

IV Congreso de Teatro Latinoamericano 2000

From Wednesday, 31 March through Saturday, 1 April 2000, the University of Kansas sponsored its IV Conference on Latin American Theatre with wide-ranging support from academics, students, writers, directors, actors and an enthusiastic theatre public. Several units on campus were generous in providing the support that made the conference possible, including the Hall Center for the Humanities, Center of Latin American Studies, the Provost's office, the Departments of Spanish and Portuguese plus Theatre and Film, and the Graduate School and International Programs. At the opening session, John Kronik (Cornell/UCLA) gave an insightful presentation on the politics of metatheatre in Latin America. Following his remarks, Melissa Fitch (Arizona) not only entertained but also instructed on the intricacies of the tango, which she and her partner John Dahlstrand demonstrated in every whirl and flourish. With that introduction, the stage was set, so to speak, for the opening night reception of this irregular conference (previously held in 1982, 1992 and 1997), and the activities of the next three days focusing on theatre from the Southern Cone.

From Thursday through Saturday morning participants were privileged to choose from among the more than 100 presentations that embraced the entire gamut of Latin American theatre, past, present and perhaps even future. The *ponentes* were primarily academics from 30 different states in the US, plus participants from ten different countries. The afternoons and evenings provided special offerings. On Thursday Osvaldo Pellettieri, Eduardo Rovner and Cristina Escofet provided in-depth presentations on Argentine theatre. On Friday Gerald Thomas flew in from Rio to comment on his theatre in a Brazilian context, and on Saturday Marco Antonio de la Parra and Nieves Olcoz provided an excellent overview of Chilean theatre.

The theatre fare was superb, starting with *Cooking with Elisa*, an English version of the Argentine playwright Lucía Laragione's *Cocinando con Elisa*, translated and directed by Andrea Baldomir of KU. The Teatro del Repertorio del Norte of Buenos Aires finished their European tour with a stop in Lawrence to bring Eduardo Rovner's provocative *Concierto de aniversario*. Ana María Imizcoz, a Paraguayan actress with long-time Kansas connections, offered her versatile and challenging one woman show, *Mujeres de mi tierra*, while Marco Antonio de la Parra and Nieves Olcoz staged his unique play, *Madrid/Sarajevo*. One afternoon Cristina Escofet shared a video from Argentina with Ana María Caso in *A través de Frida*. The final production was by the Colectivo La Rendija from Manizales with a rousing rendition of Marco Antonio de la Parra's *La secreta obscenidad de cada día*. It was greatly advantageous to have so many of the authors available for comment about the staged productions. On Saturday evening we closed the conference with a giant *pachanga* at the home of

Eleanor Woodyard who graciously invited all the participants to dinner and an evening of music and dancing under the Big Top to the *salsas* and *merengues* of Son Venezuela. Some uncultured neighbors, unfortunately, have not yet learned to appreciate Latin rhythms. Thanks to all who helped make the conference a memorable and intellectually stimulating experience.



Marco Antonio de la Parra con El Colectivo la Rendija (Manizales)
en *La secreta obscenidad de cada día*.

This issue of LATR

This issue of the *Latin American Theatre Review* attempts to survey the theatre activities during the decade of the 1990s in all of the Latin American republics plus the Hispanic theatre movement in the United States. We had confirmations for each of the countries and areas designated. The omissions that you will notice are due to failures to meet our publication deadlines. We regret that not every country is represented, but we hope that the information included here, analogous to our survey ten years ago of the 1980s, will prove to be helpful. It is distressing to see that in many cases, a lack of financial and public support continues to plague the theatre of Latin America. Nevertheless, we note that the theatre continues to be lively and dynamic with new plays, productions, groups, styles, issues, authors, actors and directors and new theatre spaces to work with – plus some of the best of previous years.

George Woodyard