

La visita de la vieja dama in Costa Rica

This summer, the National Theater Company of Costa Rica presented *La visita de la vieja dama* (*The Visit*) by Friedrich Duerrenmatt. In a new theatre that was formally a customs house and is appropriately called El Teatro de la Aduana, Daniel Gallegos brilliantly directed this highly symbolic play about the power of money to corrupt morals. Ana Poltronieri as Clara and Leonardo Perucci as Alfred brought great depth to their respective roles as the super wealthy woman who had been shamed in her youth and the poor shopkeeper who had been responsible for her humiliation.

Using a series of free-standing mobile skeletal structures created by set designer David Vargas that emphasized the intense emotional expressionist flavor of this play, Gallegos staged the play in such a way that certain scenes occurred far upstage and other scenes practically touched the first row of seats. This technique was visually stimulating and heightened the moments of isolation and loneliness as well as the moments of intimacy.

Gallegos likes this play a great deal, because he along with Ana Poltronieri and David Vargas staged an earlier production of it at the elegant National Theater in downtown San José twenty years ago.

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