

## Plays in Performance

### *Los soles truncos/The Fanlights* in San Diego

Teatro Meta, the bilingual arm of the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, presented 19 performances of *Los soles truncos/The Fanlights* by Puerto Rican playwright René Marqués (1919-1979) between October 15 and 30, 1983, at the Cassius Carter Center Stage. Six performances were of the original Spanish version and 13 of the translation, *The Fanlights*, by Richard John Wiezell. In 1982 Teatro Meta presented *Over Easy or Las aventuras del huevo*, a product of collective improvisation, a Chicano-Mexican border play dealing with a Mexican illegal in San Diego.

*Los soles truncos/The Fanlights* (originally produced in 1958 in Puerto Rico) is set in San Juan, Puerto Rico. This short two-act play delineates in a style of poetic symbolism the plight of three aging spinster sisters whom time has devoured in spite of their barricaded existence. The three sisters, Inés, the eldest and strongest; Emilia, the handicapped, crazed, poetic one; and Hortensia, the self-centered youngest and prettiest, live in a decaying mansion that is about to be sacrificed to urban renewal, "Operation Bootstrap" and American business interests. Past glory gives way to the present in the finale which consists of a ritualistic burning of the old family house and its inhabitants, the descendants of a German émigré. The final purification is symbolic of Puerto Rican resignation in the face of American encroachment, the invasion of the "barbarians." Sibling rivalry and guilt are also consumed in the climactic catharsis.

The three actresses of this staging were the Argentines Irene De Bari (Inés), Lilian Garrett (Emilia), and Neorican Anita Hamilton (born in San Juan, Puerto Rico) as Hortensia. All three are thoroughly bilingual, with solid professional credits, and a high degree of polish in their acting. They managed to convey successfully the texture of fragility, enforced interdependence, bitter rivalry, and resigned resistance in both the Spanish- and English-language productions.

The co-directors of these stagings were Jorge Huerta of the University of California, San Diego, basically in charge of the Spanish-language version, and William Virchis of Southwestern College, basically in charge of the English-language production, but both interacting creatively to form unified, separate, but intimately related English- and Spanish-language productions.

Still, according to Irene De Bari, the Spanish-language and English-language productions demonstrated "totally different feelings. Spanish reso-



Anita Hamilton, Irene De Bari and Lillian Garrett in the Old Globe Theatre's Teatro Meta production of Marqué's *Los soles truncos*. Photo: Robert Burroughs

nates. It's more operatic, passionate, bombastic. The English is more lyrical, fragile and lighter." In fact, the poetic stylization flowed more naturally in Spanish, while the English version was more "realistic." Yet both versions served to underscore the play's ultimately symbolic basis, which is related to such varied plays in the international repertoire as Tennessee Williams' *The Glass Menagerie*, Anton Chekhov's *The Three Sisters*, and Federico García Lorca's tragedies as well as William Faulkner's short story, "A Rose for Emily."

Jorge Huerta stated that the Old Globe Theatre "is committed to an ongoing project to develop Latino artists and plays. No other theatrical institution of the same magnitude and prestige as the Globe has committed itself to this kind of project. We want to find local Chicano artists and to provide a platform for Latino and Chicano artists from all areas."

*Los soles truncos/The Fanlights* was successfully performed in the round, although originally written for proscenium staging. The set by Ken Dorsey was appropriately somber and cobwebbed; the shadowy lighting by John B. Forbes seemed to be refracted from the fanlights; the costumes by David Navarro Velásquez consisted of threadbare gowns; and Federico Lanuza provided mournfully haunting synthesizer music.

In short, *Los soles trancos/The Fanlights* in this production offered distinctively professional ensemble work of the highest caliber. This top-notch staging is clearly indicative of a serious interest in contributing worthy Latino drama to both Spanish- and English-speaking communities in the San Diego-Tijuana border area.

Arthur Ramírez  
University of Southern California

David George. *El circo de nuestra América*. Acto Editorial, São Paulo, 1983. (82 pp.).

En diciembre de 1981 tuve la suerte de ver el montaje (en el Middlebury College, Vermont) de la obra *El circo de nuestra América*, del dramaturgo David George.

Juzgué, entonces, que se trataba de una pieza que merecía una temporada en cualquier sala profesional de América Latina, pues la hallé suficientemente imaginativa y madura, además de concebida y estructurada dentro de la estética teatral de Latinoamérica. Dicho juicio formulado frente al montaje (en español) de la obra, lo confirmo ahora—dos años después—al leer y estudiar la edición brasileira de *El circo de nuestra América*.

El autor, David George, apunta en el prefacio de la edición que “a paça reflète o interesse profundo e o amor que tenho pela cultura da América Latina. A leitura de Carlos Fuentes, Gabriel García Márquez, Pablo Neruda e outros, faz-se notar claramente nas páginas seguintes.” Y la obra no refleja solamente las lecturas e intereses del autor, sino que es prueba de que ha incorporado, aprehendido y hecho suyos varios caminos de realización de la literatura latinoamericana.

En efecto, las escenas de *El Circo* (20 en total, en los dos actos de esta versión) se mueven fundamentalmente dentro de dos intereses que marcan la literatura latinoamericana de la actualidad: la política y lo mágico. David George combina de manera inteligente y con poesía escénica estos dos mundos; así, la realidad política que viven los pueblos de los países “al sur del río Bravo” es presentada en lo fundamental como las visiones alucinadas de la protagonista (Catalina, estudiante estadounidense, de 20 años, becada); pero no en alucinaciones que alienan, sino, y por el contrario, en visiones que la llevan a descubrir y vivenciar la crudeza y la violencia de lo que ocurre en Latinoamérica (escenas I-8a., II-4a., II-6a. y II-7a.). Las pesadillas de Catalina no son, sin embargo, el único recurso teatral que emplea George para dialogar con el público. También hay en su obra escenas de contenido político estructuradas de una manera más ortodoxa y también muy latinoamericana (en tanto que el cuño brechtiano ha señalado en buena medida al teatro de Hispanoamérica de los decenios últimos); me refiero a aquellas presentadas por el Narrador (Carlos, el maestro de ceremonias de un circo ambulante), como son las escenas séptima (“United Fruit Company”) y décima (“La Revolución Mexicana”) del primer acto, y las escenas tercera (“Pirámides”) y quinta (“Coca Cola”) del segundo acto. Además, hay

escenas puramente circenses cargadas de problemática política en el discurso enunciado en escena (por ejemplo, la undécima y la duodécima escenas del acto primero).

Ahora bien, de la esqueletización de la pieza delineada en el párrafo anterior no deberá inferirse que se trata de una obra dramática cuyo mérito es la información política. En lo absoluto. *El circo de nuestra América* tiene fueros artísticos en su estructuración y en su concepción escénica. El autor dice en el prefacio que la génesis de la pieza se halla en ejercicios de creación teatral en los que había venido participando; en la vitalidad del montaje de diciembre de 1981 era evidente el entrenamiento en determinados laboratorios que tenía el elenco; sin embargo, la virtud estructural de la obra, creo, debe atribuírsele enteramente a George. Y la riqueza de la armazón de la obra es grande (acaso es su mérito principal). En este terreno el dramaturgo se lanza a correr un cierto riesgo: plantea un primer acto más corto en tiempo escénico que el segundo y, encima, un tanto muy fragmentado (doce escenas), y se juega con un acto final un poco largo. Pero David George es un escritor de mucho oficio como director teatral y agarra y sacude al público desde más o menos transcurrido el primer 10% del tiempo escénico del segundo acto, y ya no lo suelta ni le da respiro. En efecto, la historia de la protagonista que había quedado en suspenso desde la escena octava del primer acto logra un impacto tremendo al reaparecer en la escena cuarta del segundo, y entra en un ritmo frenético en las escenas sexta y séptima, hasta llegar a un desenlace rapidísimo en la octava y final (que es la despedida del circo) con una Catalina que es, ahora, un ser humano nuevo, tras haber conocido las entrañas infernales de la América Latina.

David George nació en Minneapolis, en 1942, y ejerce la docencia universitaria en los Estados Unidos; cabe sin embargo, gracias a su *El circo de nuestra América*, señalarlo como uno de los nuevos escritores de teatro latinoamericano. Tal la esencia de su obra. El sitio de su nacimiento se antoja como un accidente biográfico.

Manuel Fernández  
Guatemala

*Puente negro*, St. Edward's University (Austin, Texas), 24 January 1984.

One of the characters in Estela Portillo Trambley's new play, *Puente negro*, is a mojado named El Topo who becomes a different man every time he sets foot on American soil. (He is continually deported but keeps coming back.) He is amazed that there is "a whole town in California dedicated to dreams where thousands of people come on a pilgrimage to this pueblo—just as we Mejicanos go to see La Virgen de Guadalupe." And then he adds, "there is even a shrine to a little mouse named Mickey and the Americans sing a song to him."

It is this mythical attraction that brings millions of undocumented workers to the U.S.A. every year and this is the subject of Ms. Portillo Trambley's play which premiered at St. Edward's Mary Moody Northen Theatre.

In the play we meet a kind hearted coyote named La Chaparra, a brother and sister dance team named Amalia and Narciso who have dreams of being discovered in fabled Chicago, a farmworker who is destined to go and pick grapes (of wrath) in the San Fernando Valley of California, and a sweet young thing named Inocencia who was going to be a maid for a rich gringa until she fell in love with Narciso. They all spend the night in a little hut on the American side of the border which is a way station to other parts of the country.

Will they make it to their final destinations or will they be stopped by the migra along the way? Portillo Trambley, the consummate playwright, keeps us guessing until the very end by weaving a delicate embroidery of their hopes and fears. The characters are boldly drawn as Amalia tries to break up the love affair between her brother and Inocencia. El Topo paints visions of utopia as he discusses a scheme to work his way across Texas to the Mardi Gras in New Orleans by posing as a famous Mariachi. They collide in verbal fencing duels until the stark reality of the Immigration and Naturalization Service interrupts their tequila reverie.

*Puente negro* is part of a collection of Estela Portillo Trambley's plays recently published by Bilingual Press of Ypsilanti, Michigan entitled *Sor Juana and Other Plays*. Unfortunately, the production did not do the play justice. Patricio Achurra, the director, is a Chilean actor and director who is a celebrity in his own country and the star of numerous telenovelas. His attempts to use slides to obtain the Brechtian "distancing effect" worked very rarely.

The weakest point of the show was the singing—or lack of it. The audience was not allowed to appreciate the author's lyrics and original music. Furthermore, since the story turned on how spectacular Narciso and Amalia allegedly danced, the final dance sequence fell flat after such great expectations.

The costumes were so "típico" that they bordered on the stereotypical. This, together with the many bottles of tequila they allegedly consumed, gave us a negative impression of the characters which are really quite rounded in the script.

Although the cast was mixed (Anglo, Black, Chicano), this did not seem to get in the way of their credibility except for Inocencia who looked like a mannequin or sorority sister in her Mexican wedding dress and fake black wig. The best performance was turned in by Martha Patino as Amalia whose fiery speeches and vibrant personality seemed to light up the stage whenever she took focus. A close second goes to Carola Summers as the lady coyote with the heart of gold. Another gem was Andy Herrera as the viejito who never uttered a single line but who spoke with his bones and sinews.

We should be seeing more of Estela Portillo Trambley's plays now that *Sor Juana* is out. (Teatro Lucha of Austin recently performed *Blacklight*.) Hopefully, the productions will live up to the standard of the scripts.

Carlos Morton  
*University of Texas*

Theatre Ictus, Santiago (1983)

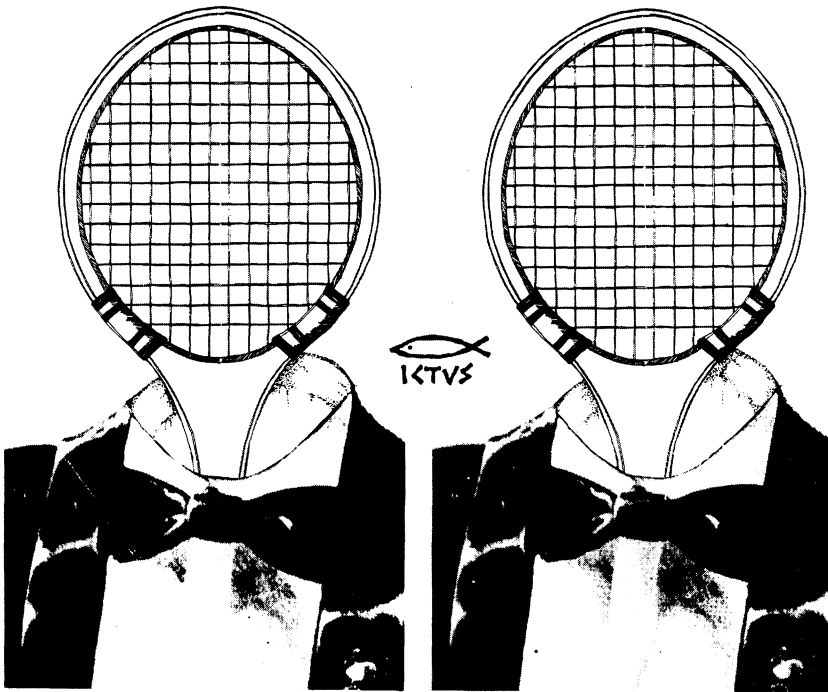
“Everything you have on is Chinese!” was the line that drew the greatest amount of applause and uneasy giggles from the shoppers clustered around the young couple doing “street theatre.” The place was the main shopping mall of the north Chilean port of Antofagasta and “Chinese” meant to them any item imported from any country in the Far East. Although the city in May, 1983, was prosperous compared to the rest of the country, the residents were well aware of the potentially devastating effects of the recent government policy. Their GM plant was due to close since it was no longer able to compete with tax-free Japanese imports.

It was also in Antofagasta that the work of the group comprising Theatre Ictus was highly praised by a Santiago professor of filmmaking who was in Antofagasta to give a series of lectures on film technique at the Universidad del Norte. The film instructor explained that their improvisations are done in the form of satires on the policies of whatever regime is in existence. However, they are done in a sufficiently oblique way in order not to provoke those in power. This view was subsequently contradicted by a long-time fan who, as pro-Pinochet disagreeing with their views, still admired their work. He thought that their satire was not oblique, but blunt. But because of their popularity among the intellectuals, the government, in order not to appear too repressive, merely ignored their existence. (He also verified the film instructor’s statement that although the government was aware of the existence of parties in private homes where the smuggled videotape of *Missing* was shown, they preferred to “look the other way.”)

This was verified through the benefit performance given by Ictus the last week of May at their theatre in Santiago. The \$5.00 price of admission appeared unusually high compared to the \$3.00 charged for the best seats in Antofagasta for a performance by the Chilean Ballet Folclórico. A member of the audience, a film producer currently working on a film about Chilean ex-president Frei, who had done so much for the country, explained that the price of admission was for that night only since it was a benefit performance for the employees of Radio Cooperativa, a 24-hour news station. Because of what had been perceived as controversial news interpretations, the regime exactly one week earlier had ordered the elimination of news personnel and the station was granted permission to play only music. But, because of protests by both sponsors and audience, the personnel had been reinstated the day of the performance. The benefit performance had been the idea of Ictus’ co-founders, Delfina Guzmán and Nissim Sharim to help out the unemployed newscasters. That those who were to be benefited comprised at least half of the audience of the completely filled 400-seat theatre could be seen by the affection and warmth with which the audience greeted one another.

The stylized, expertly directed and acted play *Renegociación de un préstamo relacionado, bajo fuerte lluvia, en cancha de tenis mojada* demonstrates the tensions between two wealthy brothers playing highly competitive tennis under the half-benign, half-subservient care of an old family retainer, played by Alex Zisis.

**Renegociación de un préstamo  
relacionado, bajo fuerte lluvia,  
en cancha de tenis mojada.**



The tension during the matches is paralleled by the tension between the industrialist and the banker as the former unsuccessfully tries to get the latter to promise to renew a loan on what is obviously a business that is suffering continuous losses. Between the games, which are stopped by deluges of rain, there are flashbacks of the boys playing competitively in their youth; of their domineering governess; of a wispy mother who wanders around in a negligee making vague allusions to a father who never appears; a vigorously pummeling Swedish masseuse. The two most stylized of all the flashbacks were based on the industrialist's innuendos about his brother's homosexuality, both using strobe lights: the first where the banker prances around in his mother's clothes; the second done to a heavy jazz beat in which female clothes are thrown about by several scantily clad male figures which would indicate a homosexual orgy.

The ending of the play is a realistic one. Aware of the fact that his factory will shortly be impounded by creditors, the industrialist sends his wife there to pull the cash out of the safe. While she is doing so, the banker enters. After the factory owner enters, there is a violent argument and the body of the banker is later found by the horrified caretaker.

Since in typical Ictus fashion the acting was based on group effort, it was agile. Elsa Poblete who played all four female roles was more convincing as the wife than as the other three women. The brothers, played by Roberto Poblete and Osvaldo Osorio were convincing as both the currently successful brothers as well as in their earlier years.

In the program it is noted that this is the first time in Ictus history that the two co-founders are not acting but directing. Carlos Genovese Fousse, in charge of publicity, describes his amazement at how quickly he was absorbed into the theatre collective in 1980 “after my arrival, together with other young actors one of whom is part of the current cast, we received advice and support from all the members of the group. We ended up becoming so close that in no time we formed a part of the Ictus team. I was surprised at how quickly I shared the creative responsibilities and goals of the group. I now felt myself part of it. I was in a position to see myself in Julio Bravo, the author of this play. He arrived timid but indefatigable with the original script. From the beginning he accepted the fact that it would be seen as a problem and daily he made it grow during rehearsals, arguments, conversations over coffee and anguish in front of his typewriter when he had to re-do a scene or work in any dialogue. He wisely allowed Ictus to ‘pour into him’ their experience of twenty years and he, in turn, gave to the group a different way of looking at things, irreverent and deeply intense, such as is usually felt by a young man.

“Almost unaware of what was taking place, he was author, scene designer, a critic of costuming and programs, everything. In the final analysis, there is no one who can say that this play is not Bravo’s, that it was negated, absorbed or swallowed up; nor can anyone say that this is not a production of Ictus with its stamp of humor, perhaps more biting than most through its style of presentation.”

And author Bravo states in the same program: “The story of the play is odd. It started back in 1980 when I was working on a variety show which was later to be called *O Caquenes*. The last scene consisted of a skit of two financiers playing tennis, chatting and enjoying economic prosperity; later, the image of the two players remained in my mind. I wrote several versions and finally, script in hand, I went to talk it over with my friends at Ictus. To be honest, the impact was very little, maybe a good idea that could be worked on, nothing more, until one day Roberto Poblete came to me. He had heard the first reading and some ideas had come to him. We came to the conclusion that the play was not too well-structured and we decided to work on it. Trying out alternatives and new ideas over a period of several months it was re-written several times.

“We again approached Ictus and this time the plot was approved. Rehearsals started and Delfina and Nissim worked with us subtly giving advice and suggestions. But then the dynamic quality of the show emerged—far more than what we had expected. We all suggested new ideas, widening



the base of the play, bringing to it a profundity which exceeded even our imagination. We all ended up immersed in a dramatic inquiry on the morality involved in the world of money. Delfina and Nissim both directed it. I became a participating playwright involved in the theatrical aspect; the re-working of situations, the polishing of the characters, living the work inwardly. The actors not only acted but invented, argued, suggested, created. The simplistic presentation of an experimental play was transformed into a collective work in which the contributions of everyone involved were gathered into the final version.”

And co-director Sharim in the program’s article captioned with a pun on the play’s title “Préstamos relacionados y otras relaciones” emphasizes the importance of collective action in the theatre: “This is the first time that Delfina and I are co-directing a show without the necessity of going on the stage and literally doing something. And I can definitely state that the experience has been both upsetting and enriching. To transform a dramatic outline and transmit its essence to a colleague so that its stage existence can be handed over to an audience is perhaps one of the important emotional and exciting aspects of the theatre, almost like changing one’s very own skin, to be oneself in others and to permit that others are themselves as one. Many times we (Delfina Guzman and I) felt an almost irresistible urge to get on the stage and act, but many were the times we learned by allowing both the staging and the personalities of the actors to go in their own direction. The basic character of the theatre creation and production became more evident; the need for group action which is basically expressed. In the theatre, I think, the only way that ideas can be brought to life is that the dream of one or more of the creators is transformed into the dream of all who are involved in the process of creation.”

To the casual theatre-goer the play is lively, worthy of Ictus’ reputation for good entertainment. For those who were looking for deeper meanings, the work represents the corruption that Chilean businessmen feel is emerging in their country. And for those who are or have been involved in theatre work, the value of a finely-tuned ensemble effort is unmistakably demonstrated.

Sara Simon  
*Houston, Texas*

## Asociación de Críticos e Investigadores Teatrales de la Argentina (ACITA)

Señor George Woodyard

*Latin American Theatre Review*

Buenos Aires, octubre de 1983

De nuestra mayor consideración:

Por la presente tenemos el agrado de informar a usted que el pasado martes 11 tuvo lugar la asamblea constitutiva de la Asociación de Críticos e Investigadores Teatrales de la Argentina (ACITA), entidad que nuclea a los periodistas especializados y a los estudiosos de la escena de nuestro país, y cuyas autoridades—según la votación efectuada en esa misma asamblea—serán Luis Ordaz (presidente), Gerardo Fernández (secretario general), Pedro Espinosa (secretario rama críticos), Gastón Breyer (secretario rama investigadores), José Marial (secretario de relaciones con el interior), Emilio A. Stevanovitch (secretario de relaciones con el exterior), Kive Staiff (secretario de cultura), Beatriz Iacoviello (secretaria de prensa y difusión), Beatriz Seibel (secretaria de administración), Osvaldo Quiroga (secretario de actas), Eduard Caffera (secretario de admisión), Jorge Miguel Couselo, Jorge Lafforgue y Roberto Vega (comisión fiscalizadora).

Asimismo se resolvió por unanimidad nombrar socios honorarios de la entidad al señor Edmundo Guibourg y a los doctores Raúl H. Castagnino y José María Monner Sans proponiéndose que dichas personas integren además la comisión de ética.

La sede de la entidad será Maipú 621 (Asociación de Cronistas Cinematográficos), y el horario de atención será de 15 a 20.

Sin otro particular, saludamos a usted muy atentamente

Luis Ordaz  
Presidente

Gerardo Fernández  
Secretario General

## Book Reviews

Portillo Trambley, Estela. *Sor Juana and Other Plays*. Ypsilanti, Michigan: Bilingual Press, 1983. 208 pp.

In her introduction to this collection, Estela Portillo Trambley makes no secret of her innumerable attempts at understanding and perfecting the skills of playwriting. Fortunately for us, she has persevered in this effort, as evidenced by the four plays collected in this volume. *Puente negro* deals with the problems faced by illegal aliens in a border town setting, whereas *Blacklight* explores the alienation of a Chicano family as its members confront hardships and personal crises. In *Sor Juana* the difficulties in comprehending the essence of existence are revealed through a series of episodes that shed new light on La Décima Musa as she suffers inner turmoil and faces the oppression of society and the Church. Unlike the other plays, *Autumn Gold* does not have a distinctively Chicano or Mexican milieu, and one wonders why it has been included in this anthology. The play deals with non-Hispanic middle-class characters who are faced with the comic dilemma of what to do with a corpse.

Of these plays, two deserve our attention most. *Blacklight* has been in the process of production and revision for a number of years and recently has been staged in El Paso by Roberto Pomo's Elenco Popular with much success. The play's major problem is that the language used never seems quite appropriate to the character types drawn. Unfortunately, the characters quickly settle into the more upper-middle-class, well-educated language typical of Portillo Trambley's writing. The infrequent use of Spanish terms or the simple omission of articles or verbs is not enough to establish that the play deals with street corner "vatos," older Mexican Americans, or, as in the case of the earlier *Puente negro*, a group of illegal aliens.

While language does pose some problems, *Blacklight* remains a powerful play in its treatment of man's inability to control fate. Eighteen-year-old Mundo wants to help his father and although he attempts to do his best, he is limited in his vision and circumstances. He sees the ever-present railroad tracks as a threat to his life and surroundings. They took his uncle's life when a train struck him, and the memory of this brings on a frightening paralysis, threatening Mundo and his whole family's existence. But Mundo fails to see that other forces are also controlling his destiny. His primary flaw is his inability to let go of Shirley (portrayed as a stereotypical *gringa*), and although he attempts to break away from her, it is too late. Her husband discovers their

affair and shoots Mundo. Yet throughout the play there is an irrational or at least unknowable force at work, as evidenced in Itzamna, the Mayan god of Night and Day, and Mundo's father's unyielding desire to know and serve that god. Itzamna calls for sacrifice, taking the son for the father, and in this way, Mundo does manage to save his father, but only through his own death.

Time and place are unclear in *Blacklight* since the play works on separate levels of reality. The dance and ritual with the appearance of the gods occurs apart from the reality which the other characters inhabit, although both are part of the total story. While many questions arise in a somewhat scattered plot, the play is worth reading and offers a challenge to any director, especially to one wishing to depict the border town environment that the author knows so well.

By far the most dynamic work in this collection is *Sor Juana*. Leaving to one side some of the unbelievable and stereotyped characters (most particularly the poor slaves), the central figure belongs to a milieu with which Portillo Trambley is definitely familiar and comfortable. Sor Juana is portrayed as an educated, middle-aged woman who intermingles her philosophical insights with everyday reality. The historical setting allows for a storyline to develop between the main character and the particular individuals who affected her life. The dramatist has selected an interesting segment of Sor Juana's life with which to begin and end the play, that is, from when she is forty-two years old to the time near the end of her life two years later. Throughout the play, however, Sor Juana appears through various stages in her life, as she searches for meaning and fulfillment, confronting many obstacles along the way.

*Sor Juana* consists of three acts, each divided into two scenes. The last act is rather brief and somewhat unsatisfactory because it shifts focus and leaves one wondering exactly how Sor Juana's life ended (that is, if one is not familiar with her biography). The flashback technique is utilized often, primarily through the use of light and a few stage properties to show a spatio-temporal change. The lack of depth in character development evident in the other plays is not a major problem here, as Sor Juana is well fleshed out through her own lengthy dialogues as well as through what the other characters say about her. Perhaps the playwright does try to encompass too much with the multiple scenes and many characters, but they work well to establish the historical figure in various and significant periods of her life.

What Estela Portillo Trambley has attempted in *Blacklight* with dance, ritual and music combined with realistic scenes, comes together here as one reality. We are caught up with Sor Juana's mind as a chamber in which we experience her thoughts and vivid memories, enhanced by aural and visual stage elements. And just as this play provides new insights into the life of a woman who is today considered a feminist heroine by many Chicanos, this anthology as a whole represents a worthwhile attempt by a Chicana playwright to broaden the scope of the total Chicano experience.

Elizabeth C. Ramírez  
San Antonio, Texas

Kanellos, Nicolás ed., *Mexican American Theatre: Then and Now*. Houston: Texas, Arte Público Press/Revista Chicano-Riqueña, año XI, No. 1 (1983). 120 pp.

Las funciones primordiales del teatro hispano en el suroeste de los Estados Unidos han sido el enfoque artístico, junto con el énfasis comunitario y los lazos de unión que se crean entre el pueblo mexicano en un territorio que previamente había sido suyo pero que ahora pertenece al angloamericano. Esta es la acertada orientación que toman la mayoría de los ensayos aquí incluidos. Como dice Tomás Ybarra-Frausto: "Such expressive forms, understood as both celebration and performance, bonded the spectators and spectacles in a nexus of social interaction. Presentational events undoubtedly contributed to the cohesion of the Mexican American community, strengthening its cultural identity and providing a sense of security against the alien and encroaching hegemony of the American way of life" (41-42).

El primer ensayo es de Nicolás Kanellos, editor de la *Revista Chicano-Riqueña*, así como del número especial aquí reseñado. A manera de introducción, Kanellos presenta una trayectoria panorámica del teatro hispano del suroeste mencionando actores, obras, empresarios y lugares específicamente geográficos como San Antonio, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Monterrey en el estado de Nuevo León, etc., lugares donde este teatro tuvo sus mejores representaciones. Todos estos elementos contribuyen al desarrollo del teatro hispano con sus diferentes formas. Ybarra-Frausto enfoca su presentación en una actriz cómica que tuvo gran impacto en el público de ese tiempo, La Chata Noloesca (1903-1979), quien incorporó a sus presentaciones elementos del humor mexicano para hacerse entender entre su público. El ensayo que sigue es de Armando Miguélez y éste está enfocado en sus investigaciones que hizo sobre el Teatro Carmen y las contribuciones específicas de esta compañía al desarrollo teatral en Tucson, Arizona durante las fechas de 1915 a 1923. Este lugar, aunque alejado de los centros artísticos principales de ese tiempo, fue importante ya que se necesitaba pasar por allí para llegar a los lugares más grandes y más importantes.

Debe hacerse hincapié en el hecho de que la mayoría de las obras mencionadas en estos ensayos fueron escritas en español. Obviamente iban dirigidas a la comunidad hispana que era la que podía entenderlas. Importante es mencionar también que tanto la vida cultural, como la económica en muchos casos, también eran conducidas en español. De allí que las obras fueran representadas en la parte hispana que en aquellos tiempos correspondía al mismo centro de la ciudad. Hoy día, gracias a la renovación urbana, han sobrevivido pocos de los teatros donde se hacían estas representaciones. Vemos aquí otro ejemplo de como el chicano ha sido despojado de gran parte de su herencia cultural y como estos edificios han sido reemplazados por grandes estacionamientos que cumplen con la demanda del "progreso."

Esta publicación forma parte de la *Revista Chicano-Riqueña* a la vez que sale anunciada como libro publicado por el Arte Público Press. Es una publicación interesante porque presenta un panorama cronológico de la historia del teatro chicano desde sus primeras manifestaciones en el suroeste de los Estados Unidos (Juan de Oñate, 1598), hasta lo más reciente de El Teatro Campesino

y del Teatro de la Esperanza. Se incluyen entrevistas con Luis Valdez y con Rodrigo Duarte para que el lector pueda captar, de primera mano, la importancia y comprender los problemas y barreras que se le han impuesto al teatro chicano contemporáneo en su esfuerzo por desarrollar, por conducto de este medio artístico, una conciencia de pueblo explotado. Se puede apreciar como, a pesar de estas barreras, este teatro ha podido sobrevivir gracias a los esfuerzos colectivos de los miembros de los diferentes grupos teatrales.

Esta es una publicación importante que, a no ser por los errores tipográficos, se leería con más gusto y sin interrupciones ya que su contenido es valioso.

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Hoffman, Herbert H. *Latin American Play Index*. Metuchen, N.J.: The Scarecrow Press, 1983. 131 pp.

The volume under review is the second volume of a two-volume set, and it is subtitled "1962-1980." Volume 1, in preparation, will be retrospective.

Organization is straightforward, and the main body of the index is a listing of playwrights whose texts have been included in anthologies and periodicals or have been published separately. Seven hundred playwrights writing in Spanish, Portuguese, and French are listed, and 1700 plays are represented. Reference is to approximately 250 collections and anthologies and to 50 periodicals.

Since so many important texts in Latin American drama have not appeared in independent publications, Hoffman's index is an indispensable guide to a scattered area of cultural production. Also of special utility is the cross-reference index of titles cited.

Hoffman's bibliography complements Erminio Giuseppe Neglia and Luis Ordaz's *Repertorio selecto del teatro hispanoamericano contemporáneo*; 2a ed. (Tempe: Arizona State University, Center for Latin American Studies, 1980), which lists by country the production of some 200 of Latin America's most important dramatists. Scholars wishing to pursue dramatic production more comprehensively will welcome Hoffman's index, despite the fact that my estimation is that more than half of the dramatists listed have only one play to their credit.

With Hoffman's and Neglia-Ordaz's bibliographies and Leon F. Lyday and George W. Woodyard's *A Bibliography of Latin American Theater Criticism, 1940-1974* (Austin: University of Texas Press, Institute of Latin American Studies, 1976) at our disposal, we now need a solid bibliography of criticism in the principal literary and cultural supplements of the major theatre capitals of Latin America to feel we have achieved an outstanding level of bibliographic control in the field.

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## Recent Publications, Materials Received and Current Bibliography

[The following recent publications noted or received by the Editors of the *Latin American Theatre Review* may prove of interest to readers. Inclusion here does not preclude subsequent review.]

- Agosin, Marjorie. Review: "Fox, Lucía. *Ayer es nunca jamás* (colección de dramas). Lima: Editorial Salesiana, 1980," *Revista Iberoamericana*, 120-121 (jul-dic 1982), 743-744.
- Ardiles Gray, Julio. *Fantasmas y pesadillas: Teatro (1972-1978)*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1983. Includes: *Ceremonia inútil; La Flor Azteca; Cambiemos los papeles*.
- Arrau, Sergio. *El padre del teatro venezolano. Entre ratas y gorriones*. Caracas: Concurso Andrés Bello, 1983.
- Arrington, M. A. Review: "Peden, Margaret Sayers. *Emilio Carballido*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1980." *Latin American Literary Review* 9, No. 19 (Fall 1981), 58-60.
- Azparren Giménez, Leonardo. *Cabrujas en tres actos*. Caracas: Ediciones El Nuevo Grupo, 1983.
- Blanco Amores de Pagella, Angela. *Motivaciones del teatro argentino en el Siglo XX*. Argentina: Ediciones Culturales Argentinas, 1983.
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- Callado, Antonio. *A revolta da cachaça. Teatro negro*. Brasil: Editora Nova Fronteira, S. A. 1983. Incluye *A revolta da cachaça; Pedro Mico; O tesouro de Chica da Silva; Uma rede para Iemanjá*.
- Caravelle*, Cahiers du Monde Hispanique et Luso-Brésilien, 40, 1983. Special issue on Latin American theatre. Includes: Articles on E. Wolff; Latin American theatre in France; Manuel Puig; Theatre of Conrado Nalé Roxlo; Revival of Chilean theatre; Honduran theatre; Ms. of Egon Wolff, *El sobre azul* and Ms. of Sergio Arrau, *El rey de la Araucanía*, with introduction by Bravo-Elizondo; Interviews with Jorge Lavelli, Norman Briski, Edmundo Guibourg, Cipe Lincovsky, Griselda Gambaro, Carlos Gorostiza, Oscar Castro.

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- Centro Latinoamericano de Creación e Investigación Teatral, *6 Años de Actividades 1977-1983*. Caracas, Venezuela, 1983.
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- Conjunto*. 51 (enero-marzo 1982) Incluye los siguientes artículos: "Sobre teatro y realidad en América Latina, tres experiencias," Carlos Espinosa Domínguez; "El teatro y la política en el teatro de Andrés Eloy Blanco y Aquiles Nazoa," Vango Caripá y Elita Rodríguez; "El primer encuentro de Teatristas Latinoamericanos," Nina Miller; "El Onceno Festival Chicano-Latino de teatro," Pedro Antonio Lira.
- Conjunto* 52 (abril-junio 1982). Incluye los siguientes artículos de interés: "Encuentro con Andrés Lizárraga, un dramaturgo de nuestros días," Ileana Azor; *Prueba de fuego*, obra en un acto de Ugo Ulive; *La madriguera*, obra en un acto, Jairo Aníbal Niño; *La gallina ciega*, obra en un acto, Roma Mahieu; "Habla Ricard Salvat," Humberto Arenal; "Sobre el teatro de Nicolás Dorr," Salvador Bueno.
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- Escena*, Revista Teatral Año 5, Anexo No 1, 1983. San José, Costa Rica. Incluye libreto de Magdalena de Ricardo Fernández Guardia, y artículo crítico del montaje de *Juego de zorros* por Lenín Garrido.
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