

Explore Florida's Past Lives This Spring

Florida has had many lives. A thousand years ago, our state was home to highly developed Native American civilizations – people who built mounds, grew maize, and crafted exquisite masks, statues, and stories painted on deerskin. Five hundred years ago, La Florida became the site of repeated settlement by Spanish expeditioners – explorers who brought new plants, new animals, new customs, and new stories to the New World with them. Two hundred years ago, Florida was split in two, into East Florida and West Florida, as people from England, France, Spain, and Africa staked competing claims to land, language, and the right to have the Sunshine State tell their story.

This spring, Theater with a Mission (TWAM) and Goodwood Museum & Gardens are creating a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore Florida's past lives. On April 26, 2020, Earth Day celebrations at Goodwood will coincide with the world premiere of TWAM's *Florida for Sale*, where audiences step into history and meet past lives face to face. Earth Day invites you to get hands-on with Goodwood's community garden, learning from experts about the healing properties of heritage plants and the healing power of tending the earth. *Florida for Sale* invites you to interact with fascinating stewards of the earth who shaped Florida's history in 1820, the year that Spain ratified the Florida Treaty, transforming all of Spanish La Florida into US territory.

During Earth Day activities, you can save small appliances from the landfill at the Fix-It shop and savor recipes culled from Florida's Spanish past by culinary experts. You can shape clay into designs developed centuries ago by Native American potters, and get up close and personal with friendly horses who are descended from the steeds brought to our state by Spanish explorers. You can tour Goodwood's lovely grounds, where green thumbs have been beautifying the earth for 200 years. And you can enjoy the fruits of the earth from food trucks celebrating Florida's fusion of Spanish, African, and Native American cuisines.

During *Florida for Sale*, you can meet characters from Florida's past who played pivotal roles in preserving, planting, and scorching the earth. You'll encounter John Quincy Adams and Luis de Onís, the statesmen who negotiated the epoch-making land transfer of Florida from Spain to the USA. You'll hear them describe in their own words the beauties of Florida 200 years ago, and their dreams for the future of our state's tough, resilient people. You'll visit with unforgettable Florida farmers, ranging from Antonio Proctor, who won a 185-acre orange grove from the King of Spain by pacifying Indians, to Anna Kingsley, who worked her way from slavery to prosperity by brilliantly managing Florida plantations which are now national parks. And you'll meet scorchers of the earth, notably Andrew Jackson, whose policy of invading Florida to burn Indian villages scandalized diplomats from Washington to Madrid.

This April, come listen to the earth tell stories of Florida's past. Surf over to www.theaterwithamission.com for more details, and make plans to visit Goodwood Museum & Gardens in Tallahassee on April 26 between noon and 5 p.m. ¡Viva la Florida!