Contents

Abstracts

Juan Manuel Marcos, "Puig, Plutarco, Goethe: la dramaticidad cro-notópica de *El beso de la mujer araña.*"

    This article examines the dramatic structure of Manuel Puig's *El beso de la mujer araña.* Applying Mijail Bajtín's theories on Plutarch, Goethe, and the "cronotopo," respectively, the author proposes three basic ideas: first, that the use of dramatic dialogue is necessary to emphasize the dual internal psychological processes of Arregui and Molina; second, that the changes undergone by the characters arise from deeper changes within the social context; third that the combination of the jail cell, the South American environment, and the seventies, as geographical and chronological backdrop, constitutes a "cronotope," that is, a dialogical space where time and place, language and technique become indissolubly articulated. (JMM)

Karen Louise Laughlin, "The Language of Cruelty: Dialogue Strategies and the Spectator in Gambaro's *El desatino* and Pinter's *The Birthday Party.*"

    In emphasizing the links between Griselda Gambaro's plays and Antonin Artaud's appeals for a concrete theatre language, previous studies of her works have overlooked her experimentation with the functions of dramatic dialogue. Like many of her contemporaries, in particular British playwright Harold Pinter, Gambaro not only exploits the power of scenic images but also employs a "dialogue of cruelty" in her plays. Gambaro's own comments on Argentine theatre make clear her fascination with Pinter's work and the techniques of verbal aggression and manipulation characterizing her *El desatino* closely resemble those of Pinter's *The Birthday Party.* But the violent dialogue of these plays does more than drive their action. In its aggressiveness, and especially its indeterminacy, this dramatic language assaults the spectator as well, forcing audience members to build up their own images of the plays' menacing worlds, until their very frustration, uncertainty, and cruelty become a part of the spectator's own experience. (KLL)

Catherine Larson, " 'No conoces el precio de las palabras': Language and Meaning in Usigli's *El gesticulador.*"

    In Usigli's *El gesticulador,* two key types of acts of discourse serve as structural underpinnings for the dramatic text. The first is tied to general theories of reference: the question of identity, expressed by the phrase "Yo soy César Rubio," constitutes the protagonist's interior conflict. The second type of speech act, one that is related to the question of Rubio's identity, is the play's central commissive act, the protagonist's promise to his son, Miguel. Names and promises correlate with truth and lies in *El gesticulador,* as Usigli's characters intergrate linguistic conflict into conflicts on familial, political, and historical levels. (CL)

Denise M. DiPuccio, "Metatheatrical Histories in *Corona de luz*."

Corona de luz simultaneously outlines the process of playwriting and reveals the interrelationship between dramatic, historical, and philosophical texts. "Dramatic imagination," defined by Lionel Abel in *Metatheatre: A New View of Dramatic Form* and exercised by Usigli and his characters, erases distinctions between fiction and reality and delves into a truth that surpasses both. The scope of this play, however, embraces not only dramatic but historical imagination, which also blurs distinctions between two apparently unique concepts: a sequence of events and an interpretation of those occurrences. Finally, the emphasis on dramatic and historical imagination in *Corona de luz* underscores similarities between the aesthetic purpose of the playwright and the academic intention of the historian. Both entail linguistic manipulation in the writing of a text, which, in turn, becomes a reality, in and of itself. (DMD)

Isabel Alvarez-Borland and David George, "*La noche de los asesinos*: Text, Staging, and Audience."

This collaborative study examines *La noche de los asesinos* in terms of audience response and modes of communication. The first segment proposes two avenues of reception in Triana's play which correspond to two kinds of reality. The play's ludic structure with its metadramatic dimension becomes an avenue for a second audience response, one rooted in the play's archetypal essence. The study's second segment analyzes David George's 1984 staging of *La noche de los asesinos* at the University of São Paulo Escola de Comunicações e Artes. Here, the discussion focuses on the ways the director sought to communicate with audiences on unconscious levels by manipulating the work's archetypal dimensions. At the core of his production was a method of collective rehearsal, a ritual mode of staging that emphasized the play's nonverbal theatrical language. (IAB)

Catalina Julia Artesi, "Una nueva forma para la farsa: *Fidela* de Aurelio Ferretti."

The use of the puppet takes on a special importance as a vehicle of expression in *Fidela*. Through the play-within-a-play situation, the author establishes three interdependent levels of reality in the Pirandellian mode. Starting with the classic love triangle, the farce is constructed around a series of absurdities which upset the conventional reality of romantic married life. These grotesque, paradoxical situations facilitate the shaping of a world which is not a caricature of reality, but a social critique of the institution of marriage and of the judicial system. *Fidela* thus helps to create a new version of the farce in Latin America, one which goes beyond the grotesque as mere technique to illuminate, with tragicomic and existential overtones, the contradictions of the contemporary world.

Osvaldo Pellettieri, "Presencia del sainete en el teatro argentino de las últimas décadas."

According to Yuri Lotman, the esthetic function of an artistic text arises from the interaction of its own structural elements and the judgments of a community of receivers. These communities are constantly discovering new esthetic functions in earlier works, especially when there is great temporal distance between the text and its receivers. Although the *sainete* is deeply rooted in the Argentine tradition, contemporary authors and receivers have come to view the genre in a new esthetic light, modifying the *sainete's* traditional function of pure entertainment. This study examines the ways in which Roberto Cossa and Oscar Viale have interpreted the tradition of the *sainete* and have used contemporary esthetic considerations to enrich and broaden its artistic value.