

El Teatro Campesino Signs with Actors' Equity Association

El Teatro Campesino's founder and Artistic Director Luis Valdez has announced that after sixteen years as an internationally renowned professional theatre, the company has been signed to their first three year contract with Actors' Equity Association, the union representing professional actors throughout the United States.

As a signatory with Actors' Equity Association, El Teatro Campesino can now employ top professional actors from the ranks of Association members throughout the United States. Along with the opening of El Teatro Campesino's first resident playhouse last July, after sixteen years as a touring company, Valdez feels the contract is a milestone in El Teatro's development as a major American theatre company.

"Given our birth in the throes of a labor struggle in 1965," Valdez said, "it is overwhelmingly significant to us to finally be able to sign a union contract for our actors. It is the fulfillment of a dream—a first step towards a new future that encompasses many more actors than our own professional core group can provide. Through our new playhouse and the extended touring plans that this contract affords us, more audiences will see our productions than ever before. Now, performance quality in every role can fully realize our creative demands."

Commenting from Actors' Equity Association National Office in New York, Alan Eisenberg, Executive Secretary said:

"Actors' Equity Association is indeed pleased that El Teatro Campesino has begun an association with Equity under the Developing Theatre Process. We look forward to the steady growth of El Teatro Campesino."

The first play to be produced and presented by El Teatro under the Equity agreement is *Bandido!*—*The American Melodrama of Tiburcio Vasquez, Notorious California Bandit*, written and directed by Luis Valdez. *Bandido!* which premiered in December, 1981, is Valdez' first play since the highly successful *Zoot Suit*, now a Universal Film in general release.