

BUSCANDO CALIFORNIA

CHICANO/U.S. LATINO/INDIGENOUS/PACIFIC RIM THEATRE & ART

(c) May-June 1993, Vol. 2, No. 3

EDITOR'S NOTES



This is the "sayonara" issue of Buscando California that I've put off as long as I could. Yours truly is on the move again. Whatever can't fit into two suitcases is being parceled out to friends and to local thrift stores.



Betty Jo Wright, the media director for the Bilingual Foundation of the Arts in Los Angeles, sent out the most thorough, reliable, and professionally packaged publicity mailings. This is an extension of the standard of excellence that the theatre has held itself up to, and season subscription rates are very reasonable. Some of the best theatre work I've seen in general has been at the BFA.

The BFA's aggressive publicity efforts were followed by those of Andy Griggs and the Burbage Theatre Ensemble, also in Los Angeles. In addition, Eloise DeLeon and Centro Cultural de la Raza in San Diego's Balboa Park were very supportive of this newsletter, and I am grateful for the access I was given to their facility.

Newsletter exchanges with AHA! Hispanic Art News, La Nueva Ola, and Film & Video Artists Association of San Diego (FAVAA) have been consistent and rewarding. With the help of the former two theatre newsletters, Buscando California was able to forge an important information conduit between the two coasts. Hopefully, the vacuum left by Buscando will be filled by Latin Heat, which bills itself as an entertainment industry newsletter for concerned Latinos for equal rights.

Also, if you who have not yet sent material in for professor Jorge Huerta's Chicano Theatre database, **PLEASE DO NOT SEND THE MATERIAL TO ME.** The vivacious Evelyn Cruz (a Nuyorican), one of the founders of Teatro ALTO at San Diego State, will be taking over the maintenance of the database. Send all relevant info. to Jorge Huerta, Dept. of Theatre 0344, Univ. of Calif., San Diego, 9500 Gilman Dr., La Jolla, CA 92093-0344, ATTN.: Evelyn Cruz.



THANK YOU TO EVERYBODY WHO TOOK THE RESPONSIBILITY AND TIME

TO SEND IN MATERIAL FOR PROF. JORGE HUERTA'S

CHICANO THEATRE DATABASE.

YOUR HELP WAS VERY MUCH APPRECIATED!



TEATRO CALENDARIO



NOTE: ALL ITEMS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. PLEASE DOUBLE-CHECK BEFORE MAKING PLANS.

ATINT (Association of Scholars and Critics of the New Latin American Theatre). 7/15-7/16, "The Latino Theatre and Cinema in the U.S." conference, Boston College, Bronx, New York, in conjunction with Teatro Pregonos' TeatroFestival (7/7-7/17). Info.: prof. Judith A. Weiss, 3020 Porter St. N.W. #103, Washington, D.C. 20008.



BILINGUAL FOUNDATION OF THE ARTS, 421 North Ave. 19, L.A., CA 90031, tickets: (213) 225-4044.

1973-1993 20th ANNIVERSARY

1) 4/27-5/9, TH-SA 8 PM, SU 2 PM, \$15-\$6, @ Los Angeles Theatre Center, Contrabando, by Victor Hugo Rascon Banda, dir. Margarita Galban; 9/21-12/5, Fuenteovejuna, by Lope de Vega, dir. Margarita Galban.

2) (readings, @ BFA's Little Theatre) Free, but reservations are recommended. Dramaturg Guillermo Reyes will be moderating the post-play discussions. 6/7, M 8 PM, Heroes & Saints, by Cherrie Moraga, dir. Jorge Huerta; 6/14, M 8 PM, Cartas de dos mujeres solitarias (in Spanish), dir. Margarita Galban; 6/21, M 8 PM, Lautaro, Epopeya del Pueblo Mapuche (in Spanish), by Isidora Aguirre, dir. Guillermo Reyes.

3) "The BFA received grants from Pacific Telesis Foundation and Miller Brewing Co. for two

of its educational programs.

The Pacific Telesis Foundation grant (\$20,000) went toward the development of No Contest, a play by Robyn Samuels, for Teatro Para Los Ninos (Theatre for Children), BFA's highly successful bilingual theatre-in-education program for elementary school students. The play opened March 8 and ends its run on June 17.

A grant from Miller Brewing Co. (\$25,000) went to Teatro Leido (Reader's Theatre).... Each season since 1985, BFA has presented from 9-12 staged readings on its main stage."

BURBAGE THEATRE ENSEMBLE, 2330 Sawtelle Blvd., L.A., CA 90064, (310) 478-0897, (213) 937-9792. [A program of the Century City Educational Arts Project, a non-profit organization.] 5/30-7/18, \$15-\$12, Twelve of Hearts, by Christopher Wood, misc. dir.; 6/3-7/17, The Chicken Press, by David Barth, dir. Tony Barsha. Zeitgeist also has several productions running at the Burbage until June 20.

CARIBE (Cultural Artists Repertory of Inter Bilingual Endeavor) presents La Chunga by Mario Vargas Llosa, trans. by Joanne Pottlitzer, 4/16-5/9, F-SA 8 PM, SU 3 PM, \$15, @ Chapel Court Theatre inside the Hollywood First Methodist Church, 6817 Franklin Ave., Hollywood, CA, reserv. (213) 962-5566. "A game between reality and fantasy where all taboos are shattered."

CENTRO CULTURAL DE LA RAZA, 2130-1 Paz American Plaza #1, San Diego, CA 92101, (619) 235-5135. 4/22-5/5, "Cross Poly Nation/Trans Poli Nacion

(Art & Community in Action)," San Diego-Tijuana arm of the American Festival Project. Various events at various locations, includes performances of Chocolate and Rosario's Barrio by the San Francisco-based Teatro de la Esperanza.

CHICANO SECRET SERVICE comedy troupe (Tomas Carrasco, Eduardo Lopez, Elias Serna), L.A., CA. 5/7, F 8 PM, \$8-\$4, Locura la Cura, @ Univ. of Calif., Irvine, Bren Events Center, box office: (714) 856-5000.

LA COMPANIA DE ALBUQUERQUE, 423 Central NW, P.O. Box 884, Albuquerque, NM 87103-0884, (505) 242-7929.

1) 4/29-5/9, TH-SA 8 PM, SU 2 PM, \$8-\$6, My Visits With MCM (My Grandmother Marta), by Edit Villareal, dir. Ramon A. Flores.

2) Are you a member of La Compania? A \$15 donation entitles you to ticket discounts, a listing in the program, and a newsletter subscription.

CULTURE CLASH, (office) 6404 Hollywood Blvd., Ste. 403, Hollywood, CA 90028, (213) 957-9977, FAX (213) 466-1706, TOURING COORD. (415) 346-9963. 3/11-5/1 (extended run, SOLDOUT), TH-SU 8 PM, \$15, @ Fountainhead Theatre Co., 1110 N. Hudson Ave. (off Santa Monica Blvd.), Hollywood, CA, Culture Clash Unplugged (Greatest Hits & New Works), written, acted, & dir. by Richard Montoya, Ric Salinas, Herbert Siguenza. Tickets: (213) 962-8185.

EAST WEST PLAYERS, 4424 Santa

COLD TOPU, P.O. Box 8805, Los Angeles, CA 90088, (213) 739-4142. 6/4-6/11, F-SA 8 PM, SU 2 PM, \$18-\$15, @ Los Angeles Theatre Center, 514 S. Spring St., The Grandsons, by Soji Kashiwagi, dir. Rodney Kagayama.

Monica Blvd., L.A., CA 90029,
tickets: (213) 660-0366.

3/17-4/25, The Rising Tide of
Color, by Vernon Takeshita,
dir. Dana Lee.

GUADALUPE CULTURAL ARTS CTR.,
1300 Guadalupe St., San
Antonio, TX 78207-5519, (512)
271-3151.

INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St., NY, NY
10108, (212) 695-5551. 5/12-
6/13, Tierra incognita, libre-
tto by Maria Irene Fornes.

LATINO CHICAGO, 1625 N. Damen
Ave., Chicago, IL 60647, (312)
486-5120.

LATINO CLASSICAL REPERTORY CO.,
art. dir. Ruben Sierra. 5/3,
benefit, @ L.A. Theatre Center,
514 S. Spring St.

LATINS ANONYMOUS, 5/15-6/12, SA
only 9 PM, \$10 cover & 2 drink
min., The La La Awards '93, @
Backlot Theater Cabaret, 657 N.
Robertson (1/2 block S. of
Santa Monica Blvd.).

MISSION CULTURAL CENTER, 2868
Mission St., San Francisco, CA
94110, Centro Cultural de la
Mision (415) 821-1155.
(readings) The Lady from
Bavaria by Luis Santeiro (5/24),
The Conduct of Life by Maria
Irene Fornes (6/21).

OLD GLOBE THEATRE, @ Lowell
Davies Festival Theatre, Balboa
Park, P.O. Box 2171, San Diego,
CA 92112, (619) 239-2255.

6/25-8/8, Balled of the
Blacksmith, by Mercedes Rein &
Jorge Curi, trans. Raul
Moncada, dir. Rene Buch.

PLANET EARTH MULTI-CULTURAL
THEATRE, 525 E. Flower (theater
@ 909 N. 3rd), Phoenix, AZ
85012, (602) 241-1828, (602)

241-1828, (800) 654-ASAP.

PLAZA DE LA RAZA, Cultural
Center for the Arts &
Education, 3540 N. Mission Rd.,
Los Angeles, CA 90031.

PORTLAND STATE UNIV.'S
INTERNATIONAL PERFORMANCE
FESTIVAL & INSTITUTE--
"Contemporary Culture & the
Performing Arts: Focus on the
Latino Experience in the
Americas," beg. 7/93. Info.:
art. dir. Michael Griggs, (503)
725-5389, FAX (503) 725-4840.

1) 7/22, TH, "Culture Clash in
Hollywood" lecture/video
presentation; 7/23-7/24, F-SA 8
PM, A Bowl of Beings, by
Culture Clash, Lincoln Hall
Auditorium.

2) 7/31, SA 8 PM (perf. art),
Cavillaca, by Luciana Proano.

SACRAMENTO THEATER CO., 1419 E
St., Sacramento, CA, (area
code?) 443-6722. 4/4(?) - 5/8,
\$15, The Pain of the Macho, by
Rick Najera (former member of
Latinos Anonymous).

EL TEATRO CAMPESINO, 705 Fourth
St., San Juan Bautista, CA,
(408) 623-2444, 623-4995.
(tour) Simply Maria by
Josefina Lopez, How Else Am I
Supposed to Know I'm Still
Alive by Evelina Fernandez.
Teamed up with Luis Valdez
classics Soldado raso and Baile
de los gigantes.

TEATRO DEL VALLE, AZ. 5/14-
5/30, F-SA 8 PM, SU 4 PM, \$9-
\$7, The Many Deaths of Danny
Rosales, by Carlos Morton.

UNIV. OF CALIF., RIVERSIDE,
FESTIVAL OF NEW PLAYS, 6/23-
6/27, @ Studio Theatre,
Humanities Bldg. All readings

are staged. Info.:
playwright/UCR prof. Carlos
Morton, (909) 787-3871, FAX
(909) 787-6324.

1) 6/23, W 8 PM (reading),
play by UCR student Rickerby
Hinds, dir. Kathryn Ervin.

2) 6/24, TH 1 PM (reading), We
Kill Indians Dead, by UCLA
student Liesel Koppl; 8 PM
(reading), Conference, by Ira
Hauptman, dir. Patrick McCray;
8:30 PM (reading), Alone in the
Water, by Edit Villareal, dir.
Jose Guadalupe Saucedo.

3) 6/25, F 1 PM (reading), The
Assassination of Eric Estrada,
by UCSB student Jose Casas,
dir. Paula Caballero; 3 PM
(reading), Frying Sashimi, by
UCR student Lani Masatsugu,
dir. John Miyasaki; 8 PM
(reading), The Tree, by Elena
Garro, trans. by Carlos Morton,
dir. Eduardo Ruiz Savinon.

4) 6/26, SA 1 PM (reading),
play by UCSD student; 3 PM
(reading), Pastorela
Fronteriza, by Carlos Morton,
dir. Bill Virchis; 8 PM
(performance), Elvira's Cross,
by Victor Hugo Rascon Banda,
trans. by Teatro Sinergia, dir.
Ruben Amavisca.

5) 6/27, SU 1 PM (reading),
Voices from the Threshold, by
Victor Hugo Rascon Banda,
trans. by Lucia Nayas, dir.
Marcos Martinez; 3 PM
(reading), The Fickle Finger of
Lady Death, by Eduardo
Rodriguez Solis, trans. by
Carlos Morton, dir. Jorge
Huerta; 5-7 PM reception.

WORDS ACROSS CULTURES, P.O. Box
3276, Hollywood, CA 90078,
(213) 243-8180.

1) 5/18, T 7:30 PM, \$7, @
Gallery Theatre, Barnsdall Art
Park, 4800 Hollywood Blvd.;
5/23, SU 2 PM, \$7, @
Fountainhead Theatre, 1110 N.
Hudson; We Shall Not Be Moved
(staged readings of poetry and
prose about women), includes
Miss Consuegra, by Guillermo
Reyes, dir. Joseph Megel.

2) 9/11 (in Spanish), 9/12 (in
English), SA-SU 8 PM, @
Fountainhead Theatre, September
11, by Guillermo Reyes.

NEWSLETTER/MAG. EXCHANGES:

AHA! HISPANIC ART NEWS, 173 E.
116th St., 2nd fl., NY, NY
10029. Subs. \$20 individuals,
\$40 organizations.

FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS ASSOC. OF
SAN DIEGO (FAVAA), P.O. Box
3360, San Diego, CA 92163,
(619) 298-1536. Dues \$25-
\$15/yr.

LA NUEVA OLA, 250 W. 65th St.,
NY, NY 10023-6403, (212) 595-
8286, FAX (212) 799-6718.
Hispanic Organisation of Latino
Actors (BOLA) news.

QUE VIVA! (lesbian/gay Latino
art) 4470-107 Sunset Blvd.,
#261 L.A., CA 90027, (213)
953-1970.

SBO, c/o Great Leap Inc., 244
S. San Pedro St., Ste. 305, Los
Angeles, CA 90012, (213) 687-
3948. LA's Asian & Pacific
Islander arts & entertainment
calendar.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA LATINO/A
WRITERS & FILMMAKERS, INC.,
P.O. Box 412078, L.A., CA
90041-2078.

EL TEATRO NOTES (Teatro
Campesino), P.O. Box 1240, San
Juan Bautista, CA 95045 (Feb.-
April 1993 issue).

RECEIVED:

BILINGUAL ANTHOLOGY OF GAY AND
LESBIAN WRITERS. Poetry and
fiction submissions needed for
special fall/spring issue.
Deadline 6/30/93. Info.:
Prof. Elena Martinez, 373
Bleeker, Apt. 5-C, New York,
NY 10014.

LATIN BEAT (changed from LATIN
BEAT), 12115 Magnolia Blvd.
#151, N. Hollywood, CA 91607,
(818) 569-5534. Subs. \$15/yr.
\$10 more to join the Latino
Referral Network.

NPRC REPORTS, National Puerto
Rican Coalition news, 1700 K
St., NW, Ste. 500, Washington,
D.C. 20006, (202) 223-3915.

OLLANTAY THEATER MAGAZINE, P.O.
Box 449, Jackson Heights, NY
11372, (718) 565-6499. Subs.
\$18/yr. Bilingual U.S. Latino
theatre magazine.

SOCIETY FOR CINEMA STUDIES,
Latino/a Caucus newsletter,
editor Christopher Ortiz, Dept.
of Film & Television, UCLA, 405
Hilgard Ave., Los Angeles, CA
90024-1622.

UNIV. OF CALIF., IRVINE,
CHICANO/LATINO DRAMA CLUB,
founder Jaime Cruz, sponsored
by prof. Alejandro Morales (co-
founder of Pacific Writers
Press). Info.: Jaime Cruz,
(714) 856-0688; Alejandro
Morales, Dept. of Spanish &
Portuguese, UCI, Irvine, CA
92717-5275.



(This address will not
be valid much longer.)

Kat Avila, editor
BOSCANDO CALIFORNIA
P.O. Box 28431
Santa Ana, CA 92799



Part of the display in the
lobby at Teatro Campesino.





A VISIT TO TEATRO CAMPESINO

Teatro Campesino has been at their present location in San Juan Bautista since 1981. Because they were in the midst of remodeling their archive room (photos taken on 4/17/93), many wonderful items from their archives were on display in the theatre lobby.



L. to R: Andres Gutierrez, Andres' "friend," and playwright Octavio Solis. Octavio directed a well-received production of his newly revised play *Fronteras* at the teatro.

THE RAMONA PAGEANT (4/17/93-5/2/93)

The Ramona Pageant celebrated its 76th anniversary and was officially designated California's State Outdoor Play. It also has the unique distinction of being the longest continuously running outdoor production in the United States. The cast is made up of over 150 people from the local Benet and San Jacinto communities. This impressive outdoor spectacle is not without its controversy, but it is one of the few places where a person will see an acknowledgment of California's turbulent and violent history in a mainstream arena.

Based on Helen Jackson's 1884 novel *Ramona*, the play centers around the tragic romance between an indigenous man and a Spanish senorita. During the course of the play, one witnesses the driving out of the indigenous peoples and then the Spaniards from their lands. The production presents an interesting showcase of the indigenous, Hispanic, and Anglo cultures.



EDITOR'S NOTES: Better late than never. The following interviews were done at the TENAZ XVI festival in San Antonio, Texas, Nov. 10-15, 1992. They have been edited heavily because of space considerations.

RICARDO SALINAS INTERVIEW: (TENAZ 11/12/92)

Culture Clash was born on Cinco de Mayo 1984 at the Galeria de la Raza in San Francisco. Rene Yanez came up with the idea, and the group (called Comedy Fiesta) included Marga Gomez, Monica Palacios, and Jose Antonio Borciago. Today the group consists of Richard Montoya, Herbert Siguenza, and Ricardo Salinas, all in their early 30s. These "post-vaudevilian carperos" (Ricardo's words) lived for five years in San Francisco's Mission District before they came to Los Angeles.

Culture Clash has written and performed in several shows--*The Mission* (1988), *A Bowl of Beans* (1990), and *S.O.B.* (1992). Their latest shows have been a combination of old and new material. They have made appearances in various films and worked with Lourdes Portillo on her short, wild film *Columbus on Trial*.

A Bowl of Beans was fueled by Ricardo's brush with death. In Sept. 1990, he was caught in a spray of bullets when he and some friends stepped outside to check a disturbance. Three of the bullets hit his heart. The gunman was only 17 years old.

Luckily for La Raza, Ric is still around, and Culture Clash just keeps getting better every year.

E: Ricardo Salinas
K: Kat Avila

R: Well, you know what's really interesting about being with Culture Clash and actually being born in El Salvador is sometimes we get criticized because we label ourselves a Chicano group, right? When actually one of our members is the only true Chicano, Richard Montoya. Herbert Siguenza was born in San Francisco, but his parents are from El Salvador, also.

When my parents came up to

the United States, it wasn't because of a war situation. It was more economic, very similar to what Europeans did when they went to Ellis Island and created a new life in the United States. That was the first migration of Salvadorans. We were right there at the heels of the Mexican migration to the United States.

When we came up here, no one had heard of El Salvador. Half of the people in the United States have no idea. So I grew up with this really warped identity. I was embarrassed to say where I was from because nobody had heard of it. When it came to filling out forms, I usually had to put "other".

For the longest time, I grew in this "other" kind of reality. I wasn't Mexican-American. I wasn't Chicano. And they really didn't have a title for me. So I would either say that I was Spanish because that was noble, or then I would say I was Mexican. I grew up with so many Mexicans that I felt like, okay, I'm Mexican.

And later on I found out through education, especially when I went to San Francisco State where they had the very first Ethnic Studies Department where you can get a degree in Ethnic Studies, La Raza, Asian-American, black studies. . . . So at that point, when I did go to that school, I learned, okay, I'm from El Salvador; okay, I'm proud of that; okay, I know who I am. But it took me a long process.

Now with Culture Clash, I'd like to say that I'm Chicano through osmosis because I grew up with so many Chicanos. I went through the Chicano teatro with Teatro Campesino, Teatro de la Esperanza, Teatro Latino, Teatro Gusto, all the teatros that performed in San Francisco. I was deeply involved in it. It was at a community level in a sense, but it was my voice. We were able to say what we wanted to. It was part of the '60s and toward the end of the '70s.

K: You're not that old, are you?

R: No, I'm not. The thing about Culture Clash, I think we caught the cocktail end of

the movielento, and we borrowed from it. But at the same time, we also borrowed from a whole new urban reality, MTV reality, a political reality that was happening in our era, the whole yuppie issue. We kind of adopted the whole enshiada.

. . . As a group I feel that we are really creating a type of new theatre in a sense. And the comedy is on the edge. We sometimes step on people's toes. We sacrifice our sacred cows. And we do it somewhat gleefully sometimes. . . .

Hopefully, when people leave our show, they'll leave with something. They'll laugh. They had a good time because one thing that Culture Clash has said is that we are entertainers first, that we are politicians, satirists, that's our second agenda. But, first of all, we are entertainers.

Part of the comedy that comes from our group is through the old traditions, too. Not only from the Chicano teatro, but from the carpas, which are the Mexican vaudeville of our time. They went around the country in Mexico and the Southwest putting up little tents and making comments about the government. . . .

It's similar to what the Jewish vaudevillians were doing, what they called the brachshelt comics. . . . They would go and do their Jewish humor. It was a way of assimilating into the mainstream. . . .

K: [Responding to a comment that on tour their audiences are 70% Anglo.] How do those audiences react to the kind of material you're doing?

R: . . . Sometimes they feel what we call "white guilt" where they don't know whether to laugh because of their political correctness. So they're a polite bunch. And we call it "white guilt" because they want to laugh, but they know they shouldn't because we're making fun of ourselves or something. Then they love it when we take digs at them--the gringo and all that. They like that. They're ready for it.

We are now turning that audience into a whole different thing. Now that

we've moved to Los Angeles our predominant audience is Latino.

K: How did that change come about?

R: It's incredible. When we did move to L.A., what we found is it's a hungry audience. It's a bigger audience. There are more Chicanos. . . .

When we first went to L.A., it was like 70% white audiences. And then after word came out, you know, Culture Clash, check out these votes, they're real crazy, they're talking about our issues. It's like we did something that was historically not done before.

When we did our last show in Los Angeles, our new show called S.O.S. Comedy for These Urgent Times, a piece we felt that was important to do--we wrote it in like two months right after the Rebellion--we had Chicanos paying tickets with their credit cards. I don't know if you understand this, but it's a major change. Because that means you could tell how many people are in your audience. Because we usually get walk-ups. We might sell 10 tickets, then you get 300 Chicanos to buy it that day, right. . . . ?

K: I noticed right after I charged my tickets to see Culture Clash I was put on a mailing list so that when Latina Anonymous did a show I was already on this list.

R: It generates more work for our fellow artists. That's why we're in Los Angeles because primarily the audience is there. They accept what we're about first of all. They could have rejected us. It's funny that when we were in San Francisco we couldn't buy an audience. We couldn't buy an article.

K: Why was that? I don't understand because San Francisco is such a multicultural community.

R: It's difficult for artists to progress in theatre in San Francisco. L.A. has a mechanism. It's Hollywood. When you do a show, you get reviewed by 10 papers. In San Francisco, you're lucky if you

L. to R.: Beverly Sanchez-Padilla, Belinda Acosta, Josefina Lopez, Cherrie Moraga, Dolores Prida, moderator Paulina Sabagun.



Franzese, you're lucky if you get inside the Examiner. They don't have a system. It's a totally slow process.

We finally went back to San Francisco, and we were in three newspapers. We had the cover. We sold out our show

K: [Comments about folklore in Chicano theatre.]

R: Sometimes a lot of the weight of what our voice is relies on what stories we want to tell. There are so few groups like ourselves that we want to do it right. We just don't want to go on stage and just ad-lib and perform what we want

But we are storytellers. We adapt a lot from our elders. And they keep us in check, too. So we're very careful what we say, whether it's the Luis Valdez or the Jose Montoya or the Jorge Huerta. We respect their words. They are the ones that formed our kind of intellect. That's what we read and that's what we took. So they keep us in check. You know, the mujeres tambien.

K: Culture Clash includes a feminist Latina point of view that initially caught me off-guard.

R: You know, I'll tell you, every single show we do, every time we talk to an audience, someone says why don't you have a woman in your group, right? We just don't. We're a trio It's just that it works as three comedians, three stooges, the Marx Brothers. It just works right there.

But just as much as we deal with racism, homophobia, drugs, the gangs, as much as we deal with that, we have to deal with relationships, the gender issue. Now that we're a little bit more in the forefront, we are getting hit up by the--I call them the "mujeres de fuerza"--the strong Chicana poets, artists, and actresses . . .

Culture Clash is eight years old [nine, at the time of publication]. We've been doing individual theater for 12 years, each of us. A lot of it is working your muscle, doing it so much that eventually you get good at it. *****

BELINDA ACOSTA INTERVIEW
(TENAZ 11/14/92)

For TENAZ, Belinda Acosta did her well-received one-woman show Machismo: Voices from the Past (11/14), a potpourri of courageous mujeres. Originally from Nebraska, she has been living in Austin, Texas, since 1988, and writes a community arts column for the Austin American-Statesman.

B: Belinda Acosta
K: Kat Avila

B: I started developing Machismo. Then I submitted that to INTAR [in the late '80s]. One place I had never been to was the East Coast. From Omaha, Nebraska, to New York is quite a leap. I felt very much what was happening to me in New York. It affected me personally. It affected my writing

When I got back to Omaha, I came to a dead end, like which way do I turn . . . ? I wanted to go back to school. I decided that was an option. But it was also very funny because I was touring my show Machismo a lot

I was getting to the point where I either had to find someone to represent me so I didn't have to do that work too, or go to school. I admit it was a difficult decision. I could tour Machismo, but my writing wasn't developing. I decided to go to school. So that's where I've been.

K: Where are you going to school right now?

B: I'm going to school at the University of Texas in Austin. . . . [l]luckily for me, they have a humanities program and within that program you can define your own program. I'm going to have my Humanities degree [Master's] in May, with an emphasis in Mexican-American Studies and Drama, so I have the best of both of the worlds.

K: New projects?

B: My new project is El Museo de Lucia Hernandez. That's my thesis script. I also had it read at the Hispanic Theatre Festival in Austin and got some really good feedback on that.

It's essentially about a

500-year-old woman. A girl comes into this yard, which is sort of the debris of her life. Looks like she's walking into a garage sale. The older woman looks at her, and she's forced to confront these things in her life.

It's basically a question of what is authentic, what does it mean to be ethnic. One of the reviewers said the girl doesn't know that she's searching, but she's looking for ethnic authenticity. In her acculturation she's been removed from that culture, so she tries to find it in very superficial and creative ways that are unreal. The 500-year-old woman calls her on it. *****

RUBY NELDA PEREZ INTERVIEW
(TENAZ 11/14/92)

With their daughter Alma, actress Ruby Nelda Perez and TENAZ festival coordinator Jorge Pina were joyfully celebrating their wedding anniversary, having been married in Cuba 11 years before.

Ruby is a popular actress, as demonstrated by the interest that playwrights Cherrie Moraga, Anthony J. Garcia, and Rodrigo Duarte-Clark have had in developing vehicles for her. Her strength as an actress lies in characterization. She is probably best known for her incredible one-woman show A Woman's Work, about an older woman who becomes a welfare recipient to get out of an abusive marriage ("They didn't give me welfare--I took it.") and then goes back to school to become a teacher. Ruby does the role so convincingly that many people think the show is autobiographical, but it's not.

R: A Woman's Work was created in 1985. It was the International Women's Day, along with a book fair, the first small press Texas book fair And it so happened that they were coinciding the same weekend. Sandra Cisneros [author of The House on Mango Street] was organizing it. She asked me if I could read some poems. I said sure. Then I asked her if she had any material I could read. She provided me with mimeographed sheets, xeroxed sheets, books,



writings that she had just received and hadn't been published.

I started to read, and I looked for writings that would lend themselves to dramatization. And, also, it being Women's Day, I wanted to have a woman writer. The key for me was to have characters for each piece. Also, I had an idea . . . being from south Texas, I wanted it to be from the region.

So I read and read and read, and I picked four pieces . . . I had the time to memorize it. Then there was another person in the theatre . . . who did sound. We put some music in between. I'd do a piece, and he'd put music . . . From there, people started asking if I would perform these pieces.

TERRY TAFOYA SAMP INTERVIEW
(TENAZ 11/15/92)

Talking to Terry, what comes out is her wonderful sense of humor, which finds its way into her plays. She is a playwright that defies categorization because her writing covers a wide range of subjects. At TENAZ, her play *Laura's House* was performed by Teatro del Valle (11/15). Based on her grandmother's stories, this evocative play caused more than one person to tear up as they remembered their own grandmothers.

The way Terry writes is almost like automatic writing. She doesn't do outlines, but lets the story unfold as it wants to.

T: There's no one particular thing to write about. It's just all these stories that are going through my head. I get 'em out and hope people like them and sometimes they do . . . I haven't defined myself as a female, or a Hispanic, or an Anglo. It's just whatever the story is that's what comes out . . .

[Writing] is not hard for me . . . I don't worry about it. I've never been blocked. I can write for about four or five hours straight. When the words stop, I stop. I don't struggle with it anymore than that. And I can go back and do the technical things like the grammar and stuff later.

BEVERLY SANCHEZ-PADILLA INTERVIEW
(TENAZ 11/15/92)

"Just one more mestiza in contemporary United States looking, longing, uncovering the tangled history of burned knots to be untied to sleep at night

MALINELLI,
MALINTZIN,
MALINCHE,
DONA MARINA."

--from a poem by Beverly printed in *La Voz de Esperanza* newsletter (10/92), in memory of all survivors of violence

Media artist Beverly Sanchez-Padilla sat on the TENAZ panel of women playwrights (11/12). She grew up in New Mexico, is married, and has two children. Her training is in film. She has done several documentaries (maybe you saw one of them on PBS) and has worked as a journalist. I remember reading her summary of the 11th TENAZ festival (1981) in *Caminos* magazine.

B: I would call myself a cultural worker, I think. I would call myself artist/activist. I've got a residency right now with the San Antonio Independent School District as a poet. I've always done poetry. And one kind of poetry is dramatic poetry . . . It's just very natural.

ZARCO GUERRERO INTERVIEW
(TENAZ 11/15/92)

Zarco has been making masks for over 15 years. Collectors pay \$1000-\$3000 for one of his masks. He studied art in Europe and New York; mask-making in Mexico, Japan, and Bali, to name a few places; and lived in San Francisco during the Chicano mural movement in the early '70s. From the work of Mexican and Chicano muralists, he found an artistic and life philosophy for himself, based on tradition, heritage, and reproductive social consciousness.

Z: I grew up in an artistic family. My father was a portrait painter and a surface

archaeologist . . . So I spent all my life growing up around the inn painting portraits of people and also exploring ancient desert cultures of Arizona, as well as the existing tribal ceremonies and rituals around Arizona. As I grew up, I also developed an interest in my Native American heritage, as well as skills in portraiture and painting . . .

I became an artist in Mexico . . . I began to develop a style right away. While I was studying realism and sculpture--which were my two loves--I discovered the use of masks in Mexican dance and ritual. Of everything I had seen in Mexico and up to that point of my life, it was truly the mask that captivated me. Part of the reason it captivated me is because I was trained as a portrait painter, as a portrait sculptor, all my life I had been trained to paint faces.

PAULINA SARACIN INTERVIEW
(TENAZ 11/15/92)

It was after midnight. Zarco dropped by to look at Paulina's masks. They talked shop and about doing a workshop together. After the TENAZ festival, Paulina was doing a four-day workshop at the University of Morelos and still later she would be working for a marionette company in Cuernavaca.

Paulina wore many hats at the festival. She was a judge for the play contest, did a mask and movement workshop, and moderated a panel.

F: I started doing theatre in 1972 with a Chicano theatre company at Cal State Northridge. It was called Teatro Aztlan. That's how I got involved . . . While I was at Northridge, I decided to go to Mexico and do theatre. That's when I went to Los Mascarones [a teatro]. I didn't come back for seven years. I stayed there with Mascarones, then we broke up and formed Grupo Zero . . .

Anyway, so I'm a product of the Chicano theatre movement, the Mexican independent theatre movement, and, I guess, the institutions. I'm a product of the Bell'arte School of Physical Theatre [in N. Calif.].



TEATRO DEL VALLE