

50 Years of *LATR*

Fifty years ago, shortly after his arrival at the University of Kansas, George Woodyard had the bright idea to create a journal that would be devoted exclusively to Latin American theatre. *Latin American Theatre Review*, vol. 1, no. 1, appeared in the fall of 1967. A slim fledgling of only 59 pages, it included Margaret Peden's "Emilio Carballido: curriculum operum," a study by Ruth Lamb on Rubén Darío's theatre, an essay by Richard Mazzara on the theatre of Jorge Andrade, and Dan Reedy and Robert Morris's synopsis of theatre in Lima, along with a list of works in progress by both graduate students and established scholars.

Indeed, 1967 marks not only the birth of *LATR*, but also the establishment of Latin American theatre as a distinct field of academic study. Under the wings of their own mentors—José Juan Arrom and Merlin Forster—George Woodyard, Frank Dauster, and Leon Lyday put Latin American theatre on the map of U.S. academia. Their relentless promotion of the field through their own publications and graduate teaching soon extended to conferences devoted solely to Latin American theatre and the publication in the 1970s of several seminal books: Arrom's *Historia del teatro hispanoamericano (época colonial)* (1967), Dauster's *Historia del teatro hispanoamericano* (1966), Woodyard and Lyday's edited collection *Dramatists in Revolt* (1976), the 3-part anthology *9 dramaturgos hispanoamericanos* edited by Dauster, Woodyard and Lyday (1979), and the *Bibliography of Latin American Theatre* compiled by Woodyard and Lyday (1976). By the time the first LATT (Latin American Theatre Today) conference was held in Lawrence in 1982, there was no doubt that the field of Latin American theatre had been firmly established as a *bonafide* field of study in U.S. universities.

Nourished by the passion of those three pioneers and that of a growing cadre of academic "hijitos," the journal grew rapidly. While the cover has stayed remarkably the same, the journal, like ourselves, has grown significantly fatter. Far from that skinny little tome of 59 pages, the spring 2016

issue contained a record-breaking 322 pages. In addition to a healthy diet of critical articles, the journal continues to receive a considerable number of interviews as well as festival reports and reviews of books and performances. Unlike the first issue, which included only U.S. academics, a significant portion of today's *LATR* comes to us from Latin America and other far-off places.

George Woodyard served as editor of *LATR* for 40 years. He often joked that after 50 years he would slap on a black cover and close up shop. Unfortunately, he is no longer here with us to see that *LATR* is anything but ready for the black cover. The journal will continue to exist and to thrive thanks to the interest and dedication that George, his many faithful followers, and our collaborators throughout the world have maintained throughout the decades.

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