

# LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

*a Journal devoted to  
the Theatre and Drama  
of Spanish and Portuguese  
America*

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Critical studies:	25 pages	Reviews:	500 words for critical study
Interviews:	2000 words		750 words for published play
Festival Reports:	1500 words		1000 words for play collection
		Performance Reviews:	500 words plus photos

Submissions that exceed these limits will be returned without consideration, provided return postage is included.

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## Abstracts

### Lucia Garavito, "Receta básica de *Cocinando con Elisa: Ingredientes a la Grimm en una caldera argentina.*"

Although French cuisine and violence seem to be the main components in Laragione's *Cocinando con Elisa*, the fairytale tradition supplies a more subtle and all pervasive ingredient. The power struggle between Nicole (the chef) and Elisa (her apprentice) is structured around a series of intertextual fairytale motifs – the witch/stepmother, the ogre, the poisonous potions, the naive young woman, the impossible tasks, the incantations – which point towards the reappearance of the witch and her evil arts in a familiar social and political context. By incorporating some of the traditional patterns associated with fairytales and dismantling others, Laragione's play reveals the horrors of the repressive years of the dictatorship in Argentina. (LG)

### Thomas F. Anderson, "*Hunger and Revolution: A New Reading of Virgilio Piñera's El flaco y el gordo.*"

*El flaco y el gordo* (1959), the first literary work that Virgilio Piñera wrote after the triumph of the Revolution, is, above all, a fierce criticism of the social problem of hunger in pre-revolutionary Cuba. In this essay I argue that many critics, who seem to have been overly eager to read a text written during such an important moment in Cuban history as either categorically pro or antirevolutionary, have erroneously insisted that Piñera's play is negative and fatalistic, and that it underscores his skepticism and his lack of confidence in the Revolution from the beginning. Such interpretations misconstrue not only Piñera's view of the Revolution, but also the play's central message and the author's primary motivation for writing it. Well aware that Cuba's chronic hunger had helped to make Fidel Castro's menu for change more palatable for so many, Piñera chose to use this familiar form of suffering in Cuba as a central metaphor in the play. (TFA)

### Hernán Feldman, "Patear el tablero: *Juegos de damas crueles.*"

Alejandro Tantanián's *Juegos de damas crueles* is a provocative play in which the constant eruptions of variegated games attempt to map the narratives that inform our notion of origin, religion, fatherhood, family, gender, and nation. This study argues that the omnipresence of games in Tantanián's play is far from incidental. In fact, these games and the unstable narratives they engender are the primary artillery that Tantanián deploys in order to combat the arbitrary premises of the foundational narratives that shape the world as we know it. Tantanián thus stages a ludic labyrinth that turns these influential narratives upside down, thereby empowering the subaltern and changing the rules of the big game of life. In the end, Tantanián insinuates that the ritualistic laws we live by are abreast with the capricious rules of "innocent" games to which we rarely give a second thought. (HF, in Spanish)

### Gustavo Remedi, "The Ubiquitous Scene: Towards a New Model of a National Theatrical System."

By reviewing and discussing the origin and the various stages of the history of Latin American theatre, and more importantly, of the history of the study of theatre and its academic institutionalization, and following Roger Mirza's and Osvaldo Pelletieri's notion

of national theatrical systems (after which a notion of Latin American theatre followed), in this work I intend to oppose an old triadic national theatrical system (constituted by traditional popular theatricalities, modern European currents and conventions, and commercial ventures) to a new national theatrical system (one that factors in the evolution of Latin American theatre in the 20th C., mass mediated theatricalities, urban spectacles, social and political rituals and performances, and more) that better reflects, and enables us to capture and discuss, both Latin American theatre and Latin American societies and cultures today.(GR)

**Leonardo Azparren Giménez, “El teatro colonial en Venezuela.”**

The author presents in this article a general overview of Venezuelan theatre from 1595 to 1800 based on original documents from the period. He analyzes the social and performance function of the plays as an ideological manifestation of the colonial regime, emphasizing the initiative of the civil and religious authorities to sponsor theatre events during important religious celebrations as well as those of the Spanish crown. The analysis includes information about authors performed on stages constructed in streets and plazas, especially throughout the XVIII century, and he underlines the importance and the consequences of the construction of the first theatre building in Caracas in 1784. (LAG)

**Rosa Ileana Boudet, “El enigma de la leontina: Flora Díaz Parrado.”**

Irony, black humor, the cruel grimace – the theatre of Flora Díaz Parrado anticipates themes and theatrical forms of the vanguard, and it shares certain points and mysteries with the theatre of Carlos Felipe. With *El velorio de Pura* (1941) she cultivated a theatre of the body, of gestures, and not just the spoken word, while with *Juana Revolico* (1944) she added a broader concept of ritual. Beyond the realm of the literary world, she imagined magic, stage machinery and a range of oneiric, grotesque and fantastic elements incorporating traditional pop culture. Her works, scarcely studied or staged, demand another look within the context of Cuban playwriting. (RIB)

**Ronald D. Burgess, “Mexico City’s (Almost) Invisible Family Theatre: Puppets at Work.”**

The general public in Mexico tends not to take puppet theatre very seriously, seeing it primarily as an activity for children. In Mexico City many groups do seem to fit that pattern, but other groups, the more successful ones, aim for a wider audience and in the process manage to provide high quality, family entertainment. Marionetas de la Esquina and La Troupe have each existed for over 25 years, and their success sets an example for other groups to follow in an attempt to improve the caliber and the image of puppet theatre. (RDB)