

Jorge Andrade (1922–1984)

Theatre personnel, dramatists, critics, actors and enthusiasts have been saddened by the death of Jorge Andrade, one of Brazil's best dramatists, whose fame has extended beyond the country's borders.

Born in the state of São Paulo, member of a family of large landowners, and well acquainted with the life and problems of the interior, Jorge Andrade never cut off those roots completely when he moved to the city of São Paulo. His training and experience brought about a determined dedication to the theatre.

As an early pioneer in that field, I became acquainted with his first works on a visit to Brazil in the 50's. I was most favorably impressed and reported back, via a paper and published article, that Jorge Andrade offered promise in the theatre for his skill with plot and the handling of his characters. On a later visit, I had the pleasure of meeting him at the home of the Brazilian critic, and in-law relative of the playwright, Décio de Almeida Prado. Despite his distinguished status, Jorge Andrade proved to be quiet and unassuming, but pensive and personally ingratiating. I was further stimulated by him and others at that meeting.

Through a series of generally successful plays, Jorge Andrade treated locally-based and personally-tinged themes, with basically traditional approaches, always revealing serious intent and fine execution. With time, he modified these with a wider extension of his themes, many still on local traditions and situations, and a broader range of theatre techniques. Throughout his works one can sense autobiographical motifs which reveal the presence of the dramatist himself.

From *O Telescópio* and *A Moratória*, through *Pedreira das Almas* and *Vereda da Salvação*, with a further branching out in such plays as *A Escada* and *Os Ossos do Barão*, he went on to further self-examination, consideration and evaluation of old versus new modes of existence, pondering relative ideals and values in *Senhora na Boca do Lixo*, *Rastro Atrás*, *As Confrarias* and *O Sumidouro*.

Many times a prize-winning dramatist, Jorge Andrade contributed significantly to the development of Brazil's contemporary theatre and his fame has spread to other countries. His departure marks a definite loss for the theatre world.

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