

## Mexico City's Spring 2003 Theatre Season

### Timothy G. Compton

This theatre season was noteworthy for a number of reasons, among them 1) the greatest number of first-rate plays I have ever seen running simultaneously in Mexico City, 2) a torrent of Víctor Hugo Rascón Banda plays after poor health took him to the brink of death early in the year, 3) the staging of a number of outstanding plays not just well translated into Spanish, but brilliantly adapted to Mexican culture, 4) several excellent “trípticos” of plays by different authors but joined in theme and cast and staged together, 5) a Northern breeze in various plays, whether focused on the topic of the deaths of women in recent years in the Ciudad Juárez area or a cast from Sinaloa on one of UNAM's stages, 6) several mind-boggling sets designed by Philippe Amand, 7) a gem written by Emilio Carballido, 8) a handful of children's plays of the highest quality, and 9) a large percentage of “clandestine” plays, which featured content directly related to contemporary Mexico.

Here follows commentary on the eleven truly outstanding plays I saw this season, in alphabetical order, followed by brief notes on other plays of note.

#### *Ahora y en la hora*

Víctor Hugo Rascón Banda reportedly wrote this play set in a hospital during his own prolonged hospital stay. Luis de Tavira directed its dozen actors in myriad roles on the unbelievable stage designed by Philippe Amand for UNAM's black box theatre, the Foro Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Spectators were seated two-deep at the second level of the building, the first row separated from the stage by only a railing and the second row three to four feet higher on a narrow riser. When spectators entered, a rectangular stage was located at foot level of the lower group of spectators, suspended from

the roof at its four corners by cables. Before the play started, the audience was warned not to extend extremities beyond the railing, and then, as if getting on a roller coaster, the railing was leaned toward the bottom row of spectators. The lights went out, and when they came back on, the rectangular stage had disappeared, and precipitously beneath the protective railing at the theatre's ground floor, the first scene unfolded. It was a beautifully choreographed scene of an open heart surgery, with teams of physicians, nurses, and technicians scurrying about, appearing from or disappearing into sudden openings in the walls, trying fruitlessly to help the patient while spectators looked on from god-like perspective. The stage on cables, incidentally, had taken its highest of four positions, above the level of spectators, creating a ceiling, complete with lighting. It was also used 1) at the ground floor level, exposing two full levels across from spectators and leaving the ceiling open, 2) at its original position, at spectator foot level, blocking the bottom level but leaving the ceiling open, and 3) at the eye level of spectators, allowing them to simultaneously take in action occurring both on the bottom floor and on the floating stage. The fourth side of the stage sometimes featured a wall with sliding panels (downstairs) and windows (upstairs), but most of the time the wall slid fully away and exposed two levels of a hospital corridor, each of which had an elevator, a pair of doors opening inward or outward to allow wheeled stretchers rapid access, and a nurses' station with charts, a television monitor, a telephone, and a white board for keeping track of patients and their needs. Since the play had numerous plot lines intertwining one with another, the look of the set changed constantly, sometimes in full view of spectators, but other times under the shroud of fog or absolute darkness. Thus, the set practically became a character in the play, often surprising spectators with its instant changes, its versatility, and its unforeseen areas of access on all four sides of the bottom level. In addition to the initial drama of the failed open-heart surgery, I counted nine story lines: 1) the husband and brother of a woman who died in childbirth verbally sparred in a waiting room over who was to blame, 2) a woman whose husband was tremendously ill spoke in a waiting room to a woman who tried to woo her into a lesbian relationship, 3) a physician and a nurse kindled a romance, 4) a famous singer's agent and her sister fretted in a waiting room over her failed, unneeded operation, 5) a woman dressed as a nun begged to see a drug trafficker being guarded by heavily armed police officers, and when she did see him, she killed him, 6) hospital bureaucrats informed a seriously ill woman's husband that they were denying her treatment because of the family's lack of financial

resources, 7) the family of a rich man who was shot at home worried about him and wondered who could have committed the crime (it turned out to be his wife), 8) a writer soon to go under the scalpel shared metaphysical preoccupations, and 9) via television, the hospital followed a breaking news story during which, when the Pope visited Mexico to make Juan Diego a Saint, he mysteriously disappeared, resulting in endless speculation and commentary from the experts. Although a grim tone dominated most of the play, its final story line brought much needed comic relief. The multiple layers of the plot were compelling, the choreography tremendous, the acting superb, many of the topics broached were of great importance for contemporary Mexico, and the visual impact of the play unforgettable.



*Ahora y en la hora*  
Photo by José Jorge Carreón

### *La estética del crimen*

Alberto Lomnitz and Ricardo Esquerra translated and adapted to contemporary Mexico City this American play by Paul Portner, giving it the title *La estética del crimen*. Lomnitz also directed it. Initially, the play developed traditionally, with the audience witnessing through the proverbial fourth wall the prologue to a murder which happened next door to the Beauty Salon, then the initial stages of the investigation to find the murderer among those who had been in the Salon. In this brilliant adaptation, the murder victim

was a real-life Mexican known for her love affair with Diego Rivera, references to very current Mexican events and politics abounded, instead of American detectives the investigators were police officers, and a news flash about the murder at intermission was even read by the Peter Jennings of Mexican television, Jacobo Zabłudovsky. The lead officer partway through the first act broke down the fourth wall and asked the audience to serve as witnesses to help him in his investigation. A hilarious reconstruction of events, with the help of the audience, ensued, followed by audience interaction with the officer during the intermission, then audience questioning of characters in the second act, and finally an audience vote to identify the assassin. These interactions required considerable improvisational skills from the actors, and from Silverio Palacios, the lead officer, in particular. Palacios was exceptional throughout the play. His fellow cast members also delivered excellent performances, with Carlos Corona as the flamboyant Salon owner and Gabriela Murray as the air-headed, shrill wife of a Mexican politician deserving special note. The plot was exceptionally clever, the adaptation to Mexico City outstanding, the acting superb, and the visual aspect of the set and costumes first-rate. After almost a year in Mexico it continues to attract strong audiences.



*La estética del crimen*  
Photo by Etienne Fajardo

*DeSazón*

This play, written by Víctor Hugo Rascón Banda and directed by José Caballero, featured monologues by three of Mexico's finest actresses, Julieta Egurrola, Angelina Peláez, and Luisa Huertas. Each played the part of and told the life story of a woman from Rascón Banda's home state of Chihuahua. Egurrola played a Mennonite woman whose husband had disappeared, Peláez played the wife of a man who would soon be released from prison after serving a term for involvement in the illegal drug industry, and Huertas played a woman who tried to rob a bank, was hunted by federal agents and survived only because a Tarahumara man sheltered her and made her his wife. As the three told their stories, audience members saw projections of related visual images from Chihuahua. Alejandro Luna designed the relatively simple set, the most salient feature of which was the use of tiny rocks on which the actresses performed, creating a stark atmosphere to match the difficult lives of the women portrayed, as well as a unique natural sound. Speaking of sounds, the group I was with was shocked, upon leaving the theatre, to find that it had not rained during the performance – the storm sound effects had been so subtle and effective as to fool us. Although it was very low-key, *DeSazón* featured terrific acting, compelling life stories, and a glimpse into Mexico's rich diversity.

*Extras*

Sabina Berman translated, adapted, and directed this superb play by Marie Jones originally entitled *Stones in His Pockets*. It was performed in the Julio Castillo theatre's ample space. Philippe Amand created another spectacular set for this play, a set both simple and audacious at the same time. It was simple in that it was based entirely on straight lines and rectangles. The floor was slightly ramped and consisted of three large white rectangles, one behind the other, with each rectangle surrounded by a black rectangle. Behind the stage was a large white wall. Amand bathed the backdrop and the rectangles in different colors throughout the play, resulting in a variety of rich visual scenes for the audience. What made the set audacious was that immediately in front of each of the stage's thirds, black dividers normally hidden from audience view could instantly close off the stage, or part of it, from the left, the right, the top, or the bottom. This created a nearly infinite variety of looks, none of which was predictable, constantly surprising the audience. Amand's mastery of lighting included a stunning water scene, the simulation of a train and then a car simply with lights, and a beautiful butterfly made from blue lighting. Berman adapted the play's setting to the state of

Morelos. The action centered on the shooting of a Hollywood movie there, and particularly on a pair of Mexican extras who dreamed of this experience springing them into fame and riches. The pair of characters was joined by other cast members in the metaproduction, some famous, some obscure, by a famous Hollywood director, by assistant directors, and by varying townspeople. And yet two actors played all of the myriad roles. The Bichir family provided the actors, alternating two of the three brothers (Bruno, Demian and Odiseo) from performance to performance. The performance I saw starred Bruno and Demian, who were absolutely dazzling as they went breakneck from character to character, from anger to pity to joy to sorrow. Their corporal and facial work was as expressive as their voices, and the way they used bandannas to help define varying characters was exceptionally clever. The plot itself was poignant, contrasting the wealth and abundance of the first world with the poverty and hopelessness of rural Mexico.



*Más encima...y cielo*  
Photo by José Carreón

*Más encima...y cielo*

This play was a rarity in Mexico City, in that it was not only written and directed by a Northerner, Sergio Galindo (Hermosillo, Sonora, 1951), but the company staging it was also from the North, the Compañía Teatral del Norte. Its strength derived from its depth of emotion based on a historical event from 1963 in Galindo's home state: When the El Novillo dam was built under orders from national powers in Mexico City, three towns disappeared into a watery grave, dislodging all of their inhabitants and burying their homes, their traditions, and their heritage. The play itself focused on an older couple who had never lived anywhere but in one of these towns. The pair was scurrying to meet the deadline to clear out before the water arrived. Actually, sadness and shock and dismay and anger over the situation paralyzed Fortunato, whose scattered, feeble efforts to prepare were overwhelmed by his deep emotions, his confusion, and his inability to accept what was happening. When his wife died at play's end, he decided he would rather go down with the ship. Irineo Alvarez played the lead stirringly and convincingly. This play proved that compelling theatre does not always require extensive sets, casts, or costumes, as this was theatre of the first degree based almost exclusively on a compelling storyline and memorable characters created by excellent acting.

*La noche del tigre*

This children's play marked the 10th anniversary of existence of Mexico's deaf theatre company, Señal y Verbo. Written by Carlos Corona and directed by him and Adrian Blue, it revisited the story of Mowgli from Kipling's *Jungle Book*, his struggles with the wily tiger, and the presentation of a creation story. The set, designed by the company's director, Alberto Lomnitz, was a beautiful homage to India, with rich Indian cloths immediately behind the actors, and jungle vines as a backdrop to the stage. Two deaf actors, Lupe Vergara, and Eduardo Domínguez, shared the stage with an "actor vocal," Ricardo Esquerra. The lines delivered by Vergara and Domínguez were simply non-auditory, as they did plenty of speaking through signs, which were simultaneously interpreted by Esquerra. Thus, Esquerra had the formidable task of providing voice for his characters as well as the characters of the other actors. He did so proficiently, while at the same time delivering his own lines in sign language. All three actors were exceptionally expressive in their pantomime and facial expressions. The animal costumes the actors used intermittently were delightful, usually consisting of a semblance of an animal head resting on the actors' heads like hats, plus the animal's

skin attached from the back of the heads. Despite all the well-deserved praise of this play's elements listed so far, perhaps its most outstanding element was its music. Musician Mariano Cossa composed original music reminiscent of India and played it live on a keyboard, also adding delightful sound effects which further enhanced the play. This play was definitely a delight for children, but it was outstanding theatre for adults as well.



*La noche del tigre*  
Photo by Alberto Lomnitz

*Químicos para el amor*

Carmina Narro directed Hernán Mendoza and Gabriela de la Garza in this superb trio of short plays joined under the title *Químicos para el amor*. All three plays focused on relationships with variations on love, manipulation, revenge, and lunacy. Several elements combined to make the performance a unique success. First, the "stage" consisted of a table and



chairs in the middle of the diminutive cafeteria of the Centro Cultural Helénico. That the “set” looked just like other tables and chairs at which spectators sat encouraged the illusion that the audience was listening in on conversations at a cafeteria. Spectators enjoyed unequalled proximity to the actors. Second, Mendoza and de la Garza created three very different couples. Costumes, props, and hair styling from one play to the next helped, but Mendoza very convincingly went from a high-powered, affluent, impatient yuppie to a simpleton with a violent streak who empathized with the rats he worked with in a laboratory, to a rough and tumble cowboy type, while de la Garza transformed from a submissive, humiliated woman to a self-confident actress who was famous but unfaithful, and finally into a slightly deranged manicurist who believed that radio and television broadcasts were sending her secret messages. Third, the dialogue was rich, written by Rodrigo Johnson (*Aspirinas para los desahuciados*), Sabina Berman (*Round de sombras*) and José Antonio Cordero (*Manicure*). Fourth, each short play revealed the essence of different kinds of off-kilter relationships and showed them play out to unexpected conclusions: 1) The humiliated girlfriend took revenge on her boyfriend by presenting him with their aborted fetus, 2) The lowly simple husband whose actress wife cheated on him took her life, and 3) the loony manicurist rejected the cowboy’s generous love for no particular reason. *Químicos para el amor* required no set, no theatre, no special seating, and had minimal props, lighting, sound effects and cast, but was unique, first-rate drama.

### *Salvador*

Sandra Félix, Antonio Zúñiga and Gilbert Amand translated this children’s play written by Canadian Suzanne Lebeau. Félix directed *Salvador*, which actually carried the subtitle *La montaña, el niño y el mango*, Zúñiga played the lead and Philippe Amand designed yet another attractive set. The essence of this beautiful play was a poignant story about a boy growing up in the mountains, sustained through a series of setbacks by the undying love of his mother. Zúñiga succeeded in the difficult task of toggling between the roles of Salvador as an adult who looked back on and told the story of his childhood and Salvador as a child. Luisa Huertas, surely one of Mexico’s greatest actresses, played the mother, who doggedly clung to the hope of making her children’s future brighter than her present, and sacrificed constantly to make it happen. Despite the politically-based disappearances of her husband and oldest son, she managed to send Salvador off to school to become a writer. The mango of the subtitle became a powerful symbol of

her almost magical determination. Despite living in their mountain climate, she claimed she could coax a mango tree to grow and yield fruit, for which she was ridiculed. Yet, when Salvador left for school, he found that she had packed him a mango from the tree she had cultivated against all odds. Another powerful moment came after the older brother took on family responsibilities following his father's disappearance, when he sacrificed to make humble (a brush for his sister, an orange for Salvador) yet nearly impossible Christmas dreams come true for the family. Amand's set had a rustic cabin type of feeling, with sliding doors that opened and closed in several variations to create the environments of home, school, town square, business, and church. Behind the doors and the actors Amand immersed a backdrop in varying colors which subtly changed to beautifully mimic sunrises and sunsets. Surrounding the doors he projected images which further situated the play. *Salvador* did not close its eyes to the difficulties of life, but offered a profound example of appreciation for family relationships, the power of love, and the importance of maintaining vision and hope.



*Salvador*  
Photo by Philippe Amand

*Sueños de Einstein*

Teatro Contradicción, a group founded in 1999 by Claudio Herrera of Mexico, Stefan Bohun of Austria, and Alexandra Scerbak of Austria, produced a Mexicanized version of *Sueños de Einstein* after it premiered in 2001 in Austria and was taken on tour there the following year. According to the program, Teatro Contradicción creates its plays based on an idea which the actors then explore through improvisations, and then continue to change after being presented to audiences. Eventually the play is written. This play, written by Herrera and Bohun and directed by Herrera, explored the idea of Einstein's world at the time that he was developing his theory of relativity, showing his human side, humorously showing that perhaps he was not as much of a genius as he may appear, demystifying him as well as Freud, Marx, and Shakespeare. *Sueños de Einstein's* strength lay in its power to surprise. Spectators never knew what would be happening next on the stage, whether it was showing that Einstein was so involved in his theories that his wife had to dress him, a scene seemingly performed underwater, a scene in which Marx and Einstein danced to "Somewhere my Love," a conga line including Freud and Einstein, a scene performed by white lab coats in black light, a routine based on "take a number and wait your turn" when there was no line, a scene performed and then "unperformed" in reverse mode in incredible exactness, a scene in which buildings wandered around the stage then settled into a formation reading " $E = mc^2$ " (an epiphany for the "genius"), a scene in which Einstein provided running commentary on a performance of *Hamlet* and then tried to help the title character, and on and on. The actors used props brilliantly, using, for example, a table first as a table, then as a door, then as a gondola, then as Freud's famous couch. A broom was first a mast, then an oar, and finally a rudder. The actors showed impeccable timing, remarkable corporal control, delightful abilities to mime, and amazing energy. Claudio Herrera, not content to just write and direct the play, performed the part of a Mexican who kept running into Einstein and saying mundane things such as "The 24 hours we have spent on this train seems like a lifetime" which Einstein, played by Claudio's brother Alejandro, would take as further evidence proving the theory of relativity. Both actors actually took on several parts from time to time but would return to these roles. A guitarist, a violinist and a cellist performed Vivaldi and other classics live and to perfection, and also became actors in several scenes. This play was an absolute visual and

comical delight, full of whimsy and surprise, but also containing many nuggets of circumstance and dialogue provoking thought and wonder.

*Los trazos del viento*

On March 3-9 of this year six different plays on the subject of the deaths of women in Ciudad Juárez in recent years came together in a “Muestra teatral.” SOGEM (Sociedad General de Escritores de México) spearheaded the effort to coincide with the “Día internacional de la mujer 2003,” and placed ceremonies with speeches by numerous dignitaries on both ends of the event. In fact, the event was highlighted on the Latin American channel of CNN. Three of the plays from this “Muestra” subsequently took on lives of their own in D.F.’s theatres, one of which was a monologue written and acted by Cristina Michaus (*Mujeres de Ciudad Juárez*), another highlighted the efforts of a mother to find her disappeared daughter and the insensitivity of public officials to help her (*Rumor de viento* by Norma Barroso), but suffered from serious problems as dramatic art. The third play, *Los trazos del viento*, based on a text by Alan Aguilar, adapted by the Conjuero Teatro group, and directed by Dana Stella Aguilar, was a powerful theatrical experience. In it, three women characters spoke of their lives and hopes and dreams, but went to work in the Maquiladoras of Ciudad Juárez and ended up being humiliated, abused, harassed, attacked and finally killed. Although the plot was revealed before the play, the poignant nature and authentic feel of the three stories, and the delightful personalities of the young women made their subsequent tragedies more difficult to take. In addition, several elements of the play were beautifully done. First of all, the set was minimal but beautiful, based on a rectangle of white sand on the stage. Lighting bathed it at different times in varying rich colors, it had a lovely sound as the actresses walked on it, and residue from it remained on their dresses after they had fallen down onto it, suggesting the baggage victims carry. Second, the choreography was beautiful, especially in the way the actresses alternated monologues, and their actions echoed the actions of the previous actress, particularly in scenes representing the repetitive work in the Maquiladoras. Third, each character was developed beautifully and shown as a unique individual, the first with a love of nature and birds in particular, the second with a strong maternal instinct and the desire to marry and raise children, and the third with a desire to go with her family to the United States. This play succeeded in taking the tragedy of the women of Ciudad Juárez beyond the grim statistics of hundreds of deaths and disappearances, and showed

how real people with unique personalities and a great deal to offer and experience have had their lives senselessly snuffed out.

*Zorros chinos*

The Bochinche group performed this play written by Emilio Carballido and directed by Carlos Corona. *Zorros chinos* departed from the mundane, depressed existence of Yuriria, whose world revolved around selfish, domineering men who abused women. She discovered that she could escape into a charmed, magical world dominated by beings who were half fox and half oriental men, men who knew how to pamper women and make them feel wonderful. Ironically, in the human world men treated other people like animals, while in the animal world men treated others with great civility. The fantastic, beautiful world of the foxes, filled with poetry, fine wine, silks, music, dancing, exotic pictures of dragons, and contentedness, contrasted with the poverty of rural Mexico with its stern clothing, harsh stone and wood constructs, violence, guns, and cacophony. The elegant acting performances of Gabriel Porrás as Príncipe Wu and Ricardo Esquerra as the prince's servant were critical to establishing the magical oriental world. Julieta Ortiz also deserves special note for her performance of vastly different roles of Uarhari and Domingo. Several times the acting reached an extra level of beauty as actors mimed with tremendous expressiveness as well delivering dialogues flawlessly. The exquisite music composed by Mariano Cossa and performed live by Cossa on guitar and Leonel Pérez on cello created instant passage to the enchanted oriental world. Cossa and Pérez provided delightful sound effects as well. The beautiful set, designed by Juliana Faesler, hinged on a vertical axis which allowed the actors to change the set and slip effortlessly from one world to another. Most actors played several roles, but only the playbill let on to that fact because the use of masks and puppets disguised them effectively. Actors shrouded in black, and thus mere shadows, made lively, life-sized puppets come to life using one hand for the puppets' heads and the other as the puppets' arms. The play's masks were tremendously expressive and comic, allowing enough of the actors' faces to show for a variety of expression. Bochinche took Carballido's marvelous text and gave it all the theatrical touches it deserves.

Numerous other plays had definite merits, although I felt that they fell short of "masterpiece" status. I mention now a few of the most noteworthy. *Tríptico de guerra* was indeed made up of three short plays on the subject of war, sandwiched by a prologue and conclusion which expressed vehement opposition to the U.S.-led war in Iraq. The third "play" was actually

more of a storytelling by Sofía Alvarez, but the other sections were performed by four members of the Bonilla family, including Héctor, who also directed the play. The prologue was a mock speech by a U.S. general preparing his forces to go to war. The first mini-play was the highlight of the performance, *Si buscas la paz, prepárate para la guerra*, by Ignacio Solares. It portrayed a moment in the Mexican Revolution when a captain defied orders to kill his prisoners, allowing them instead to escape. The second mini-play was by José Ramón Enríquez, *Big Brother War!*, and focused on media efforts to squeeze every bit of personal advantage they could out of war. The conclusion was simply a dramatic reading of a statement published by U.S. military veterans expressing opposition to the war in Iraq. The Bonilla family was superb in their various roles, the set designed by Arturo Nava was interesting and functional for all aspects of the triptych, video on stage was used extensively, and was particularly effective during the general's harangue in the Prologue, and the topics were disarmingly current.

Similarly, *La Marta del Zorro* featured extremely current content related to politics at the national level. The Zorro, of course, refers to Vicente Fox, and Marta is his wife. Carlos Pascual created this extremely popular play, which was billed as an "espectáculo político musical." It has played to the sold-out house of the Wilberto Cantón theatre for many months (two nightly performances three times a week, charging 200 pesos per ticket, which is considerably higher than average ticket prices) thanks to the fact that although the basic premise of the play stays the same from week to week, namely to show the foibles of the president and his wife, the specifics of the content adapt to stay absolutely current. Another key has been the terrific acting of Raquel Pankowsky, who has a quirky resemblance to the First Lady. Finally, Fox himself has been generous in imparting subject matter that has been easy to exploit as a comic target. Freedom of speech seems to be alive and well in Mexico City's theatre world.

Víctor Hugo Rascón Banda wrote *El ausente* specifically for the Contigo América group to celebrate 22 years of the group's existence. Blas Braidot, one of the founders of El Galpón in Uruguay, was directing the play but died before its premiere, so it also became a play in Braidot's honor. The plot was exceptionally pertinent to Mexico today – a family struggled in the aftermath of a father's disappearance in the United States. Flashbacks showed how unemployment triggered his departure. His wife had to go to work full-time, his teen-aged children suffered from a lack of parental involvement while being sucked in by Mexico City's fast lane, his parents moved in to help but could not bridge the generation gap to their grandchildren.

Eventually the play revealed that the father died in Arizona's desert, but he was ever present in the home, visiting family members in a silent, ghostly form from time to time. And when the grandparents' desperation reached a zenith over the situation, they choreographed their own suicides along with the death of their grandchildren. Enrique Ballesté played the part of the confused, bothered grandfather most convincingly, and showed the difficulties of growing older in a rapidly changing world. Most of the play's finest moments came in dialogue between the grandparents, revealing quirky individuals who know each other very, very well. This play was consistent with Rascón Banda's profoundly pessimistic view of life in current-day Mexico.

Finally, *Flor sin raíz* was a children's play adapted by Esmeralda Peralta and Leticia Negrete from a story by Patrick Johansson, who was born in France but has become a Mexican citizen. Peralta directed the play, and both Peralta and Negrete performed it two to three times a day Monday through Friday in SOGEM's Wilberto Cantón theatre. A simple moral tale about a flower who pulls up her roots to be free and see the world but dies prematurely as a result, this play featured lovely puppets of a variety of animals, incorporated Nahuátl names of various animals and plants, and had a number of nice special visual effects, such as the use of black light to show the wind. It also tackled the national problem of flight out of the country and loss of roots. The 200 or so students, ages four to six, who attended, seemed enraptured by the play, and I am always pleased when children witness good theatre.

This report has touched briefly on only a few of the numerous plays (well over one hundred plays were advertised during any given week) which ran during the Spring 2003 season in Mexico City, but those few plays show that Mexican theatre clearly continues to thrive. The Spring 2003 season in Mexico City provided abundant evidence of its variety, creativity, technical merit, and pertinence to Mexican society.

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