

# LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

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

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## Abstracts

### Lois S. Grossman, "*Los albañiles*, Novel and Play: A Two-time Winner."

Vicente Leñero (Guadalajara, Mexico, 1933) has adapted his prize-winning novel *Los albañiles* for the stage. The principal elements of the novel—the complex structure, murder-mystery format with religious and epistemological overtones, and wholly credible and involving group of characters—are equally effective in the dramatic medium, despite fundamental alterations. Leñero's insights into his own novel and his instincts for drama combine to effect the difficult conversion of one literary medium into another. (LSG)

### Alcides João de Barros, "A Situação Social da Mulher no Teatro de Consuelo de Castro e Leilah Assunção."

Consuelo de Castro and Leilah Assunção contribute to Brazilian theatre as much in the artistic realm as in the fact that a feminine perspective gives new connotations heretofore unrecognized by male artists. While the problems treated by both can be condensed into one broad social theme, each projects her own particular vision of society. Leilah presents society as a dead world which she does not attempt to revive. She defends a feminine—but not feminist—point of view in which woman is the victim of circumstances favorable to man. Humor, most often in the form of repeated insignificant gestures and words, is employed as an aid in interpreting the facts. Consuelo, having studied politics and sociology, has acquired a more structured view of the world. She rebels against a capitalist system of competition and valuation of money in which the individual becomes a slave to false values. Her plays reveal a tragic and desperate vision in which the individual recognizes the need for change but is incapable of realizing that change. The only possible resolution is capitulation or self-destruction. (In Portuguese) (BKR)

### Eleanor J. Martin, "*Caligula* and *La muerte no entrará en palacio*: A Study in Characterization."

René Marqués' drama *La muerte no entrará en palacio* (1956) portrays the successful overthrow of tyranny. Don José, the governor in Marqués' play who is based on the character of Luis Muñoz Marín (governor of Puerto Rico 1948-64) who wishes to perpetuate his island's dependency on the United States, is opposed and finally assassinated by those who wish independence for their island. The drama resembles Camus' *Caligula* (1944) which depicts the exercise of unlimited power, on the part of the Roman emperor Caligula, and his final overthrow. Camus' possible influence on Marqués becomes apparent if we study the main and secondary characters of the two dramas. Influence, however, is far from mere imitation, for Marqués has adapted the possible source to suit his political and humanistic purposes. (EJM)

### Ana María Defelitto and Eithel Orbit Negri, "*Narcisa Garay, mujer para llorar*: Semiótica de la escenografía."

The dramatic text offers two categories of signs: primary and secondary. The scenography is a theatrical sign of visual perception placed in space and external to the actor. The present scenographical analysis of *Narcisa Garay, mujer para llorar* (1959), by Juan Carlos Ghiano, is mainly based on the secondary signs with reference to the primary when necessary. The scenography faithfully depicts the yard of the boarding-house and everything aims to individualize each character. The scenographical planes (yard, doors/terrace, Narcisa's room) mark a close correspondence with the initial division of the tenants; the stairs (a labyrinthic door to Narcisa's world) serve to show the human relationships: either distance or proximity, and the chain of incidents within the dramatic action which creates them. The scenography is the essential aspect and, together with the accessories, participates in the action as a sign of sign and as a symbol. (In Spanish) (AMD and EON)

### Maida Watson Espener, "Enrique Buenaventura's Theory of the Committed Theatre."

As a writer of "committed theatre," Buenaventura approaches the solution of Latin American social problems through the creation of a theatre which will inspire its audience to change the structure of society. The earlier plays express his concern by more traditional means, but after *La trampa* in 1966 there is a radical change in both form and content. As stated in his *Teatro y cultura* (1968), he sees the theatre as a didactic tool to produce a social revolution that will change societal structure from within the system itself. Through a technique similar to Brecht's epic theatre he strives for division so that his audience will see itself mirrored in the play and therefore be moved to action. The audiences of the various performances of a play participate in the creative process of the author as they are led to a greater self-knowledge and a greater awareness of the social change needed. (BKR)

### Robert J. Morris, "Alonso Alegría: Dramatist and Theatrical Activist."

During the past ten years Alonso Alegría has assumed a leading role in the Peruvian theatre as a playwright, director, and producer. This study briefly describes his achievements and goals as a director before considering his two dramas, *Remigio el huaquero* (1965) and *El cruce sobre el Niágara* (1968). Alegría's plays could hardly be more different with regard to their theme, structure, characterization, and use of language. While his first work is of traditional design and reminiscent of the regionalist drama of years ago, *El cruce sobre el Niágara* adheres closely to the dictates of the contemporary theatre and appeals directly to the international audience. (RJM)

### Colin M. Pierson, "Coelho Neto: Introduction of African Culture into Brazilian Drama."

Although Negroes were well represented on the Brazilian stage in the nineteenth century (albeit many times in the form of stereotypes), Africans and the influence their culture exerted on Brazil were most conspicuous by their absence. With his realistic comedies, *O Relicário* and *O Diabo no Corpo*, Henrique Coelho Neto demonstrated both to his contemporaries and to his successors that omission from the stage of this important facet of rural and urban Brazilian life was indeed a serious error. (CMP)

### Asela Rodríguez-Seda, "Arms and the Man y El héroe galopante: La desmitificación del heroísmo."

Before Shaw's most ardent Latin follower, the Mexican Rodolfo Usigli, began writing, the Puerto Rican Nemesio R. Canales (1878-1923) had written essays, short novels and a play largely influenced by the Irish playwright. *El héroe galopante* (1923), a one act comedy in prose, particularly follows the dramatic scheme of Shaw's *Arms and the Man* (1894). Thematically it coincides with Shaw's in destroying by means of anti-traditional, anti-conventional protagonists and ideas, the romantic illusions and conceptions about love, family ties, courage, but above all, about heroism. (In Spanish) (AR-S)

### Michèle Muncy, "Entrevista con Luisa Josefina Hernández."

Luisa Josefina Hernández points out some characteristics of her works, such as the handling of the time element and the emphasis of the visual and auditive aspects. She expresses her reaction to the contemporary theme of solitude and lack of communication, and adds some comments about mysticism in general and the mystic elements contained in her works. She indicates what influences could be found in what she has written, especially that of the Bible. She also defines what is the "teatro obrero" in Mexico and gives her opinion about it. Luisa Josefina Hernández comments about the status of women in her country and finally she explains why she does not agree with the idea of a true return to a "teatro indígena." (In Spanish) (MM)