

LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

*a Journal Devoted to
the Theatre and Drama
of Spanish and Portuguese
America*

Editor	Jacqueline E. Bixler
Managing Editor	Stuart A. Day
Associate Editor	Vicky Unruh
Book Review Editor	Paola Hernández
Interview Editors	Jorge Dubatti, Beatriz Rizk
Assistant Editors	Danny Anderson, Santa Arias, Jill Kuhnheim, Cacilda Rêgo, Paul Sneed, Yajaira Padilla, Antonio Luciano Tosta
Editorial Assistants	Angélica García Genel, Dana Meredith, Gina Sandí Díaz
Publisher	Center of Latin American Studies The University of Kansas

Subscription information: Individuals, \$25.00 per year. Institutions, \$65.00 per year. Most back issues available; write for price list. Discount available for multiyear subscriptions.

Please send manuscripts (in MLA style) and other items to be considered for publication directly to Dr. Jacqueline E. Bixler, Editor, *Latin American Theatre Review* (jbixler@vt.edu). Manuscripts should be sent as an email attachment when possible. Please send book reviews to Dr. Paola Hernández (pshernandez@wisc.edu).

Please direct all business correspondence to the *Latin American Theatre Review*, Department of Spanish and Portuguese, University of Kansas, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-2168 USA (latr@ku.edu)

Manuscripts must be accompanied by an abstract of 100-125 words in English. Limitations of space require that submissions conform to the following:

Critical studies:	6500 words	Reviews:	500 words for critical study
Interviews:	2000 words		750 words for published play
Festival Reports:	2000 words		1000 words for play collection
Performance Reviews:	500 words plus photos		

Submissions that exceed these limits will be returned without consideration.

LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

49/1

Fall 2015

Contents

Abstracts	3
“Cheers to George” <i>Jacqueline Bixler</i>	7
The Politics of History and Memory in Early Chicana/o Theatre <i>Jorge A. Huerta</i>	11
Disappearing Acts, or the Absent Character in the Plays of Elena Garro <i>Sandra Messinger Cypess</i>	27
Post-memoria o “memoria prostética”: Virgilio Piñera a través de Teatro Avante de Miami <i>Beatriz Rizk</i>	45
Liminal Spaces: When the European “Intellectual” Meets the American “Savage” <i>Sharon Magnarelli</i>	61
Apuntes a la historia del cabaret político mexicano: aspectos contraculturales <i>Gastón Alzate</i>	79
Parálisis, parloteo y performance en <i>Potestad</i> de Eduardo Pavlovsky <i>Priscilla Meléndez</i>	99
La contingencia intelectual y gastronómica según Alberto Pedro Torriente: <i>Manteca</i> y otras necesidades alimenticias en la Cuba de los noventa <i>Patricia Tomé</i>	115

El teatro musical de Arena y Opinião: popular, histórico y auténticamente brasileño <i>Iani Moreno</i>	131
Photographic Representation: Negotiating Sites of Memory in Eduardo Rovner's <i>¿Una foto...?</i> <i>Michelle Warren</i>	149
Josefina López's <i>Piñata Dreams</i> in East Los Angeles <i>Trevor Boffone</i>	163
<i>¿y tu abuela, dónde está?</i> Demythologizing the American identity through Pregones/Puerto Rican Traveling Theater and Roadside Theater co-production of <i>BETSY!</i> (2015) <i>Ellen Mareneck</i>	167
In Memoriam for the Recently Departed: Lupe Ontiveros, Tony Curiel, Juan Antonio Castro, Elizabeth Peña, Goyo Flores, and Lina Gallegos <i>Carlos Morton and others</i>	171
In Memoriam: Frank Dauster (1925-2015) <i>Sandra Messinger Cypess</i>	177
Book Reviews	181

Abstracts

Jorge A. Huerta, “The Politics of History and Memory in Early Chicana/o Theatre”

In this personal remembrance, the author writes as a professional director as well as a theatre historian in a discussion of Chicana/o theatre and performance. The author proposes that any discussion of Chicano/a theatre demands a discussion of politics as well as memory, asking his readers if the two categories are interchangeable. After describing *Latin American Theatre Review* founder George Woodyard’s influences on the developing field of Chicano theatre, the author describes how he witnessed and participated in the evolution of Chicana/o theatre in its initial manifestations. During that stage, early Chicano theatre companies began to re-write and explore the history of politics and memory through their collective performances. In keeping with the theme of this issue, the discussion also highlights the influence of Mexican and Latin American theatre companies and artists on what became the Chicano theatre movement.

Sandra Messinger Cypess, “Disappearing Acts, or the Absent Character in the Plays of Elena Garro”

Walter Benjamin’s ideas concerning the incommunicability of experiences suggest that there are events for which those involved cannot find listeners capable of comprehending their experiences. When such moments of incommunicability occur in Elena Garro’s dramatic world, many of her characters simply disappear from the scene. This article examines the dramatic function of disappearance in four of Garro’s plays, illustrating that there is no one way for characters to withdraw. *El Encanto*, *Tendajón mixto*, for example, depicts the rare occasion in which a character is fortunate enough to find a companion who leads him to a more amenable existence, while others, like Titina in *Andarse por las ramas*, absent themselves by choice. In all of the plays examined, Garro imparts her vision of how incommunicability affects interactions and often harms individuals.

Beatriz Rizk, “Post-memoria o ‘memoria prostética’: Virgilio Piñera a través de Teatro Avante de Miami”

After 35 years of ceaseless productions, the Miami group Teatro Avante in 2012 debuted Virgilio Piñera’s *El no*, adapted by Gilda Santana. It was their eighth staging of a work by the Cuban playwright, which started with the group’s 1978 inauguration and staging of *Electra Garrigó*, followed by *El gordo y el flaco* (1983), *Falsa alarma* (1986), the world premiere of *Una caja de zapatos vacía* (1987), *Jesús* (1994), *El filántropo* (2006), and *Aire frío* (2009). After reviewing the above plays, the article concentrates on *El no*, which places the responsibility of dissent directly on the Cuban Revolution’s second generation. The author’s approach includes some of Alison Landsberg’s theories on the role of memory in the era of mass culture. The article also examines, from an exile perspective, Marianne Hirsch’s theories on the post-memory that second and third generations exert to recreate a past as well as their application of creative imagination in that process, especially when dealing with trauma within the family.

Sharon Magnarelli, “Liminal Spaces: When the European ‘Intellectual’ Meets the American ‘Savage’”

Both Lucia Laragione and Pedro Sedlinsky in their respective *Criaturas del aire* and *El informe del Dr. Krupp* stage the encounter of the European “scientist/intellectual” with the American “primitive/savage.” Employing postcolonial theory, this article analyzes how the European intellectual invades American space (implicitly “primitive” or “savage,” since it is defined as “not European”) while reconstructing the European space. In both cases, the

Europeanized space is an interior space, while the American space is depicted as exterior in an underscoring of the perceived binary divisions between civilization and nature, mind and body, intellectual and primitive. Nonetheless, and in what the author reads as fundamental to the playwrights' messages, although the "civilized" space of the European intellectual is the focus of the action in both plays, the "primitive," American space is always visibly present and threatens to overflow its boundaries and spill into the "civilized," European space.

Gastón Alzate, "Apuntes a la historia del cabaret político mexicano: aspectos contra-culturales"

This article provides an overview of the origins of contemporary Mexican political cabaret in Mexico City since the 1970s. It takes into consideration the historical and political context of Mexican culture and the relations between countercultural manifestations, contemporary art, para-theatrical spaces, and sexual dissidence. The article also aims to cover the most significant aspects of the incorporation of plural libertarian movements in the 1960s and 1970s into Mexican culture. This was a difficult process due to the authoritarian, long-term government of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI). The creators of contemporary Mexican political cabaret are part of a resistant popular theatrical movement that has provided an alternative critical model vis-a-vis the traditional, authoritarian, and dominant political environment of Mexico.

Priscilla Meléndez, "Parálisis, parloteo y performance en *Potestad* de Eduardo Pavlovsky"

From the perspective of time and space, this essay analyzes the way in which Eduardo Pavlovsky's *Potestad* (1985) transforms the outrageous speeches of the protagonist and his excessive bodily movements into signs of physical, psychological, and moral paralysis. Such an approach serves to reveal the dialogic, proxemic, historical, and temporal schemes of the play. The author examines the dialogue and tension established between the protagonist's harangues, his obsession with the positions of the characters, and his closely timed bodily activity and the relation between these discourses and an audience forced to harmonize the contradictions between what it hears and sees and the places occupied by people and objects. Through the theatricalization of silence and paralysis, *Potestad* questions the traditional notion of theatre as dialogue and action, thus creating an ambiance of ambiguity, trickery, and emptiness.

Patricia Tomé, "La contingencia intelectual y gastronómica según Alberto Pedro Torriente: *Manteca* y otras necesidades alimenticias en la Cuba de los noventa"

This article examines how *Manteca* by Alberto Pedro Torriente—considered the most popular and polemic Cuban dramatist of his time—conveys the idea that during Cuba's "Special Period" literary workmanship was homologous to culinary struggles, in part due to the artistic, social, and economic circumstances of the period. The passivity set on stage by the protagonists—three middle-aged siblings forced to coexist with a pig inside a deteriorated apartment—is echoed by the shortages in foodstuffs, electricity, and gas on the island. In the midst of a forced fast, the youngest brother attempts to create an alternative self through literary writing, thus laying the foundation of an alternative reality where he can satisfy his starvation. The author argues that such artistic creations, as seen on stage, simulate a theatrical, culinary *künstlerroman*, wherein personal distress and famine are merged with stagnant creativity during a time of social apathy and perpetual subsistence.

Iani Moreno, "El teatro musical de Arena y Opinião: popular, histórico y auténticamente brasileño."

In the 1960s, a handful of Brazilian plays, presented as musicals, re-examined national historical figures. In these plays, the lines articulated by the actors carry as much weight as the

musical notes and rhythms performed by the musicians. In *Arena Conta Zumbi* (1965), *Arena Conta Tiradentes* (1967), and *Dr. Getúlio, Sua Vida e Sua Glória* (1968), theatre troupes perform the life and historical times of prominent national heroes. The protagonists are characters whose lives are well known by all: King Zumbi of Palmares, Joaquim José da Silva Xavier, also known as Tiradentes, and former president Getúlio Vargas. The directors —Augusto Boal, Gianfrancesco Guarnieri, Alfredo Dias Gomes, and Antônio Ferreira Gullar— do not detract from the protagonists' historical importance, but they do strip away superfluous details and information that have made these mythical figures appear saintly and virtuous and not the human beings that they were. Music creates a distance that allows the audience to better understand the implications of their actions and contributions to the national stage. These plays criticized the Brazilian military dictatorship of the time and had considerable influence on the Brazilian theatre of the future.

Michelle Warren, “Photographic Representation: Negotiating Sites of Memory in Eduardo Rovner’s *¿Una foto...?*”

Eduardo Rovner’s *¿Una foto...?* (Argentina, 1977) tells the superficially benign tale of a husband and wife who try to make their baby smile for a photograph. The play (dedicated, incidentally, to those who refused to smile) employs family as a metaphor for a nation forced into appearances of well-being through whatever means necessary, with the photograph serving as proof of that well-being. This study focuses on the photograph in *¿Una foto...?* as a “site of memory” and argues that the photo that the characters attempt to take of their baby, the most innocent and vulnerable character on the stage, stands in for the outward appearances of a stable and content nation, whatever the cost of creating that appearance. Although the photograph represents familial stability and happiness, the process, as a “site of memory” played out on stage, reveals a more sinister truth behind the arrival at the final product.