's father comes from Cuba, an island country 90 miles south of Florida's coast in the Caribbean Sea. During the performance, you'll notice a few aspects of Cuba's culture:

Language

In Cuba (like in much of the Caribbean and Central and South America), most people speak Spanish. The Spanish name Pablito is a variation of the name Pablo, which is Spanish for "Paul." Pablito is similar to saying "Little Paul" in English. During the show, other Spanish words are spoken. Don't worry if you don't know them, you'll understand what's happening from David's expressions.

Spirituality

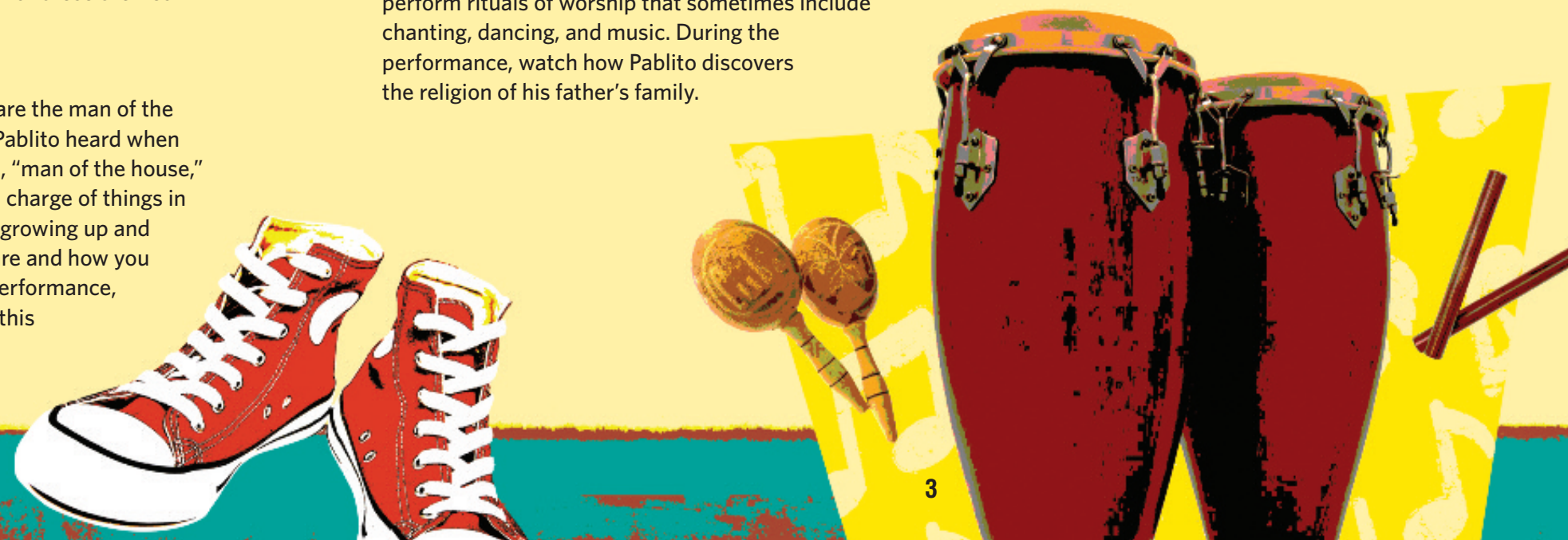
A religion called Santería (pronounced sahn-tuh-ree-uh) began in Cuba when the island's African slaves blended elements of West African religion with the Catholic traditions of Cuba's Spanish colonists. People practicing Santería often have statues of gods and altars for saints in their homes, and they perform rituals of worship that sometimes include chanting, dancing, and music. During the performance, watch how Pablito discovers the religion of his father's family.

Music

Cuba's cultural melting pot also created a distinctive Afro-Cuban musical sound featuring voices and percussion instruments—mostly drums, but other instruments could include sticks and shakers. Afro-Cuban music is performed for pure entertainment as well as in religious services. In the music's percussive sounds you'll hear:

- **polyrhythm**—several different rhythms being played at the same time
- **call-and-response vocals**—a pattern in which one phrase is sung and then "answered" by other participants
- **syncopation**—stressing a note in an unexpected place between beats or on a weak beat
- **improvisation**—adding words or musical phrases spontaneously while performing

During the performance, listen for the Afro-Cuban music playing as Pablito explores his father's house.



Change Comes to Cuba

IN THE STORY, Pablito learns how Cuba's history affected his family. Here's an overview of events you might hear about.

The Revolution

In 1958, Cuba's people rebelled against their unpopular president in what became known as The Revolution. After the president stepped down, rebel commander Fidel Castro (fi-DEL KAS-troh) became Cuba's new leader. Many Cubans thought there would finally be real change and freedom from many years of corrupt leadership and influence by other nations.

Castro, however, made changes that surprised many citizens. For example, he instituted communism (a system of government in which the state owns all a country's resources and divides the nation's wealth among its people). Castro's government took over land and businesses without paying the owners and harshly treated people who protested against the government's policies.

The Exiles

Frustrated with these changes, tens of thousands of Cubans left Cuba by 1963, leaving behind their homes, businesses, and possessions. Many exiles (people living outside their home country) moved to Florida. They remained bitterly angry with Castro's government as they started their lives all over again.

America Worries

At the same time, U.S. leaders grew alarmed at Cuba's friendship with America's enemy the Soviet Union, and they assigned the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA, a U.S. agency that gathers information from outside the United States to help protect national security), to find ways to overthrow Castro. But the CIA efforts failed. To pressure the Cuban government to change, the United States banned trade with the island nation—a practice that continues today.

Revolución