

LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

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the Theatre and Drama
of Spanish and Portuguese
America*

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Abstracts

Santiago Rojas, "El criollo viejo en la trilogía rural de Florencio Sánchez: perspectivas de un ocaso."

Florencio Sánchez's dramatic works of rural background are best represented by *M'hijo el dotor* (1903), *La gringa* (1904), and *Barranca abajo* (1905). In these pieces the dramatist portrays, especially in the figure of the aged *criollo*, the *gaucho* of a particular historical period, the end of the 19th century and the dawn of the present one. These characters of the rural *pampa* are faced with new ways of living and with the corresponding need to adapt themselves to these changes. The artist, with an evident desire for verisimilitude, distinguishes these characters from the traditional *gaucho* that had predominated in River Plate literature for so many years and creates a new human form, worthy of special critical attention. (In Spanish) (SR)

Jacqueline Eyring Bixler, "Freedom and Fantasy: A Structural Approach to the Fantastic in Carballido's *Las cartas de Mozart*."

Carballido's use of the fantastic in *Las cartas de Mozart* proves to be highly instrumental when viewed under Tzvetan Todorov's theory on literature of the fantastic. The world of fantasy as portrayed in this comedy performs a dual function in the development of the play. Structurally, the fantastic sets off a catalytic process which culminates in the formation of a whole new reality based on the world of Mozart. At the same time, the fantastic plays a semantic role in developing and expressing the basic themes of freedom and creative transformation. The dramatic message that finally emerges from the interplay of fantasy and reality is that the world is one of mysterious transformations, and that man himself, provided with a free and imaginative will, is capable of determining these changes. (JEB)

Susana D. Castillo, "El juego: texto dramático y montaje."

In *El juego*, the young Venezuelan dramatist Mariela Romero assimilates the socio-psychological current prevalent in contemporary Latin-American theatre. Through her Artaud-like portrayal of the destructive symbiotic relationship between Ana I and Ana II, the author achieves a forceful condemnation of the violence inherent in contemporary society. Romero's decision to include minimal stage directions produces a truly "open text," one which constitutes a challenge to the creative imagination and talent of anyone who should direct it. Through a comparison of two interpretations of the play as directed by Armando Gota, this article demonstrates the decisive role of the director in bringing to life the essence of a play in which the word is subordinate to the "concrete" imagery of a stage created for the senses. (In Spanish) (SDC)

Rosalea Postma, "Space and Spectator in the Theatre of Griselda Gambaro: *Información para extranjeros*."

Información para extranjeros represents the coalescence of Gambaro's experimentation with the use of theatre space and with the experience of the spectator in relation to the dramatic event. The physical setting is the primary instrument in the formation of the spectator's experience. Gambaro suggests an empty house as the ideal performance environment; guides lead groups of spectators through the theatre space to witness scenes in different rooms. The labyrinthine quality of the setting and the fragmentation of the dramatic structure contribute to the alienation and disorientation of the spectator. The 21 separate spectacles which make up *Información* deal with incidents of repression, torture, and cruelty. The lack of distance between the spectator and the action creates an implicit threat. The spectator is forced to interpret and to react to the inhumanity he observes, and to examine his experience as spectator in *Información para extranjeros*. (RP)

Graciela Palau de Nemes, "Resonancias colonialistas y heraclitanas en *La campana de Julio Ortega*."

La campana (The Bell), one of the four one-act pieces with which the Peruvian writer Julio

Ortega made his debut as a dramatist, shows a curious affinity with the philosophical doctrines of Heraclitus. Heraclitus has served contemporary Spanish American writers in their search for meaning. Ortega joins them by staging the search for an exit by two opposite characters imprisoned in a bell. In a Heraclitean context, these men are the victims of their own folly, thinking themselves imprisoned while they are really free. But they can also be the victims of their Spanish American historical circumstances because they are forced to function within the limitations of an old-fashioned, social structure no longer operative. The Heraclitean approach gives greater depth of meaning to Ortega's apparently simple plot, showing a very careful and artistic elaboration. (In Spanish) (GPN)

Fernando de Toro, "Ideología y teatro épico en Santa Juana de América"

There exists a group of Latin American authors that have made use of what we have called the Brecht system as an operatory model in order to reproduce concrete political and social reality, and also for the creation of their own dramatic works when faced with the problem that entails the desire to transmit political ideology or to denounce a given political system. The adoption of this system has allowed them to avoid a purely propagandistic production, and at the same time, to achieve the creation of a very original Latin American Epic theatre. This article has the objective of delineating the Epic structure in a drama that is one of the most representative examples of this type of theatre: *Santa Juana de América* by Andrés Lizárraga. The method used is the Actantial Model elaborated by A.J. Greimas and adapted for the theatre by Anne Ubersfeld in her book *Lire le théâtre*. The application of this model allows for establishing the structure of the play and for isolating the ideology contained in the Actants which constitute the model in the first place. (In Spanish) (FT)

Peter L. Podol, "Surrealism and the Grotesque in the Theatre of Ricardo Monti."

The Argentine playwright, Ricardo Monti, utilizes the esthetic of the grotesque and the ambience of Surrealism to undertake an anguished search for identity in his theatre. *Una noche con el señor Magnus e hijos* (1970) establishes the fundamental direction of his work. *Historia tendenciosa de la clase media argentina* (1971) sacrifices to an extent the threatening, yet magical, realm of his first work to examine, through allegory, fifty years of Argentine history. *Visita* (1977), Monti's most hermetic and complex work, intensifies the Surrealist ambience of *Magnus*, plunging the audience into a mysterious inner world totally divorced from waking reality. There the theme of immortality is examined in a dramatic milieu culled from man's subconscious fears and desires. Monti's plays combine national and universal concerns in a highly individual style; despite his limited production, he has already emerged as the most serious voice among dramatists currently writing in Argentina. (PLP)