

Grupo de Teatro "Nuestro," Washington, D.C.

In response to the rapidly growing Latino community in the nation's capital, Centro de Arte, Inc., was organized in 1975 to provide a variety of otherwise unavailable artistic activities. One of its principal thrusts has been in *teatro popular*, and the consistent success of its bilingual theatre group indicates that there is a real need for such drama programs.

In its first two years, the Centro's group presented works such as *El sol subterráneo* by Jairo Aníbal Niño and *El gran zoo*, adapted from Nicolás Guillén's poetry. Recently reorganized as Grupo de Teatro Nuestro, the group has added a focus on bilingual children's theatre to its repertory. This expanded program is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts, the District of Columbia Arts Commission, C.E.T.A., and the Volunteer Clearing House.

At last summer's Hispanic festival, Teatro Nuestro presented *El monumento*, a farce by Colombian playwright Enrique Buenaventura, to an audience numbering in the thousands, and then repeated its success for a packed house on the Centro's own stage in the *barrio*. The 1978 Christmas season brought numerous benefit performances for hundreds of children of *Beloved Little Clown (Pequeño y dulce payaso)*, an original mime sketch subsequently taped for television. As part of Centro's de Arte's observance of the International Year of the Child, Teatro Nuestro is preparing a bilingual version of *Candelita's Pals (Los amigos de Candelita)*, a Mexican-Uruguayan circus story by Saúl Ibagoyen and Teatro Galpón.

The actors of Teatro Nuestro come from divergent backgrounds but share a dedication to cultural expression and awareness through theatre. They have shared their concerns and experience through joint activities with other groups, such as Teatro Cuatro (New York), and Teatro Alma Latina (New Jersey), at Latin American theatre festivals in Washington and elsewhere. Their names are: Stephanie Altomare (U.S.), Pedro Avilés (El Salvador), Jorge Somarriba (Nicaragua), and Miriam Segovia (El Salvador). We would like to hear from you!

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