

LATIN AMERICAN THEATRE REVIEW

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Abstracts

Frank Dauster, "Bridging the Quantum Gap: Considerations on the Novelist as Playwright."

Although there have always been cross-genre adventures, only recently have numbers of important novelists begun to write for the theatre. A reading of Arlt, Puig, Donoso, Fuentes and Vargas Llosa suggests that novelists tend to treat the same themes in writing for the stage as in the narrative and that they adapt to the different technical requirements of the theatre with relative facility, probably due to their tendency to work closely with directors, cast, etc., in developing workable scripts for the stage. (FD)

Dick Gerdes and Tamara Holzapfel, "Melodrama and Reality in the Plays of Mario Vargas Llosa."

To date, Mario Vargas Llosa has published three plays: *La señorita de Tacna* (1981), *Kathie y el hipopótamo* (1983) and *La Chunga* (1986). In all three plays, Mario Vargas Llosa relies on certain variants of melodramatic convention while providing realistic settings. The subtle combination of apparently disparate elements leads to the creation of historical allegory in the first play, the analysis of bourgeois conduct in the second, and the presentation of Peru's universal myth of capitalism in the third. Since Mario Vargas Llosa avoids the standard oppositions and solutions to conflict posited in traditional melodrama, the audience must face crucial decisions when assessing the social contradictions of contemporary society in the modern world. (DG)

Christine D. Martínez, "El valor de la libertad en el teatro de Guillermo Schmidhuber de la Mora."

The central theme in Schmidhuber's theatre is the expression of freedom, not in the political sense, but as consciousness of self, of realizing one's full potential. The article analyzes *Los herederos de Segismundo* and *El día que Monalisa dejó de sonreír* with reference to the Hegelian concepts of freedom and history. A few creative and spontaneous characters underscore the value of self-realization, while the others reflect the essence of Schmidhuber's theatre—that freedom has yet to become an important concern of every individual. History, in the Hegelian tradition, and as presented in Schmidhuber's plays, is a progression in the self-consciousness of freedom. Critical reasoning must be new and transcend what has gone before us in history. (CDM)

José Francisco Navarrete, "La poesía como elemento de estructura dramática en *Alfonsina*."

Mendoza, Argentina, has an extensive theatre tradition. Among today's dramatists, María Elvira Maure de Segovia occupies an important position, transcending localisms and projecting herself to the country's capital. Due to the variety of perspectives she employs, her works have earned much favorable criticism and several awards. Her diverse style and theatrical language enable her to pursue themes dear to her: the defense of the nuclear family; the desire for self-realization and love; an ethic outlook towards life and death; and the presence of God in man's daily activities. Maure de Segovia valiantly defends her ideals in a world in crisis. At the same time, she infuses a poetic tone into her work. In *Alfonsina* this tone provides structural unity. Without overshadowing her work, Maure de Segovia uses poetry to unite the protagonist's present and past, making *Alfonsina* a work rich in theatrical signs. (JFN:BLK)

Mario A. Rojas, "Gulliver dormido de Samuel Rovinski: Una parodia del discurso del poder."

In *Gulliver dormido*, Samuel Rovinski, one of the leading contemporary playwrights of Costa Rica, parodies the authoritarian discourse practiced by politicians and other members of the ruling social class of his country. Using a semantic, syntactic and pragmatic discourse analysis, this article specifies the different devices usually exercised in language control in general and uncovers those practiced by Rovinski to construct his parodic text. (MAR)

Diana Taylor, "Framing the Revolution: Triana's *La noche de los asesinos* and *Ceremonial de guerra*."

"Framing the Revolution" suggests that José Triana's plays *La noche de los asesinos* and *Ceremonial de guerra* are "revolutionary" plays, though not in a way most commentators of his work acknowledged or were prepared to accept. Both *Asesinos* and *Ceremonial* challenge the circular model of historical process, posing the following questions implicitly in the texts: What does "revolution" mean? Is it merely the substitution of one authoritarian figure for another? Does revolution connote merely a circular, predictable phenomenon such as in the "revolutions" of the earth around the sun? Or does the theatrical model itself offer a paradigm for creating the new out of repetitive revolutions? If, as Triana implies by quoting Miguel Hernandez, theatre is the essence of revolution, then perhaps the plays propose that we need to develop new ideological models in order to imagine ourselves otherwise. (DT)

Becky Boling, "Crest or Pepsodent: Jorge Díaz's *El cepillo de dientes*."

This essay proposes a study of Díaz's play within the context of the dramatist's own critique of mass media and consumerism. An affluent society, for which most needs are fulfilled, comes to see itself through manufactured (artificially produced) signs, products and consumerism. In particular, *El cepillo de dientes* presents the absurdity not so much of the human condition *per se*, as of the existence of a narcissistic, Americanized, consumer class amid Third World poverty. It is this incongruity that Díaz himself has pointed out that forms the basis of a "Latin American" brand of absurdity. (BB)

Marina Pianca, "El teatro cubano en la década del ochenta: Nuevas propuestas, nuevas promociones"

Cuban theatre has passed through several distinct stages intimately linked to the process of the Revolution. In given historical moments a panoramic vision indicated that the process had lost momentum, that the theatre of Cuba had suffered a certain type of paralysis due to a variety of factors. Notwithstanding, in the 1980s not only was there an attempt to reconcile the polar tension between the old and the new, but also there was an effort to legitimize unpublicized incidences of political and artistic daring. Together with the "process of rectification" initiated in 1985, criticism and autocriticism took a predominant role in the theatre, with critics and theatre professionals participating in the process. As much within youth theatre groups as within those more established, there was a desire towards involvement in the renovation process. This process would attempt to rescue the plurality of creative tensions in such a way as to leave no aspect of the human condition overlooked. Flora Lauten and her students at the Instituto Superior de Arte (today members of the Grupo Buendía) are an example of the new posture within the theatre of Cuba. (MP: BLK)