

Jornadas in Puebla

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The *Terceras Jornadas Internacionales del Teatro Latinoamericano*, jointly sponsored by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, the Centro Cultural Espacio 1900, and the Ayuntamiento del Municipio de Puebla, were held in Puebla, Mexico, July 10-14. In keeping with the precedent set in the two previous years, the meeting touched on several facets of theatre, including playwriting, performance and criticism. This year's conference was dedicated to Cuban playwright José Triana. In a special session, George Woodyard (KU) spoke on Triana's latest play, *El último día de verano* and William García (Union College) spoke on *Medea en el espejo*. Following the papers, Triana entertained questions from the speakers and the audience. In other sessions, papers given by scholars from Latin America and the United States dealt with a wide range of topics and dramatists, including sessions on Sor Juana, *poblano* dramatists and Latin American female dramatists. Most sessions ended with an animated discussion between the panel of speakers and the audience, comprised of university professors, dramatists, and acting students from the Centro Cultural. Each group brought to this exchange a different perspective on the theatrical text.

Participants were also treated to five live performances. On Monday, July 10 *Muchas gracias por las flores* written by Jacobo Morales, directed by Francisco Beverido Duhalt, and acted by Hugo López, was performed in the Teatro Arlequín of the Centro Cultural. The following evening, writer, director, and actor, Martín Zapata, performed his play *Ik Dietrick Fon* in the Arlequín. Both of these one-person shows presented the theme of isolation, be it psychological, linguistic, intellectual or emotional.

In commemoration of the 300th anniversary of her death, activities on Wednesday, July 12, focused on Sor Juana. The entire group took a bus to Tecalí de Herrera, a nearby village filled with architectural evidence of Mexico's Golden Age, including the Franciscan monastery. Following the morning session dealing with Sor Juana's theatre, the group saw *La carta*, a montage of letters and poems by Sor Juana with Angeles Sánchez in the lead role. The piece was directed by Alejandro Bichir and original music composed by Helio Huesca

accompanied the text. Hearing and seeing Sor Juana's texts performed in a Tecali's *corral de comedias* added to the authenticity of the experience. The group also participated in the official dedication and unveiling of an onyx bust of Sor Juana. The sculpture stands outside the *corral*.

On Wednesday evening, an adaptation of Ruiz de Alarcón's *Mudarse por mejorarse*, directed by Manuel Reigadas Huergo, was performed in the Café Teatro of the Centro Cultural with Angeles Peniche (Clara), Alejandra Valencia (Leonor), Pablo Moreno (don García) and Benito Lavalle (Félix) in the major roles. The actors took special pains to make this Golden Age text accessible to a twentieth-century audience. The costumes perfectly dovetailed with the bizarre intrigues of this standard *comedia de enredo*.

The performance highlight occurred on Thursday, July 13, with a production of *La noche de los asesinos*. In honor of Triana's presence, Angeles Sánchez, Silvia Tanús, and Sergio Castrillo revived their roles from twenty years ago as Cuca, Beba, and Lalo, respectively. José Francisco Jaramillo directed. Staged in the Teatro de Interiores at the Espacio Cultural, the cramped, cluttered, and dark dramatic space perfectly captured the essence of a setting described as "un sótano o el último cuarto-desván" in the written text.

Several other activities rounded out the week's events. Ita Aagaard, a French actress, gave a presentation entitled *El actor y el cuerpo*. She introduced the audience to the basics of stage body movement and voice. The group also saw a video about Mexico's premiere actor, Ignacio Retes, who at that time was acting in Leñero's *La visita del ángel*. Finally, for lunch on Thursday afternoon, the group enjoyed the gracious hospitality of Héctor Azar, playwright, founder and director of the Centro de Arte Dramático, A.C. (CADAC) in Puebla and Mexico City, and currently the Secretario de Cultura for the state of Puebla. Azar also gave the group a tour and a brief history of his CADAC theatre in Atlixco.

The initial stages of planning for next year's *jornadas* are underway. There is a strong possibility that the conference will be dedicated to Griselda Gambaro, who is expected to attend the conference. For more information, contact Prof. Oscar Rivera Rodas, Department of Romance and Asian Languages, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN, 37996-0640. E-mail IN%"rivera@utkvx.utk.edu" Phone: 1-423-974-2311.

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