

LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

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

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Abstracts

Robert J. Morris, "Alonso Alegría since *The Crossing* . . ."

Alonso Alegría has written two plays since the premiere of *El cruce sobre el Niágara* in 1969: *El color de Chambalén* (1981) and *Daniela Frank* (1982). The former is of particular appeal because it is Alegría's first attempt to transcend the traditional structural boundaries of drama and is his first recourse to the fantastic in order to effect social protest. The second work is especially noteworthy due to its innovative combination of what, in isolation, would be ordinary modes of expression. The play may be of interest to some Hispanists because it was composed in English. (RJM)

Judith Ishmael Bissett, "Delivering the Message: *Gestus* and Aguirre's *Los papeleros*."

Bertolt Brecht's writings have influenced the structure and criticism of Latin America's committed theatre. Many playwrights like Augusto Boal embrace Brecht's theory. Others, including Osvaldo Dragún, admit his significance, but do not feel that the dramatic structures they use should be labeled Brechtian. Critics of Latin American drama have often analyzed the plays of, for example, René Marqués, by identifying and examining Brechtian structures in a particular work. Having recognized Brecht's presence in Latin American drama, readers or potential producers of a work containing Brechtian structures must also recognize that these structures are used to evoke an intellectual response in audiences. If the desired reaction is to be attained, careful attention must be paid to readings or productions. Here, in order to illustrate an effective reading, Patrice Pavis's approach to *Gestus* is used to "read" scenes from Isadora Aguirre's *Los papeleros*. (JB)

John R. Rosenberg, "The Ritual of Solórzano's *Las manos de Dios*."

Although the theological aspects of Carlos Solórzano's *Las manos de Dios* have attracted critical comment, little has been said about the work's ritualistic structure as it relates to the religious theme. The Guatemalan playwright has used the ritual of the theatre to invert and question the rituals associated with Latin American Christianity. In effect, Solórzano constructs a ritual within a ritual (the theatre) that forces the spectator, like the townspeople of the play's fictional village, to deal with what Northrop Frye has called the "dialectic of desire." He accomplishes this by reflecting in his work the structure of the traditional miracle and mystery plays, by creating tension through the inversion of the roles assigned to traditional characters, and by involving his characters in ritualistic situations and settings that result in ironic expressions of the theme. The play, through its inherent and artificial ritual, concentrates on a significant problem of religious and existential philosophy and converts that problem into art. (JRR)

Wolfgang A. Luchting, "César Vega Herrera: A Poetic Dramatist."

The text attempts to make better known the Peruvian dramatist César Vega Herrera, who deserves a wider audience. For this purpose, four of his best-known plays are described and interpreted, as well as both certain elements isolated and certain techniques traced that recur in them. Emphasis is placed above all on the poetic vision Vega Herrera employs in the handling of his materials. (WAL)

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—GW