

**Comedia Performance
Journal of the Association
For Hispanic Classical Theater**

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**Volume 7, Number 1
Spring 2010
ISSN 1553-6505**

Comedia Performance

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Comedia Performance is distributed without additional charge to members of the AHCT at the annual conference in El Paso, Texas. Individual copies may be purchased for \$20. Non-members of AHCT may subscribe for \$50 for three issues. Library rates are \$30 per issue and \$75 for a three-year subscription.

Please contact Susan Paun de García, Managing Editor, at garcia@denison.edu, for additional information. Send other queries to Barbara Mujica at blm@comediaperformance.com.

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5. Avoid structures such as "This reviewer thinks..." Reviews are by definition subjective.
6. One reviewer may not publish more than two reviews in a single issue.

CONTENTS

Performance Studies

Embodying Rape & Violence: Your Mirror Neurons & 2RC Teatro's <i>Alcalde de Zalamea</i> <i>Catherine Connor-Swietlicki</i>	9
--	---

The Influence of the Target Audience in Two Productions of <i>El perro del hortelano</i> <i>Christopher D. Gascón</i>	53
---	----

The Metadramatic Function of the Aside in <i>La traición en la amistad</i> <i>Michael J. McGrath</i>	86
---	----

On the Bricks: The Terra Nova Consort, Greenshows, and the Spanish Jongleuresque <i>Bruce R. Burningham</i>	103
---	-----

The Transformation of <i>La prueba de los ingenios</i> Into the <i>Labyrinth of Desire</i> : Adapting Lope de Vega for a Contemporary American Audience <i>DeLys Ostlund</i>	143
---	-----

Designed for an Experience: The Natural Architecture of <i>Corrales</i> <i>Elizabeth M. Petersen</i>	170
--	-----

Interviews

- Karen Berman: Still Dreaming
Barbara Mujica 200

- From Castelvines y Monteses to Capulets and
Montagues: Dakin Matthews Translates Lope
Susan Paun de García 209

- Entrevista a Sandra Sampayo, Elvira en *El mejor
alcalde, el rey*
Gladys Robalino 229

- The Yenque Acting Tradition: An Interview with
Teresa and José Yenque
Darci L. Strother 240

- Theater Reviews* 266

- Book Reviews* 307

Performance Studies

EMBODYING RAPE & VIOLENCE: YOUR MIRROR NEURONS & 2RC TEATRO'S *AL- CALDE DE ZALAMEA*

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Introduction

There are many reasons why Rafael Rodríguez's theater company is rapidly becoming recognized as one of Spain's most innovative young theater companies. A key factor in Rodríguez's leadership is his performance-based sense that real embodiment is more than just what actors do on stage. That is, his company, the 2RC Teatro (2RCT), can persuade us to call into question the essentially metaphorical approach to performance embodiment that we theater scholars and critics have traditionally relied on. For example, perhaps we would normally discuss in our classes or in our publications how actor Javier Collado of the 2RCT so embodies the principal role of the *Alcalde de Zalamea* that he becomes tantamount to Pedro Crespo for us. In that case we would be explaining how well he realizes his role, elaborating on how the en-

tire 2RCT performance represents our individual notions of what Calderón's play communicates. Of course actors embody their roles and even the thematic material of entire plays in that conventional sense. But what more and more humanists, performers and other artists are beginning to understand is that, as spectators, our bodies do much more than functionally process sights and sounds in what we commonly consider our immaterial minds and their invisible thoughts. We now have much greater understanding that, as scholars and ordinary spectators, we necessarily and truly embody what we observe actors doing. That is, as we are observing their performances we are actually, physically re-making their every movement and sound inside our own tissues, connecting them within us dynamically in processes we usually call everything from absent-minded watching to feeling and thinking.

These terms "embodiment," "embodying" and "embodied mind" have been the subject of a few major books by key scholars across the humanities and sciences in recent years. If they have not all produced precise, encapsulated definitions for these terms, it is simply because everything we attribute to our minds is necessarily all-inclusive. That is, our minds are always dependent on our bodies, their brains and on our individual capacities to experience and interact with everything outside us. In effect, we always embody those absolutely interactive major components of ourselves, the ones we humans used to try to separate into enormous catego-

ries called culture and biology. And so it is that the most authoritative scholars and researchers taking on the huge task of studying our embodied minds must necessarily work in specific and more manageable areas of inquiry. But at the same time, their findings attract widespread interest from performance and plastic artists as well as scholars of literature, drama and all the arts. And because the arts, particularly performance arts, are so inclusive of our body-minds in all aspects of life, my study of performances and embodiment must necessarily include whatever creates and dynamically interacts with performances and spectatorship. That means I need to rely on and to integrate what I have learned from major researchers and scholars in order to pass on the benefits of our inquiries to my readers. The performances I have seen of 2RCT's *Alcalde* struck me as a striking performance example for sharing embodiment studies with others.¹

Few performances of classical *comedias* are able to heighten our awareness of our normal embodying of actors' actions, faces, voices, gestures, etc. as do 2RCT's uncensored versions of the *Alcalde de Zalamea* (*Alcalde*). We spectators have no choice but to enact in our own body-brains what the body-minds of the performers are stimulating within us. That is, each spectator's very own bodily tissues are incited to experience what her body-mind is seeing and hearing outside her own body. But each one can only bring from the outside to the inside self what she is capable of resonating among all the con-

tributing “citizens” of her “society of mind.”² She can only embody as much or as well as her particular and multiple connections are able. And for those connections to be set in motion—i.e. for her to comprehend the art outside her—she is dependent on how well her mirror neurons stimulate all her potentially networked motor-sensory, emotionally and aesthetically remembered relationships we commonly call feeling and thinking.

This is real spectator embodiment of a performance—the embodiment that we are usually unaware of unless we make a strong, conscious effort to recover as much as possible of our normally involuntary, pre-conscious body-mind connections. This is life, but it is also art. These are our embodied aesthetics coming alive in us, increasing our self-knowledge as we feel-think and/or marvel in a performance.³ In most contemporary performances of *Alcalde* or of other classical *comedias*, the embodiment we expect to find is the arm’s-length sort that our scholarly stance and our professional suspension of disbelief have always afforded us. By this I am not denying that we can recall recent *comedia* performances innovatively staged, ones in which we spectators come to feel more bodily engaged in the actors’ embodiment than is usually the case in more traditional and discreet performances.⁴ But in the uncensored *Alcalde* that Rodríguez’s company performs, we spectators are more compelled, or at least challenged, to be aware of our body-minds, to probe the depths of our empathetic,

embodying capacities and to understand how a raw, onstage reality becomes mental, actual and present within us.⁵

How is can that be? What has made the intensely embodied, performative difference in the 2RCT performance of *Alcalde*? The short answer is onstage rape. The longer answer to that question is the present essay and a chapter of my book in progress. But why talk about rape you might ask? Quite frankly, it might take onstage rape, an extreme example by *comedia* standards, to “force” spectators to become aware of their embodied minds. It took my seeing 2RCT’s uncensored performance to realize how *comedia* scholars might better reflect on their own minds’ embodiment. In short, Rodríguez’ *Alcalde* does not present gratuitous rape! As I discuss in this essay, the play’s entire range of violence interconnects with the audience members and is then intra-connected within each individual spectator according to her body-brain contributors, her internal tendencies and life experiences. This potentially realistic embodiment of violence, as *comediantes* should note, is not just a study of the violent themes interwoven in the play’s text. Rather, what might seem an “over-the-top” example can perhaps help us comprehend how we always embody actors’ embodiment, but always according to how well our particular mirror neurons initiate interconnections to the rest of our individual “societies of mind.” That is, how do your usually undetected muscular and motor activities, emotions, categories and memory

maps get internally remapped into new versions of your ideas or concepts? It all depends how much unconscious stimulation your contributing body-brain systems need for you to dynamically reprocess your feelings and thoughts. This dynamic sense of onstage and offstage body-mind movement might even be the most effective and affective way of reaching today's young audiences and any spectators who "know" violence and rape from films, internet and television—if not from their own embodied life experiences.

In effect then, my first goal in analyzing the 2RCT's embodiment of rape and violence in the *Alcalde* is to explain how each spectator's dynamic, inner-outer coordinates of a performance determine, or at least condition, how she or he embodies and conceptualizes it. In probing how mirror neurons can connect us with the 2RCT production of the *Alcalde* I draw upon my spectatorship for two versions of their performance and on interviews with Rafael Rodríguez.⁶ But I also examine our varied human neural dynamics of internalizing violence because as the most direct way of demonstrating that you or I can only really know ourselves when we can understand how our different body-brain dynamics become transformed into the invisible relationship we call the mind. My discussion will require readers to evaluate their operative concepts of what it means to be a humanist as well as a human being. I need to ask myself, for example, if I am a stereotypical, ivory-tower humanist who "lives in

her head” and only worries about her biology when natural functions and pleasures or sickness—major or minor—demand that I start thinking of my mind’s embodiment as essential to life itself. This process includes gauging how much I mystify my mind’s intellectual, aesthetic and even spiritual capacities. Self-evaluation of one’s embodiment thus demands that I recognize violence and rape as much more than thematic components of a play’s plot that I analyze critically for discussion. In effect, studying 2RCT’s performances of rape and violence demands that I recognize my internal constituents of rape and violence, i.e. my capacity to embody those actions. At the same time, my experiences and those of any other spectator—whether or not she is a scholar—are directly dependent on each one’s own society of mind might remap her evolved genetic legacies when witnessing a performance of rape and violence in person or via other media.

Hence my second major goal in this essay is to help theater scholars evaluate and develop greater understanding of how each one’s individual embodied-mind operations normally function in ordinary life performances—which are basic to artistic ones as well. In this effort, I rely on the most current research on body-mind processes being used by performance and plastic artists and other “laymen” as well as academics across humanistic and scientific fields of study.⁷ The main factors in this regard are our mirror neurons and their potential to form new connections, a process referred to as neural plastic-

ity. These interdependent processes are how we humans have interacted in life for millennia, but the potential of these neurons and their flexibility have only recently been discovered. A final and closely related goal in this essay on how we might the embody rape and violence is to share with *comediantes* the benefits of body-and-brain-based teaching and scholarship. I distinguish this approach from conventional category- or concept-oriented methods that characterize first-wave cognitive studies. That is, I indicate why I rely on performers, artists and “lay humanists” in the neurosciences who delve into the full potential range of internal and external coordinates of human embodiment.

Embodiment and “Lay” Neural-Humanism Onstage and Off

One would hope that most *comediantes* have at least an intuitive or gut-level sense of their own embodied minds and that they try to demystify their minds as being “out there somewhere” in lofty and invisible spheres of intellect and spirit or soul. Some of us have had at least occasional real-life experience in the sorts of embodiment-training workshops that are the foundational learning experiences and lifeblood for actors and performance artists.⁸ But what benefits do we experts in *comedia* retain when we turn to thinking and writing or to teaching our students as we integrate embodiment with our ideas about early modern performances,

historical contexts and socio-cultural impact? Why is it that our scholarly treatment of performing bodies somehow leaps from discussing onstage sounds, expressions and movement to a very different level—that of the concepts we develop for interpreting those performances? In short, we leave a huge gap between our dynamic body-brain interactions, i.e. our embodied minds, and how we assume our minds automatically process our personal outside-to-inside experience of life. Unawares, we are bypassing the critical difference between what we believe to be our rational and linguistic mental processes and what is really happening inside us in order to get to the end-products of our body-mind activity: our concepts. In so doing, we fall into an intellectual rut with many textually focused literary scholars and even with some cognitive studies leaders. That is, we just keep thinking inside our own categorical frameworks with perhaps a few new interconnections reinforcing the same old concepts and quashing opportunities for greater embodied plasticity.⁹

Why? Perhaps because we want instant cognitive answers and conceptual end-products that are more sharply defined, reduced or encapsulated and thus more manageable ways of grasping the ephemeral and even the ineffable experience of performances.¹⁰ The stereotypical humanist does not have time for all the biological, preconscious, emotional and apparently irrational stuff taking place between the unappreciated gaps where the outside gets into

each one's newly adjusted internal transformations. We are totally dependent on all those unnoticed yet dynamic modifications of self that we usually label as experience, learning, reinforcement, memory and more. So it is that we do not even realize that we are missing something. And because most of us are not professionals trained for onstage embodiment or because we are not very curious about the neural-humanist scholarship now available to laymen, we do not even realize that everything that matters to our thoughts connects inside us even before it can be verbalized.¹¹ Because we do not take the time to address the key questions—i.e. how we form memories and concepts and how our neural plasticity continually and creatively reshapes our emotional-rational processes—we are missing the marrow of the matter and settling for bare bones.

In sum, because we rarely understand ourselves as profoundly embodied and truly individual in body and mind, we can scarcely help others truly engage with embodiment in performances. As a consequence, we keep teaching and writing about our own cognitive categories and conceptual interpretations and hoping that our students' individual embodiment skills are enough to understand why "you have to experience it" and why "you have to be there" to appreciate differences between seeing a well-performed *comedia* and reading the text.¹² If we are stereotypical ivory-tower scholars, we might assume that our bodies and brains process the world automatically like computers and that our body-

brain interfacing is truly hard-wired in the sense of being functionally automatic. Or perhaps we hold elitist notions of biological life—even of our own body-brain biology—as something “out there” and functional or standard equipment, sort of like plumbing. Yes, embodiment is mental, conceptual and all the processes we traditionally call thinking; but it is absolutely and simultaneously dynamic, organically material and plastic or changeable. Even though we are seldom cognitively, emotionally or sensationally aware of our minds’ absolute bodily dependence, our body-based mind operations continue developing dynamically under our skin.

But wouldn’t it be a huge advantage for all of us, in personal *and* professional terms, to understand that we think and feel differently because we have individual processes of embodiment? This is how we embody everyday life, and it is the only way our body-minds can embody performances—whether they be ordinary intellectual activities, our ordinary daily processes or our embodiment of on-stage life. We could become more attentive to our own body-mind processes and better explain how individuals arrive at their own concepts of performing life offstage or on. At present, how many students truly appreciate why and how their own embodiment differs from that of any human being who has ever lived or ever will?¹³ Are we able to teach them that what they feel-think about the 2RCT *Alcalde*, for example, depends on how well their own mirror neurons observe other humans and then set

off intra-connections, remapping the outside into their own body-minds? In effect, how well they enjoy their genetic legacies and their life-based learning is directly related to how well their mirror neurons and their internally plastic connectivity work. Being able to experience life or performances depends on which motor-sensory, emotive and rational components of their previous memory mind maps get involved in flexibly remapping newly embodied concepts.

How Are Your Mirror Neurons and Plasticity Doing?

These “mirror” or “socio-cultural” neurons are probably a chief factor in how humans evolved their communicative abilities and, eventually their language skills.¹⁴ They are also the best explanation yet for why we have very individual capacities to interpret what others are thinking and feeling just by observing the gross details of their body positioning, their gestures, facial expressions, voice tones, pitch, rhythms and so forth. Why didn’t we explore mirror neurons before? In part because they are such new discoveries but also because we were looking for more top-down, cognitive, language-based and category-driven explanations for the mind-brain while neuroscientists were finding and patiently explaining this missing link of embodiment.¹⁵ Fortunately, these socio-cultural neurons do make sense to humanists, artists and laymen in all

fields.¹⁶ We do not have to invent abstract theories of mind for cognition because our embodiment develops from conception, following our genetic and inner-outer experiences. In common parlance, mind-reading is an organic, evolved and inside-outside process of mirroring, imitating, developing new connections and learning, just as we humans have been doing for millennia. Awareness of this simple, embodied reality can revitalize not only performance studies but the humanities in general.

A handy way to start explaining our differing mirror neuronal capacities is to evaluate ourselves. This will be a useful first step in understanding the differing impact levels that 2RCT's *Alcalde* might have on our individual embodiment and thus on our interpretations as spectators. Self-evaluation methods have been developed by Simon Baron-Cohen, a leading expert and researcher on autism and Asperger's, to help his patients and their families comprehend how they interpret others' actions and thoughts across a spectrum of differing social, emotional and rational intelligences. One self-evaluation starts with photographs of human facial expressions (2003, Appendix I).¹⁷ Baron-Cohen trimmed the photos so that the only part of the expressions we can see is the eyes with the immediate brow and cheek area. For each pair of expressive eyes, he asks us to select one emotional human expression among four possible interpretations of what we are seeing in those eyes. Remarkably, most of us are able to pinpoint a majority of the emotions

in the cases he proposes. These and many more related studies in mind-reading and interpreting embodiment have relevance for how humans might construe all kinds of body movements, hand gestures, postures and everything else we do in conversing and interpreting the “life performances” of ourselves and others.¹⁸

Baron-Cohen’s work is especially instructive for weighing our social-emotional, embodied thought about others. He invites us to self-evaluate using photos of faces and questionnaires about our systematic and empathetic dealings with life. By comparing ourselves with his large population samples, we can get a sense of how our individual body-mind interpreting skills relate to those of others on a vast, bell-curve of human interactions. Toward the left end of the figure where the bell curves down and tapers off, Baron-Cohen represents our systematic tendencies, our need to control life by putting things into categories we find manageable. But individuals in the autism spectrum are selectively systematic. They need to deal systematically with topics they can handle—such as arcane calculations and skills requiring narrow, all-consuming concentration. However, they are weak at the other end of the curve representing strong empathetic tendencies. They have problems socializing, understanding others or relating to what the latter are feeling or planning. Often they cannot understand what literature, music, drama and other performing or plastic arts express about human feelings and

thoughts (Sacks). On the other hand, those with the greatest social empathizing tendencies on the far-right end of the curve might be best represented by individuals with Williams' syndrome (Tager-Glusberg et al.).¹⁹ They are highly sociable, overly trusting, tending to gaze admiringly at others and to sing with perfect pitch. But they fail to understand irony, anger or imminent danger and harm. In sum, either sort of imbalance in systematizing and empathizing—autism or Williams'—results in learning disabilities and difficulties interpreting reality and fiction.

From the above it is easy to see why scholars in literature and drama are interested in how most normal humans balance systematic and empathetic tendencies. We want to understand how we read others' minds as we write, read, spectate and interpret. The present essay, however, focuses on the mirror neural basis for our capacities to interconnect life and art within ourselves—either as scholars, teachers or “lay humanists.” In effect, we can heighten awareness of our connectivity by self-evaluating our individually nuanced balances of systematic and empathetic capacities during performances or in reading.²⁰ In essence, we can self-evaluate how dynamically and plastically we tend to mirror, to connect and to develop with our experiences.

Embodying "Alcalde" Sights & Sounds: Our Different "Societies of Mind"

Let's compare our own nuanced embodiment with how an autistic or Williams' patient might observe and then internally connect with the sights and sounds of onstage rape. In the former case, having *weak mirror neurons* means not being attentive to onstage embodiment, dialogue, movement, color and so forth. An autistic life of not being able to mirror or to imitate inside oneself means always living the world within a narrow, systematic range. Without intense training, most autistics are caught in a vicious circle: because their mirrors are weak from infancy, they cannot sufficiently embody the outside world, therefore making it more difficult to learn by newly embodying and reconnecting memories. That is, an autistic's limited yet systematized experiences of the world result in little variety and few complex mind maps of the constituent contributors to his memories and concepts. That means that his particular "society of mind" has fewer potential "cellular citizens" interconnecting, enriching and reworking memories. Lacking a richly connected "populace" in his concepts—i.e. lacking flash-mapped neuronal populations that constitute our remembered experiences—he does not bring together a very extensive and balanced "citizenship." His society of mind could not actively participate in a performance of *Alcalde*, i.e. connect

with and embody it, as would the body-minds of most spectators at the same performance.

Unawares, the societies of mind of these normal spectators would be “networking together” the stimuli sent from their neuron-mirror “citizens,” their sensory-motor “citizens” almost simultaneously with their “emotional citizens” and then their frontal-cortex “voters” to form a new mental-social relationship. That means that spectating onstage violence and rape is really remembering by re-networking a memory into a new micro-society of constituents that adjust the past to the present in order to understand what is being perceived. The more flexible or plastic these new embodied mind “social connections” are, the greater are one’s capacities to develop, adapt and change. Imagine all the potential “cellular citizenry” of the “society of mind” that constitutes the varied range of emotions, bodily sensations and consciously realized reactions you might have to performing violence! Neither autistics nor Williams’ sufferers are capable of forming such diverse new and richly populated “flash-mappings.” Their new “city maps” lack the varied participant “neighborhoods” that are, in effect, what constitute human thoughts and feelings. An autistic’s “citizenry of thought and feeling,” in other words, is more like an isolated little hamlet than a vast “neuronal city” of diverse and integrated populations. His “constituents” are too isolated to “vote together” and to be cognizant of what would be occurring in onstage violence and rape.

How do your mind maps or your societies of mind compare with those of individuals in the middle or at either end of the bell curve of normality when embodying a performance of the *Alcalde*? How much do you tend toward being a systematic processor of reality or being an empathizer? If an autistic were present, he most likely would be irritated by the sounds and sights of violence and, depending on his development levels, would not be paying attention to the action. Given the usual isolation and self-absorption of autism, his weak mirror neurons would not have connected well with whatever mental populace of networked memory he might have for identifying the actors' movements and sounds, let alone to feel empathy or any kind of identification with the victim. On the empathetic end of the bell curve, a Williams' patient would be very interested in everything about the people on stage.²¹ With her infectious affability, intense interest in gazing at and talking with others, her love of story-telling and listening rhythms she would be very fascinated by Crespo's daughter Isabel. But the Williams' patient is cognitively deficient in abstract thought, concepts of space and visual processing. Her mirror neurons would not be able to connect well beyond her sensory-motor systems to her rational-emotional systems, and to a "rich constituency" of memories and learned experiences from her cortex. She would have great empathetic interest but little intellectual competence in her society of mind for understanding Isabel, Pedro, Álvaro and

everyone else onstage. Specifically, a woman with Williams' would not perceive danger in the faces and actions of the soldiers in *Alcalde* onstage because she would not recognize impending violence or cruelty in her own life. Hyper-empathetic and socially uninhibited, she could identify with both Isabel and Álvaro without making cognitive-emotive connections to his aggression or Isabel's noisy struggle.

Significantly, *noise* in this *Alcalde* is a key factor for spectators to gauge their embodied perception of the actors' embodiment in terms of nuanced systematization-to-empathy with the actors. Indeed, our normal embodied connectivity with our surroundings is assisted by our evolved interdependency of motor-sensory capacities such that our ears assist our eyes and vice versa.²² This is a good example of how much our normal dynamics of embodiment depend on neural plasticity to make connections that autistics and Williams' might not. The mirroring of normal humans, in other words, can be expressed in audio, tactile and other sensory terms as well as visual mirroring. In the 2RCT performance, the prevalence of the noises of onstage violence should provoke spectator mirroring based on how hearing and seeing work together. In all its venues, the noisy violence of Rodríguez's versions of the play bring audiences closer to body-mind comprehension of the rough-and-tumble reality that all Zalamea lives through when rowdy and randy troops, fresh from Flandes, seek quartering—and

much more—among the villagers. Chispa’s heavy-metal voice, the pounding and power of her military-drum and slapped-guitar accompaniment, her *soldadesca* gestures and scene-dominating actions of a *mujer-que-manda* set the violent tone and, quite literally, the entire stage for the body-mind violence so indispensable to this *Alcalde*. Then, soldiers hustling to take command of the space and further inciting the noisy roughness, make this *Alcalde* connect more directly with contemporary audiences—especially among young spectators—whose mirror neurons and societies of mind are daily besieged with video violence, domestic and street violence or similarly associated auditory assaults from their popular music preferences.²³

Even in the censored version of *Alcalde*, when the audience only hears the sounds of violent struggle and aggression emitted from the wings, the audio-mirroring of this *Alcalde* is enough to set off intense spectator embodiment. Repulsed or at least irritated by the Isabel’s screaming and the noises of her kicking against the floor and by Pedro’s noisy scuffle with the soldiers trying to control him, an autistic might try to ignore the sounds or to tune out physically by covering his ears and not looking at what was producing the noise. Williams’ patients might suffer without being able to connect their fearful reactions to their visual images of Isabel and Álvaro. In contrast, the vast majority of us would not only “mirror” the sounds of violent rape, but we would audio-visually embody the feelings of indi-

viduals causing or suffering the noisy violence. It might bring some of us to look more intensely at the rape precisely because it provides a double reinforcement through audio and visual intake. Other normal spectators might not tolerate the intensity of mixed audio and visual violence, closing their eyes and even covering their ears as when they are watching horror movies or violent contemporary films. In the cinematic cases, I confess that my mirror neurons tend to render me unable to watch.

Without studying our mind's embodied dynamics we might have asked ourselves, "How can sound alone be so powerful?" But we now know that vision is never pure perception. Our minds' societies can normally "visualize" with sound created by movement that might have been presented to sighted audiences in uncensored scenes. Our auditory mirroring so powerfully provokes our sensory-motor and emotional-reasoning abilities that we "visualize" even without seeing.²⁴ Even when we "normal folk" cannot see the rape performed, as in the censored versions of *Alcalde*, we hear and might thus feel—according to our own embodying societies of mind—the intense sensations, perhaps identifying them with Isabel's panicked struggle, perhaps with Álvaro's violent pleasures and perhaps with Pedro's immediate pain and impending dilemma. In effect, the 2RCT versions—whether censored or not—stimulate our brain regions to embody the sounds and the sights of the embodied performance. The big difference for spectators is that, unawares,

we embody as many violent details as we are capable of or accustomed to, depending on how our neurons imitate, intra-connect and interconnect within us. In sum, all 2RCT's versions of rape and violence are personal opportunities for spectators to gauge and comprehend their own embodiment.

Your Society of Mind: Embodying 2RCT's Onstage Violence & Rape

Did you see the uncensored performance? Did your mirror neurons activate onstage rape inside you, connecting your motor-sensory and emotionally rational society of mind when watching and listening? My point in this little quiz is that we all need to start with conscious efforts to comprehend how our own mirror neurons are our initial step in physically-mentally embodying whatever we can perceive. This is especially the case because 2RCT's uncensored *Alcalde* challenges us, with the examples of rape and violence, to finally understand the connections between personal embodiment, stage embodiment and social embodiment—especially with relation to why societies prohibit or permit staging or filming rape. The performance dramatically illustrates why societies favor our “right” to see onstage rape or why they censor it. From classical Greece to early modern Spain and on into the present, societies try to protect individual spectators’ body-mind societies and, in turn, they shield our external societies which, in their efforts

to maintain order, limit the potential constituents of our societies of mind when they control the events of our worldly societies. In this essay, I therefore urge my readers to be self-evaluating their embodiment of filmed, audio or onstage violence as I simultaneously confess and assess my own. If you have understood the range of human empathizing and systematizing discussed thus far and have tried to understand how flexible and richly intra-connective your mind is, it should be more apparent why onstage violence, especially rape, is instructive. And as specialists we should be able to comprehend why mirror neurons and our greater connective embodiment—our plasticity—are fundamental, not only to performance studies, but to all our life performances from infancy onward.

But a cautionary reminder is in order: you and I are not merely, categorically comparing our selves with extreme cases at either end of the systematic-to-empathetic bell curve! Whether among “normal folk” or not, human embodiment is always highly nuanced, always experienced within our individually varied abilities to embody. It all depends on how you have lived life, imitated it, felt, thought and flexibly remapped your body-mind’s societies beyond your genetic legacies. And like the patients discussed, we too can develop more plasticity to better balance our embodiment across systematizing and empathizing tendencies.²⁵ With effort, we can adapt our own societies of mind to be more dynamic, more aware of new potential connections. In

effect, as we evaluate performances we are really evaluating our own subtle levels of connecting life and art.²⁶

I begin with my self-evaluation of embodiment as a spectator of the uncensored *Alcalde* in the Repertorio Español.²⁷ Interweaving that with new neurological evidence on mirroring, plasticity and embodied connectedness, I incorporate Rodríguez's accounts on spectator responses in other 2RCT venues—some uncensored and others partially censored. Of all the stages played during their North American tour, the Big Apple venue was the “smallest apple” for performing. Ironically however, the Repertorio's tiny space so intensified the actors' normally full-stage movements that the affects and effects of their embodied violence was dramatically amplified in spectator embodiment! Indeed, the auditory violence of the rowdy troops, Chispa, the drums and the concentrated visual invasion of the audience's space could have made it difficult for even an autistic to turn off and to isolate himself from the tension and violence in the air. From the outset, I was somewhat aware of the audio-visual discomfort I felt, but only after reevaluating how the rape scene affected me was I able to reflect on the power of 2RCT's staging of *Alcalde* in the accentuated auditory, visual and spatial conditions of the Repertorio. Even the play's comic relief and its more lyric moments of valor, honor, love or gentility did not dispel the sustained and underlying tension I was embodying in this very intimately staged

performance—and even before the rape scene occurred. By then, when the tall, muscular and handsome Miguel Ángel Granados (Álvaro) abruptly grounded, dragged and roughly thrust María Vigo's (Isabel's) slender and yet kicking and struggling frame toward him and along the floor, my mirror neurons were absolutely agitated and connecting my fright with emotional-rational confusion. Both suspended and puzzled, I now remember having asked myself, "They are not really going to stage rape are they? We do not do that in *comedia* performances!"

Without undressing, Álvaro and Isabel embodied rape in their under-the-skirt and opening-the-trouser movements. And because of that directorial decision, the 2RCT can help *comediantes* understand why embodiment makes the critical difference, why silent reading of a play cannot be as emotionally powerful as performance and why embodiment of ephemeral experiences can potentially affect and effect changes not only in actors' and spectators' societies of body-mind but in how our worldly societies react to and treat violence in its artistic and non-fictional forms. As I now try to re-map how my "flash-maps" of body-brain connections embodied the moment, I sense that my reactions were strongly audio-driven and supportive of what I thought I was seeing. I do not deny that my visual mirroring of Isabel's fiercely thrashing arms and legs activated the same combative muscle groups in my body that her body was tensing against each brutal lock and thrust that Álvaro cru-

elly inflicted. It was my lived example of how mirror neurons stimulate our processes of embodiment: they can incite all a spectator's muscle groups and senses to imitate and re-perform the actions of Álvaro and Isabel in the very same areas of our bodies that we perceive their muscles and voices to be performing.

Most normal spectators could experience some degree of this instantaneous audio-visually oriented, motor-sensory embodiment in that moment of the 2RCT's *Alcalde*. But my particular memories seem to be telling me that had I only seen the action without hearing it, I would not have so intensely embodied the rape scene and would not have made such powerful emotive-cognitive plastic connections to how the violence of rape functions dynamically in performers, spectators and eventually in our societies as a whole. The sounds of violent struggle were that frightening to me! But that was not just because no pertinent "skin" was revealed, even in the uncensored version; Álvaro's and Isabel's movements and horizontal positions were enough for active mirror neurons to stimulate involuntary, perhaps unregistered sexual responses in spectators. But audio-stimulated mirroring so amplified Isabel's frightening kicking and screaming in me that my female embodiment of her rape was remapping every empathetically experienced rape scene I could remember from film, TV or even in first-person accounts of "close calls." Yes, the visual mattered. But my embodying processes con-

nected more intense feelings and meanings of violence in the rape scene and throughout the play because my society of mind connected a double-dose of audio-visual constituents.

Why Individual Embodiment Matters: 2RCT's "Alcalde," Onstage/Offstage

How did other spectators react to the uncensored version of rape staged in the Repertorio or in other venues? Seated among the “público más frío, intelectual” of New York, I silenced my inner tumult and perhaps so too did most other spectators (Rodríguez, Strother interview 149). But in younger and more open environments of Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez, some 2RCT spectators had so highly embodied the onstage rape of Isabel that they shouted out to Álvaro, “No le pegues” (Rodríguez, Connor interview). They voiced their real mirroring and interior enactment of the actors’ intensely embodied portrayals! The individual spectators’ shouts demonstrated theater’s vital role in provoking our inner-outer and social capacities for flexibility and change. Each spectator’s voice expressed intra-connective remapping of her unique society of mind—from mirror neurons to sensory-motor and emotive-cognitive reworking. Were the voices provoked by empathetic body-mind association with the victim? Research would say “no.”

Mirror neuron research on our internal and external imitation of brutal mental or physical ag-

gression indicates that we humans react powerfully to violence but in individual ways, regardless whether the violence is onstage or off and whether or not we condone or condemn violence on stage or off (Iacoboni). That is, someone might shout “ay, ay” out of empathy for Isabel and a desire to make society protect her. But those same shouts might also express a different spectator’s sexual excitement when internally mirroring the pleasure-pain of sexual conquest and domination. Or such shouts might express a spectator’s attempt to control his/her involuntary sexual stimulation in mirroring the violence. This is how physical-mental titillation works spontaneously and dominates our supposedly rational minds. It is why violence, especially the pornographic variety, so dangerously and plastically connects categorical distinctions between pleasure and pain. Just as the sights and/or sounds of attacking Isabel force a victim of rape to remap her complex memory sensations of being raped, so too they can stimulate a rapist, or a potential one, to remap and/or reinforce socially condoned and/or condemned motor-sensory and cognitive-emotive reactions to staged violence.

Such distinct experiential responses are a chief reason why societies and individuals debate censorship, deciding between protecting their citizens and encouraging their creative realization of personal embodiment. That is, societies or directors can censure our exposure to the powerfully imitative affects and effects of violence but, in so doing,

they also deny opportunities for personal development and self-expression—whether artistic or social. In his DVD version of *Alcalde* director Rafael Rodríguez found a third way between the uncensored live performance version and the visually censored, audio-only version of staging rape. Since Rodríguez is trying to encourage spectators to map together several kinds of violence as they embody an *Alcalde* performance (Connor interview), the DVD of the 2RCT performance partially censors a spectator's gaze in ways that live performances do not. That is, Rodríguez's DVD portrays the full-stage and full-screen versions of soldierly violence, including Chispa's auditory-visual command of the stage. But when Crespo struggles on stage left of the DVD's huge performance space to defend Isabel from being raped at his distant stage right, DVD spectators are not allowed to embody the rape for more than a few seconds and never in close-up as I was able to do in the Repertorio's tiny, live-performance space. Instead, the only DVD close-up during the rape forces all spectators' gazes onto Crespo, encouraging us to embody Pedro's internal struggle and noble dilemma rather than his daughter's personal and social anguish.²⁸ In short, this partial self-censorship in the less-ephemeral, DVD version limits the potential range of connected feelings and meanings that spectators might embody in live performances, especially in the Repertorio.²⁹

The power of staging rape and violence is what Iacoboni calls the "bad and ugly" side of our

neuronal mirrors: they are the dark reflection of our awesome capacity to grow by imitating whatever gets embodied into our motor-sensory and emotive-cognitive systems (204-18). We can only learn by embodying, by enacting in our own flesh what we are capable of internally remapping—whether it is learning to calculate, to spectate, to sing or speak eloquently, to read and write, to kill and maim, to make love tenderly or to revel in sexual domination. Whether onstage or off, we humans mirror and embody these and all other involuntary or conscious feelings, actions and thoughts; that is why theater matters to us and our societies. That is why Rodríguez believes that the largely young audiences in Tijuana and Ciudad Juárez were so responsive to the uncensored *Alcalde* performances (Connor interview). Of course his spectators weren't required to self-evaluate or to voice how their own body-minds remapped the rape and violence of the 2RCT staging. But based on how our individual internal mirroring and plasticity differ, we know that the enthusiasm Rodríguez witnessed among spectators represented a variety of feelings and thoughts about violence. At the risk of reinforcing sexual violence in some individuals' embodied minds, the uncensored 2RCT *Alcalde* incited spectators' mirror neurons, providing them more diverse ways of embodying the play's meanings and for stimulating discussion about what rape and violence mean to border-town societies and their citizens.

This onstage violence was particularly poignant in Juárez, because the 2RCT performed their *Alcalde* on *El Día de la Madre*. There in El Paso's sister city, in the mirror of her Mexican double, in a city plagued by violence against women and more recently by armed assassinations involving gangs, drug lords, police and innocent civilians, the audience courageously participated in the performance, taking on the challenge of embodying stage violence, perhaps because it was so personally and socially relevant to their lives in that place and time.³⁰ In sum, violence does matter in how our body-minds take in the world. Censors past and present have always intuited that violence reproduces violence. But we now know why it doesn't have to do so *carte blanche* (Iacoboni 204-18). Responsible, individual awareness of how we diversely embody within our own internal remapping of violence has both personal and social implications (219-72). This is why theater matters more than ever and why we need to understand our own embodiment with the help of the arts and humanistic neurosciences.

Rodríguez's contemporary performances of *Alcalde* offer prime examples of how our embodied mirroring and flexibility recreate onstage realities in us as we spectate. The contrasts between the El Paso and Juárez approaches to audience control and to spectator participation are ripe for our critical examination of time-honored concepts about *comedia* performances in any era. Not the least are the varied modes in which female spectators—in distinct ven-

ues and with diverse body-mind gender identities—could have embodied any sort of onstage violence, even merely harsh voice tones and brusque gestures. Given what we know about mirroring and flexible connections in our minds’ embodied “societies,” it is likely that female spectators form connections to the *Alcalde* distinct from the honor-bound interpretations we usually highlight in textual analysis. Performing violence makes concepts of honor less an abstraction even for male defenders of the honor code. And the embodied enactment of any or all types of violence potentially connects spectators of all gendered and socio-economic identifications. In short, because our body-minds have been mirroring and making new connections for millennia, the repercussions of embodiment-based studies create enormous potential for rewriting performance history and theater studies in myriad ways.

NOTES

¹ At present the most authoritative point of departure for understanding how “embodiment” is now being used is probably the introduction to *The Embodied Mind* (1991). The leading author was Francisco Varela, the innovative neurologist-come-phenomenologist, who knew how to explain the biological and cultural understanding needed for our evolving notion of our minds as embodied in life, inside and outside each self. Since Varela’s death, his co-author Evan Thompson has completed the book the two began, *Mind in Life*, in which he handles the nuanced distinctions between his focus on embodied dynamics of the mind and the necessary neural coordinates of those dy-

namic connections that he is not trained to study. He eschews contemporary cognitive scientists who identify the mind too closely with categories and concepts without demonstrating sufficient body-mind connections. My embodiment studies for performance necessarily combine the Varela-Thompson approach and new revelations from neurologists and psychologists who document the biological evidence on which their work was ultimately based. I discuss these latter scholars in this present essay with respect to our internal connectivity or enactment of outside-inside relations. Raymond Gibbs, author of *Embodiment and Cognitive Science* provides a book-length definition of the embodied mind and focused more on psychology, strengthening much of what phenomenologist Shaun Gallagher treats in *How the Body Shapes the Mind*.

² In effect, our cellular-level activities are our original experiences of intra- and interconnectivity of self and world. Our body-minds are our internal micro-societies that the exterior world mirrors in ecological and social systems. As we experience these macro-societies, we imitate and convert them into the constituents of our minds' micro-societies. These in turn remap themselves, forming new ideas, new skills and "remembering" our constituents. Mind change occurs, in effect, like social change. It can only happen if there is sufficient agreement or linkage among the "citizens." There has to be a level of saturation or a threshold of stimulation and coordination before the inner networks spark their "flash-maps" connecting the components of a re-conceptualized memory. I have sculpted the term "society of mind" based on neuroscientists' and artists' accounts. Particularly inspiring are Sapolsky, Edelman, Iacoboni, Damasio and Varela et al. In this regard I am also indebted to Howard Mancing's reference on Diane Gillespie and numerous major components of my studies in the cognitive field. Also instrumental are William Connolly's reading of Iacoboni for *Neural Politics*. These sources document our internal "social maps" of selves and of our external societies, providing more accurate descriptions of our body-

minds than do category-oriented, “framed” and “blended” accounts developed in earlier cognitive scholarship in literature, linguistics and philosophy.

³ Resistance to body-mind approaches in performance studies stems from not knowing how we embody and enact the world. Understanding the truly embodied roles of actors and spectators of performances is a first step in helping *comediantes* see how our inner-outer experience of embodying awe is the basis of our aesthetic enjoyment of the marvelous and of why the arts matter to us. This is not the relationship of art and science you learned about even five years ago, let alone when you were an undergrad or graduate student!

⁴ Experienced *comediantes* among my readers have seen plenty of classical performances where shock factors such as nudity, physical violence or anachronistic, incongruent costuming and music are employed to embody questions of socio-economic and political relations, personal integrity, sexuality, gender and so forth. Notably innovative examples staged at Chamizal, and that come readily to mind in that regard, are UNAM’s “Marta la piadosa,” the Repertorio Español’s “Burlador de Sevilla” and “El astrólogo fingido” of González Puche and Zheng Hong. Each raises concerns about embodiment. However, the 2RCT performance examined in this essay was the most poignantly charged, recent and fitting example of how spectator’s participate in *comedia* performances and of why mirroring and plasticity matter.

⁵ Readers of this study have probably noticed that I am shifting pronoun usage in ways not usually encountered in academic publications. Why am I intentionally breaking scholarly distance we humanists pretend to maintain by referring to each other, and even ourselves in the third person? The shifting pronouns communicate how the arts, humanities and social sciences are challenged and changed by revelations that we are all highly individualized yet supremely interconnected and embodied selves. In the dynamics of our body-minds, we are always potentially any and all identities of self: you, I, we,

she, he and they. And when I employ the pronouns she and he, I do so ironically because the new neural humanism of embodiment is revealing how woefully inadequate these multiple and culturally marked labels of gender identity are for communicating our truly dynamically embodied gender relations. In sum, the shifting pronouns call attention to why the new science is challenging our humanistic notions about identity and individuality as well as our snobbism about science as too materialistic or mechanical for us intellectuals. Yes, we are our materially embodied selves, but in the most profoundly, dynamically and awe-inspiring ways imaginable. This notion of embodied minds establishes body-brain unity as the point of departure for understanding why our lofty minds are so lofty yet so simultaneously flesh-and-blood.

⁶ I witnessed the uncensored performance in the Repertorio Español de Nueva York in March of 2008. Subsequently I read Prof. Darci Strother's informative interview with the director for *Comedia Performance* (2008.1). I followed in August 2009, interviewing Rafael Rodríguez by telephone and emails. I concluded by seeing the *Alcalde* DVD produced by the 2RC Teatro.

⁷ Other artists and companies are discussed in my book project on embodiment in performing and plastic arts.

⁸ Most current actor-training approaches are based on neural-phenomenology and neural-aesthetics, either directly as in Shannon Rose Riley's essay in *Theatre Topics* or indirectly on more intuitively based training exercises like 2RCT's actors employ. I highly recommend active workshop exercises for *comediantes* to understand embodiment. The first-hand rigors I experienced in an acting class so overwhelmed my embodied learning that I realized why I will never become an actor (NYU Performance and Politics workshop in Bello Horizonte, Brazil in 2005).

⁹ Truly embodied mind approaches to performances can help get us out of this intellectual rut. Narrowly cognitive and conceptual approaches cannot benefit our scholarship and teach-

ing as much as neural-humanism. We need to get beyond narrowly cognitive or phenomenological arguments about the gap between the conscious and the preconscious levels of embodiment

¹⁰ Chief examples are cognitively focused scholars McConachie and Turner.

¹¹ By neural humanism for laymen, I refer to the latest humanist-friendly books and magazine articles being accessed by artists and performers as well as scholars. Ramachandran and Iacoboni (in his summaries of Rizzolatti, Gallese et al.) are at the forefront, working directly with an intelligent and creative lay public. They contrast with the first-wave cognitive phenomenologists like Mark Johnson and Alva Noë. Pursuing the legacy of neurobiologist Varela, however, Evan Thompson better links philosophy with the neural humanism of Damasio, Edelman and others.

¹² Of course we try to get students to act out scenes or, if we are among the fortunate few, our universities might allow us to devote an entire semester to preparing and to performing *comedias*. But students could reap life-long benefits in self-development if their training included studying and experiencing what real embodiment is.

¹³ The short explanation for this is that everyone experiences embodiment differently because one's body-mind is the only place where life experiences can occur and that we can be aware of them. These are called our autopoietic systems—how our body-mind histories internally self-organize our lives to coordinate with the ecopoietic and other autopoietic systems outside us (Varela and Maturana).

¹⁴ In addition to Ramachandran and to the sources cited by Iacoboni (on Rizzolatti, Gallese and many others), see issues of *Social Neuroscience*. However, Iacoboni's book is the first to bring together in layman's language all the newest and most significant research on how mirror neurons—especially the super mirror neurons—fill in the gaps of understanding our

marvelous interconnections and on how our body-minds learn, feel, think and remember in the world.

¹⁵ Most of us understand that human mind-interpreting abilities evolved, but we need the information from neuronal mirroring to make more profound embodied connections beyond scholarship in evolutionary psychology or autism research. Ramachandran, Gallagher and researchers discussed by Iacononi and *Social Neuroscience* show how mirror neurons have revolutionized and surpassed other theories of mind (ToM).

¹⁶ “Socio-cultural neurons” and “Dalai Lama neurons” are some of the most communicative terms Ramachandran has lent to his humanistic explanations. In effect, embodiment studies are already entering a second wave of body-mind studies, one more dependent on real embodiment in performance and plastic arts and neural-humanism. First-wave scholarship from leaders such as Lakoff and Johnson or Turner and Faconnier can’t bring theater scholars to the profound issues of embodiment we need. Theater historian McConachie, for example, fails to understand the contradictions inherent in his cognitive applications to spectatorship.

¹⁷ See all Baron-Cohen’s Appendices (2003). Photographs in Appendix I include questionnaires for self-evaluating one’s tendency toward systematization or toward empathy. The materials are still helpful although mirror neurons have disproved his theory about testosterone’s influence on diminished ToM. See other notes on mirror neurons that follow below.

¹⁸ In addition to note above, see McNeill on gestures; Ekman on faces and his edition with Rosenberg further exploring facial gestures; Damasio on social and emotional intelligence in reasoning; Ramachandran on autism and less effective mirror neurons.

¹⁹ Mirror neuron research has already altered Baron-Cohen’s hypothesis the prevalence of autism among males could be blamed on testosterone. We now know that weak empathizing among autistics points to weak mirror neurons (Ramachandran) and that Williams’ patients are females with high empa-

thy and lower systematization pointing to intense mirroring (Dobbs). However, embodiment studies are helping us understand that the complexity of gender identity far beyond the roles that hormones of all kinds play in gender identification. Indeed if anything, embodied neural humanism points to more diverse body-mind indicators of non-binary gender assignments than ever imagined, as I discuss in my book project.

²⁰ I have used this self-evaluation technique to encourage students to develop greater awareness of their reading and speculating capacities. They find it highly revealing and instructive in improving their tendencies and understanding whether they need to be more empathetic or more systematic.

²¹ Dobbs' essay is an excellent, recent introduction to current research and discoveries pertinent to our "normal" selves via Williams' patients. He also includes neurological research comparing Williams and Autism. The latter is a spectrum and not a syndrome like Williams', and it thus has many different manifestations, levels of isolation and tendencies to systematize or to lack empathy and social affect in general. It is also much more common (1 in 150) than Williams' (1 in 7,500) or Down syndrome (1 in 800).

²² Ramachandran's work on phantom limbs demonstrates how visual and audio regions of the brain affect each other. Gibbs' and Gallagher's recent books also offer fascinating examples of our interconnected senses of body image and self image that relate directly to the interconnectivity of our sensory-motor capacities.

²³ The relations of music within and outside our societies of body-mind are one of the richest sources available on embodiment of self/mind, evolution, language development and behavior. The neural humanism of keeping a beat, of dancing, of reggaetón, metal, classical and all types of music, rhythms, tones etc. are revolutionizing what we know about every aspect of music in the arts, literature and even social and political studies in human life. See Sacks, Levitin, and the essays

edited by Juslin and Sloboda and by Peretz and Zatorre in their respective recent collections.

²⁴ Neural-phenomenological and neural-humanistic documentation are revealing the interdependencies among all our senses—including touch, taste or scent. A current, familiar example is the “Prius factor” and the frightening realization that we depend on our ears to alert us to look for nearly silent vehicles.

²⁵ Prof. Temple Grandin’s case is the most frequently cited on how autistics can learn social skills although they lack neural empathy (Sacks 290-91). See also Doidge on plasticity training in her case and others.

²⁶ And because the potential physical-mental ranges of performance embodiment have changed little since Calderón’s time, we *comediantes* must challenge our own interconnections with spectators, actors, dramatists and the whole cultural context of performing. Rather than simply theorizing about broad horizons of expectations for a nation, social classes or even genders, our theater histories must be integrated with our neural aesthetics of embodiment.

²⁷ The chapter-length version on staging violence and rape addresses more ways that 2RCT’s *Alcalde, Fuenteovejuna* and many other plays with onstage or offstage violence incite our embodying of violence.

²⁸ My readers should understand why neural humanism demands more profound study of “the gaze” and “the panopticon,” two currently influential socio-political and psychological explanations of vision control.

²⁹ My attention was so fixed on Álvaro’s violence and Isabel’s struggle that I did not recall Crespo’s resistance until I later saw the DVD.

³⁰ Readers will understand why Rodríguez staged the visually censored version in the Chamizal National Park Theater. Complex factors in the mind maps of Park Service officials and the Siglo de Oro Festival leaders, as well as in the sociological mappings of the El Paso area and their citizens’ corre-

sponding societies of mind brought them to eliminate the visual staging of rape (Connor interview).

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THE INFLUENCE OF THE TARGET AUDIENCE IN TWO PRODUCTIONS OF *EL PERRO DEL HORTELANO*

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So much has been written on Lope de Vega's *El perro del hortelano* that one may well wonder what else might possibly be said about the play. Nearly all commentary up to now has, however, focused on the dramatic text rather than performances. The recent proliferation of productions of the work since the success of Pilar Miro's 1995 screen adaptation can facilitate what has long been missing: a discourse informed by performance analysis. Susan Fischer has already opened the forum on *El perro* in performance with her detailed analysis of the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2004 staging of Lope's comedy in English translation (Fischer 2005). Two other recent Spanish language productions bring to light something that analysis of the dramatic text cannot: the degree to which the target audience may influence the way the play is staged. Repertorio Español's 2004 *El perro* and 2RC Teatro's 2007 staging offer sharply contrasting interpretations of

Lope's classic *comedia palatina*. Critical commentary on the written text has tended to cluster around two poles, one emphasizing the forbidden romance between the protagonists and how it transforms them for the better, the other highlighting the keen wit with which Lope parodies not only selfish aristocratic behaviors but also rival writers, ex-lovers, and literary conventions. 2RC Teatro and Repertorio Español's visions diverge along similar lines, but their readings appear to be influenced greatly by the anticipated public's conception of society and their place within it; their familiarity with Golden Age Spain and the conventions of its drama; and their horizon of expectations with regard to this particular play.

Many studies of the play offer either a generally sympathetic reading of the characters' conflicts and development en route to embracing genuine love and nobility, or an interpretation of the play as a parodical critique of aristocratic values and pretensions. Those favoring the former view have traced Teodoro's transformation from "vain, lying, ambitious philanderer" to "integral man, honest, truthful, noble," and maintain that the protagonists develop a "sincere natural love" by the end of the play (Wardropper 110-11). Teodoro develops a "higher consciousness" and the couple "have learned to love truly; they have come to know each other, not as idealized fantasies, but as real people" (Fischer 1989, 83). According to the latter reading, Lope condemns notions of honor linked only to

birthright, power, and social standing and not to virtue (Fernández 314), and the play is essentially about the “hollowness of the aristocratic ideal” (Wilson 274), as Lope offers a devastating satire of an aristocracy he regards as “podrida y carente de toda buena cualidad” (McGrady 162). Some scholars find a middle ground between these two extremes, recognizing the importance, to varying degrees, of elements of satire, romance, and the honor conflict. We might therefore say that interpretations of *El perro* tend to line up along a continuum from idealistic romance to cynical satire.

The “readings” of directors Rafael Rodríguez of 2RC Teatro and Isabel Ramos of Repertorio Español fall within this continuum; however, the process through which they arrive at their interpretations differs from that of philologists. While scholars argue on behalf of the sense of the play they believe the written text and its social context best support, directors are of course concerned with rendering the action in a way that their viewers will find engaging. In conceptualizing the *mise-en-scène*, they must read and interpret not only the script, but also the audience.

As we are well aware, Lope himself condoned the idea of knowing and playing to the tastes of one’s audience in his *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias*. Indeed, Isaac Benabu imagines him gauging the tastes of *corral* regulars, “observando el progreso de su obra por las tablas. A lo largo del tiempo,

las reacciones de ese público [le] ayudaban a perfeccionar su arte” (43-44). If Lope adjusted his works to suit the various sensibilities of *corral* audiences, today’s companies face the daunting task of adapting classical plays to engage a spectatorship of diverse cultures, ethics, and tastes that may be unfamiliar with the values and dilemmas of Golden Age Spain. Knowing one’s audience may be difficult today, but it becomes all the more essential in adapting a baroque classic for contemporary sensibilities. Carol Bardenstein notes that theatrical adaptation is “goal oriented,” and that adapters must focus on “the text’s acceptability within the target cultural system” (146). To adapt the action of a play across time or space, a director must consider the audience’s comprehension of certain cultural and linguistic systems, or what Marco De Marinis has called the “theatrical system of receptive preconditions” (175). The role of the adapter is to identify and bridge gaps between the semiotic systems that inform the spectator’s experience and those that inform the play. Immediately one understands not only the difficulty of such a task but also its inherent risks. In some places, audiences may be quite diverse and difficult to characterize in any general way. Today’s spectator may operate routinely within several contrasting cultural and linguistic systems, and may have virtual access through technology, the media, or education to systems different from those of his or her actual experience. Never

has the risk of pigeon-holing an audience been greater for directors than in today's age of information and globalization; yet failing to reach out to today's audiences might prove an even greater risk as the arts struggle to survive in troubled economies worldwide.

Understanding a play's multiplicity of voices, registers, and experiences can be just as daunting for directors. Patrice Pavis points out the difficulty of recreating a play's "microcultures," that is, its diversity of registers, its "internal cross-coding of various subgroups in the play (as regards age, sex, socio-professional milieu, kind of desire, etc.)," concluding that ultimately one cannot hope to reproduce the entire polyphony, but must bravely choose a strategy, "a vision of this cultural discursive mix, which is perhaps schematic but at least systematic" (39).

The directors of the two productions of *El perro* in question employ different strategies to make Lope's language, values, and observations of society resonate with the particular kinds of audiences they anticipate. The companies' mission statements and the directors' own remarks give us some idea of their understanding of their spectators and of what they can offer them through *El perro* and other Golden Age plays. New York City's oldest and most prominent Spanish language theater, Repertorio Español has produced Spanish and Latin American theater from a variety of periods and gen-

res for forty years. Repertorio's audience is of course largely Hispanic. Although Hispanics currently make up about 15% of the United States' population, of New York's 8.2 million people, approximately 27% are Hispanic. The company's founder and artistic director, René Buch, noting that most of the Hispanic population of the United States is relatively young, muses:

What concerns me is that we will have generations and generations of young Hispanics that will never learn to appreciate the excitement and magic of live theatre, never learn about the riches of their cultural heritage, never consider the arts as a profession and never see their own experiences depicted on stage. Concurrently are the generations of non-Latinos whose only knowledge of the Latino culture will be the diluted, one-dimensional and damaging images that permeate in mainstream and pop culture. (Buch 1)

The mission of any of Repertorio's productions includes the cultural education not only of adult Hispanics and non-Latinos, but of young Hispanics in particular. Repertorio conducts an educational program at five public New York high schools with high Latino enrollments in order to introduce students to Spanish-language theater and show instructors how to incorporate theater into the curriculum. Each program culminates with the performance of

an original play put together by the students at Repertorio Español's theater. The company is clearly dedicated to the cultural education of young Latinos.

With regard to *El perro* in particular, director Isabel Ramos remarks that while "finding a bridge between the present and the past," she hopes to "maintain a sense of why the text was originally written," but also to "find an aesthetic that would be representative and engaging to Latin American and Latino audiences" (Ramos 1). Ramos's aesthetic indeed seems directly related to the issue of "why the text was originally written." This question has been much debated, but is, I believe, better understood now than ever. In a 1972 article, Margaret Wilson discusses deceit and aristocratic pretentiousness in *El perro*, but concludes that the play does not constitute a "serious" attack on the upper classes, since Lope seems to accept aristocratic values in most of his works (282). She believes that if he has a target, it would be his fellow writers, particularly Tirso. She points out how Lope appears to borrow from and parody Tirso's *El vergonzoso en palacio* (1611), which also features a secretary, Mireno, favored by a duchess, Magdalena, who marries him when he is revealed to be a duke. Wilson sees Lope mimicking Tirso "to show how much more can be done by stepping outside and even poking fun at the old conventions" (282). Donald McGrady's 1999 study of Lope's source material adds to our understanding of the intertextual play

between Lope and his peers by identifying other immediate influences. Bocaccio's *Decameron* V-7 had been recognized as the source of Tristán's fabricated story of Teodoro's "noble" origins.¹ McGrady notes that Ludovico Ariosto wrote a play based on the episode, *I suppositi*, and shows how Lope has borrowed some of his elaborations of the original. He further maintains that Luis de Góngora based his play *Las firmezas de Isabela* (1613) on *I suppositi*, but wrote it as a parody of Lope's own *Virtud, pobreza y mujer* (1612). *El perro* can thus be seen as a satirical response to *Las firmezas*, highlighting the social and poetic affectation and arrogance of Góngora, who, as McGrady puts it, "se daba insoportables ínfulas de aristócrata" (162).

Thus, in order for Ramos to maintain some sense of why the play was originally written, she must determine whether such elements as the parodying of literary conventions, the critiquing of other writers' styles, and the satire of aristocratic values and arrogance can be communicated to her young, Latino, New York audience in an engaging way.² Most critics concur that Lope caricatures Góngora in the lines and character of the marquis Ricardo, who praises the countess in the artificial, hyperbolic language of *culteranismo*.³ Ramos adapts Lope's playful parody by targeting instead a pop icon recognizable to Latinos. Ricardo, as played by actor José Enrique, sports flowing blonde hair, an audacious costume, a regal posture and a histrionic tone, all of which call to mind Walter Mercado, the an-

drogynous, Puerto Rican, Liberace-like astrologer who reviews the daily horoscope on the sensationalist news show *Primer Impacto*, offered by Miami-based Spanish-language network Univisión. Like this visionary of the stars famous throughout Latin America, who began his career as a TV and radio astrologer in the sixties, Ramos's Ricardo uses poetic language, a dramatic voice, and spectacular fashion sense to charm listeners and project wealth and authority, yet the gaudy exterior and elegant phrasings belie a lack of true substance.

Through another character, Ramos parodies the literary convention of the *deus ex machina*, the improbable occurrence that conveniently resolves the play's conflict. Ramos transforms Lope's Ludovico into the Countess Ludovica and presents her as a puppet that Tristán pulls out of a chest. Her costume, makeup, and floppy movements evoke the scarecrow from *The Wizard of Oz*: her servants must support and manipulate her limbs. Thus Ramos comments on the hollow, contrived nature of this character, openly demonstrating that she is little more than a convenient fabrication created only to resolve the central conflict, a simulacrum to endow the protagonist Teodoro with noble status and riches so that he can marry Diana. The scarecrow of Oz is, of course, easily recognized by generations of viewers all over the world since the film, believed to be one of the most-watched in history, debuted in 1939. Ludovica's clown-like movement and ap-

pearance might also remind Latino viewers of clowns still performing and beloved all over the Spanish-speaking world, such as Venezuela's Popy; Gaby, Fofó and Miliki, from Spain but also popular in Latin America from the 50s through the 80s; or from Mexico, Brozo, the female clowns of Nifú-Nifá, or dentist-turned-clown Cepillín, whose children now follow in his oversized footsteps. Again, Ramos demonstrates how puppetry, clowning, and sham, made clear to the audience through an allusion to a familiar image, are used to project status where, in reality, it is lacking.



Diana (Karina Casiano) ignores the protests of Anarda (Yaremis Félix) in Repertorio Español's *El perro del hortelano*. Photo by Michael Palma.]

The parodical spirit we see in these two instances, inspired by the satirical impulses that prompted Lope to write the play, becomes the de-

fining aesthetic of Ramos's production. The Countess Diana, for example, is portrayed as vain, pampered, tyrannical, and adolescent. Her costume is largely responsible for achieving these effects: She wears a strapless pink prom dress with furry brown muffs on her forearms; her hair is absurdly dotted with small pink ribbons; and she clomps around the stage on two coffee cans strapped to the bottom of her ballet slippers. Her feet never touch the ground: often a servant carries her piggy-back offstage. The fact that the Countess occasionally guzzles milk from a Parmalat carton not only reinforces her infantile nature, but also associates her with the ideas of scandal, deception, and false wealth that the Italian dairy company, which does extensive business in Latin America and Spain, has come to represent since they were discovered to have engaged in accounting fraud in late 2003, artificially inflating their balance sheets. Once again, Ramos alludes to an image familiar to Latino audiences to underscore the theme of artificially enhanced value.

The aristocrats Ricardo and Federico are mirror images of each other: they are robed in coffee-colored raincoats, with pennies glued to their chests. They sport orange and pink thongs over their raincoats, in the manner of codpieces, and squeak around the stage in sneakers with bright violet laces. The two growl and bark at each other when they vie for Diana's attention outside the church in act two. If Diana is the *perro del hortelano*, they are two

foolish puppies fighting for her attention. Farcical costumes and actions thus help communicate the hierarchical relationships between these seventeenth century courtesans to an audience that cannot be assumed to possess a linguistic or cultural familiarity with that historical context.



[Ricardo (Ricardo Hinoja) and Federico (Jorge Dieppa) conspire against Teodoro, while Tristán (Emiliano Santa Cruz) eavesdrops in Repertorio Español's *El perro del hortelano*. Photo by Michael Palma.]

The final scene has all the fanfare of a triumphal procession, as the happy couple, wearing white wedding veils, parades around the stage, fol-

lowed by Tristán and the other servants, cheering and dancing. When Teodoro announces that Tristán is to marry Diana's servant Dorotea (3367-71), the throng celebrates wildly as the two servants shriek in clearly exaggerated elation, as if they had won a lottery. Confetti flies and great spectacle ensues as playful concluding music swells. Ironically, Dorotea and Tristán have shown little interest in one another, nor does Tristán seem like someone who wants to get married, given all of his advice for Teodoro on how to get out of relationships (371-502), his insulting description of a former lover (459-78), and his great contentment in making merriness with his cohorts at the tavern (2416-35). Perhaps the only thing the couple might wish to celebrate in marrying each other is their financial gain from her dowry; therefore, why not present the moment as if the two had won a raffle? The spectacle performed here ironically underscores the arbitrariness and lack of substance in the servants' marriage, and in the *comedia* convention of the multiple-wedding ending in general.

2RC Teatro's *El perro* targets a different audience, and with different objectives. Although director Rafael Rodríguez's audiences in Arucas, Gran Canaria, may be more familiar with the play than theatergoers of New York, he nonetheless considers Lope's work at some cultural distance from the Canaries, as Golden Age theater has not been widely performed in the islands for some time.

He therefore seeks to re-familiarize islanders with a vital part of their cultural heritage. As Darci Strother indicates in an interview with the director, part of the reason Rodríguez established his company in Arucas in 1997 was because he saw little quality theater being produced on Gran Canaria, while “la comedia facilona y de vodevil” dominated the mar-quees (139-40). He notes that scarcely any Spanish classical theater had been performed in the Canaries for twenty years (140). Rodríguez explains on the company’s website that his purpose is to offer quality Spanish theater and culture as an alternative to the tendency in the Canaries toward “un teatro comercial fácil y sin riesgos artísticos” (Rodríguez 1).

Despite the infrequency of performances of Golden Age plays in the area, Rodríguez recognizes that his audience’s familiarity with *El perro* due to the success of Pilar Miro’s film version was a factor in his decision to stage it. Among his criteria, he lists:

Abordar textos con ciertos referentes en el espectador. En este caso *El perro del hortelano* es un texto conocido no sólo por eruditos, sino que, gracias a la excelente versión cinematográfica llevada a cabo por Pilar Miró, es reconocido por una amplia mayoría de espectadores. (Rodríguez 1)

His staging indeed evidences an awareness of the influence of Miró on his spectators’ horizon of ex-

pectations. He must be careful not to disappoint them by either departing radically from or adhering slavishly to Miro's aesthetic.

In order to provide a quality alternative to facile commercial theater, to reawaken an interest in classical Spanish culture and literature in the archipelago, and to respect Miro's version while displaying innovation and the art of live staging, Rodríguez foregrounds the psychological depth of the protagonists and the brilliance of Lope's poetry and wit. While Ramos clearly leaves her own unique imprint on her non-traditional, uptempo, visually stimulating rendering of *El perro*, Rodríguez embraces subtlety and leaves aside the extra- and intertextual issues that underpin the satirical elements of the dramatic text to focus on the main action of the story: the problematic relationship between Diana and Teodoro.

The difference in aesthetic is evident in the way the directors render the opening scene, in which Diana awakens to the noise of intruders, Teodoro and Tristán flee from Marcela's room, and the countess interrogates her servants but ultimately promises to arrange Marcela's marriage to Teodoro. Ramos immediately establishes the humorous tone of her piece by beginning in darkness with some light, playful piano music over which a woman's voice operatically sings a wordless melody in a major key with occasional dissonant notes.⁴ She establishes the conceptual acting style that will mark the

performance as a spot comes up on Diana, asleep on a table we understand to be a bed, tossing the skirts of her puffy dress back and forth. She repeats the same stylized sequence of motions several times: she points her legs up and moves them mechanically from left to right, imitating the movement of the hands of a clock, drinks from a carton of milk, and imitates a baby's way of sleeping with her face against the "mattress" and her rear in the air. Some mischievous notes on a flute in a minor key signal the intruders' disturbance. Diana awakens and bellows for her servants to wake up; they enter chaotically, wearing nothing but white underwear and bed sheets. The countess grills her maids in a gruff, military tone. Comically playful music underscores the proceedings. The scene is very fast-paced, from the confusion of the beginning to the urgent exchanges at the end, leaving the spectator somewhat breathless and in need of a moment to process all that has transpired and the unorthodox style of the piece.

The pace, tone and emphasis of the same scene in Rodríguez's production are markedly different. Classical symphony music creates an aristocratic feel as the house lights dim, but no further musical cues occur until Diana's soliloquy after the opening scene, a sonnet which is underscored by a gentle, romantic piano interlude.⁵ A dark blue skylight casts the darkened stage in silhouette; when a dog begins barking in the distance, the shadowy figures of Teodoro and Tristán hurriedly scurry off.

Diana enters with a lantern, brandishing a sword, and assembles her servants. All are dressed in dark, muted tones and the nighttime stage remains dim against the azure backdrop: nothing visual or audible distracts from the tense, evenly paced exchange between the countess and her maids. The acting style is naturalistic; words and phrases are measured carefully and contemplative pauses punctuate this unexpected, late-night encounter. The absence of underscoring and sound cues and the dim lighting of the scene keep audio and visual distractions to a minimum, allowing the spectator to focus on the countess's words and tone as she faces what she most fears: a threat to her honor. It is commonly believed that a person's true character emerges most markedly in moments of crisis. Rodríguez uses the tense moment to dramatize for his audience an essential element of Diana's character, and indeed, of strong women in Spanish literature from Cervantes's Marcela and Lope's Laurencia to Calderón's Rosaura and even Lorca's Bernarda Alba: a militant ferocity in defending her honor. He thus tailors the scene so that the audience focuses primarily on Diana's voice and actions; her pride and strength of character will become the fulcrum of the play's action. This stands in marked contrast to Ramos's rendering of the scene, where the spectator's attention is pulled in many different directions -- whether on the quirky musical underscoring, the comical costumes, or the tyrannical countess bark-

ing orders from center stage -- to create a sense of comic chaos and set the humorous, parodic tone of the play.

The difference in tone is also evident in the productions' sets, which we see fully lit for the first time after the opening scene. Ramos's stage is small, intimate and littered with frames and old chests. The frames may suggest that this play is about how things are displayed; how things are enhanced through presentation. They may also evoke the idea of limits or boundaries, like those that divide people of different social stations. The chests give the space the feel of a cluttered attic or cellar storage area, with potential for play: a child might find old clothes or relics in the chests to fuel the imagination. The piecemeal costumes reinforce this interpretation: bright colors and offbeat combinations of accessories give the outfits a child-like quality and appeal.

2RC's stage, on the other hand, evokes a very adult world of social limitations, propriety, and hierarchy. A huge grate looms as a backdrop, suggesting the theme of imprisonment and serving as a constant reminder of Diana and Teodoro's social confinement: society requires them to behave according to their class and rank and forbids their romantic involvement. The fact that one can see through the grate serves well all the instances of eavesdropping and voyeurism that occur in the play, thus manifesting the characters' concern for the

“¿qué dirán?”: improper behavior may be glimpsed by unwelcome eyes; rumors may circulate; honor may be stained. A divider covered with an intricate gold-patterned fabric and ornate period costumes suggest the seventeenth century and add rich color. Ladders behind the grate and a tall scaffold used as Diana’s throne create different levels, reinforcing both the notion of social stratification and the hope of upward mobility.



[Servants spy on Diana (Lili Quintana) and Teodoro (Vicente Ayala) in 2RC Teatro's *El perro del hortelano*. Photo by Gustavo Martín.]

At this point in the action, it becomes evident that 2RC's production will maintain some of the precedents set by Miró: the symphony music sets a regal, aristocratic ambience, period costumes and decorative tapestries evoke the Spanish baroque era, and the leads are depicted without irony or parody through a naturalistic acting style. Rodríguez decides not to challenge or frustrate the expecta-

tions the audience may have, at least not at the outset of the action, choosing a style that is similar to that of Miro's work (to the extent that theater can be compared to film).

His production is, however, hardly a dramatized remake of Miro's efforts; the similarities between the two remain only superficial. From 2RC's mission statement it is evident that Rodríguez anticipates a Canary audience that, despite its knowledge of Miro's version, has not often seen Lope or Golden Age theater staged. His purpose appears to be to engage spectators through the craft and immediacy of quality theater, and to showcase the beauty of the language and Spain's literary heritage. We see this particularly in the way 2RC stages and performs the play's many sonnets. For example, plaintive piano music and a lone spot on the countess set a contemplative mood before the play's first sonnet in lines 325-38, inviting the audience to listen intently. Diana has just spoken harshly and authoritatively to her servants, but her tone here softens as she reveals her secret attraction to Teodoro. In her thoughtful, measured speech we begin to discern three beats per line, and the rhyming of "gentileza" with "naturaleza," "tesoro" with "adoro" (328-31). We are reminded that we are listening to poetry. Lili Quintana, as Diana, brings out not only the content of the verses but also their form, highlighting the rhythm and phrasing of each thought and accentuating end rhymes. Her non-verbal communication

adds a visual dimension to the expression of her dilemma: as she speaks she slowly walks away from the throne, stopping only when she is as far as possible from it without leaving the stage: Diana's illicit desire is opposed to her obligation as countess. The final lines of the sonnet are delivered in telling fashion. Quintana comments longingly, "quisiera yo que por lo menos / Teodoro fuera más, para igualarme, / o yo, para igualarle" -- here she pauses to look back at her throne, then turns away to finish the thought -- "fuera menos" (336-38). As she exits, she makes the sign of the cross, as if her wish had been a prayer. The poetry of her gestures reinforces the poetry of the lines. The nuance with which Quintana, Rodríguez, and crew bring together voice, movement, lighting, and sound to dramatize the sonnet evidences the importance the production places on highlighting the beauty and expressiveness of Golden Age verse.

Rodríguez also provides theater-goers of the greater Las Palmas area an alternative to simplistic, predictable theater by bringing out elements in the play that challenge the spectator to think and evaluate, and by taking certain risks with the material. The play holds the potential to force the viewer to continually revise his or her perception of the characters, who are so complex and contradictory that a director wields great power to present them as positively or negatively, as one-dimensionally or multifaceted, as he or she sees fit. Ramos, as we have

seen, generally treats her characters with such parodical stylization that we cannot truly sympathize with any of them; rather, they remain caricatures, distant from us and from reality, but expressive of certain societal foibles. Miró depicts Teodoro and Diana so sympathetically from beginning to end that even scenes and lines meant to demonstrate their negative qualities -- Teodoro's growing ambition and arrogance and Diana's capacity for icy coldness, cruelty, and even violence -- fail to take away from their attractiveness to the viewer and wonderful chemistry with each other. For both of these directors, characterization serves the overall aesthetic they wish to project: Miró gives us a lush, sensual love story of two beautiful people perfect for one another; Ramos, a satirical picture of how spectacle compensates for lack in our society.

Rodriguez, in contrast, brings out the dual, contradictory nature of several of the characters, thereby challenging the spectator to weigh the evidence, judge, and re-evaluate as new behaviors emerge. Lili Quintana's Diana, for example, brings an inflexible determination and cold fury to the scenes in which she wields a sword and commands her servants with an iron fist, tortures Teodoro cruelly by making him choose a husband for her, and madly beats him in the second act. She is, at the same time, charmingly poised and flirtatious with Teodoro in other scenes, visibly torn in her private revelations of her attraction to him, and poignantly

divided as she bids him farewell in the final act. The actress portrays Diana's range of emotions sincerely and believably; Quintana's countess, unlike those of Miró and Ramos, is neither wholly sympathetic nor reprehensible, but rather human in her inconsistency and inability to choose between societal obligation and personal desire.

Rodríguez departs further from other versions of the play and indeed, even from Lope himself, by omitting many lines from the play's resolution (3210-377), including Teodoro's critical confession to Diana of Tristán's ruse, and by adding a final concluding line. Rodríguez cuts nearly everything that occurs at the conclusion of Lope's text after Ludovico goes to Diana's palace and claims Teodoro as his son. In 2RC Teatro's version, Vicente Ayala as Teodoro acts dumbfounded at the news, and Diana asks Ludovico to return later to give him a chance to get himself together and dress properly. Teodoro, now with the swagger and pride of a noble, insists to Diana that "con igualdad nos tratemos, / como suelen los señores, / pues todos lo somos ya" (3165-7). In a peevish over-reaction to the countess's "otro me pareces" (3168), Ayala's Teodoro accuses her, here not with playful irony as in the versions of Ramos and Miró, but with petulant anger, of not being as attracted to him now because she prefers him as her inferior (3168-74). He punctuates the retort by storming away from the countess to sit at a distance with his hand on his

forehead in exasperation. Later, embracing Diana, he tells her, “Iré a ver / el mayorazgo que hoy fundo, / y este padre que me hallé” -- he pauses here to look back over his shoulder at Tristán and remark with great irony, almost gloatingly, “sin saber cómo o por donde” (3181-4). When Diana warns him to stay away from Marcela, Teodoro jabs back arrogantly with a hidden barb directed at her, “No nos solemos a bajar / los señores a querer / las criadas” (3194-6). The former secretary manifests in this scene a haughtiness far removed from the self-deprecating humility he displayed at the beginning of the play. In Lope’s version, Teodoro reclaims his sense of humility with his confession to Diana, but here, that never occurs.

This clearly constitutes a revision of Lope’s conclusion, but does it also imply, albeit indirectly, a critique of his denouement? The subplot involving Tristán as the suitors’ hit man prolongs an outcome that has for the most part been determined. This might be fine if the intrigue were resolved in an interesting and logical way, but it is not: Ricardo quite inexplicably confesses the plot to have Teodoro killed in the play’s final lines, then volunteers to provide Marcela’s dowry to evidence his newly found good will, which remains puzzling and unaccounted for. The servants’ marriages, as Ramos seems to point out, are simply extraneous spectacle. Above all, the “nobleza natural” with which Teodoro credits himself and attempts to manifest by con-

fessing Tristán's fabrication to Diana is difficult to take seriously. Wardropper and others base their notion that Teodoro transforms himself from a selfish, deceitful opportunist to an unselfish, honest man of noble character on this eleventh-hour confession; yet, how can we see as genuinely noble and honest a man who, first of all, while sharing the truth with his fiancée, is perfectly content to take advantage of a senile old man who lost his son tragically, and to deceive the rest of society with an elaborate lie worthy of Ginés de Pasamonte, and who, furthermore, just a short time beforehand celebrated his newfound social rank with a marked affectation and arrogance more akin to Shakespeare's deluded Malvolio than to someone of a naturally noble character? As A. David Kosoff has pointed out, in ethical terms, the characters' defects far outweigh their virtues (26).

Rodriguez's ending not only eliminates all of these problematic issues, but more importantly, alters what might otherwise be our reading of the play, or at least limits the possible ways in which we may interpret the characters' journeys. With the elimination of any claim or manifestation of "nobleza natural" on Teodoro's part and his final presentation as gloating, peevish, and arrogant, we see the ending as affirming his baser rather than his better nature. The humble Teodoro who remains reluctant to rewrite the Countess's letter because it would show "soberbia" on his part and would never equal

her effort anyway (523-6), and who loves Marcela honestly, without hope of advancement, is superseded by the haughty social climber who tears up her letter, declaring “ya soy otro” (1373), the liar who rejects her love, citing once, household decorum, and later, her arranged betrothal to Fabio (a fabrication). Above all, without Teodoro’s confession, it is not so much love as *engaño* that wins the day. In this sense, Rodríguez ends the romantic comedy with a picaresque twist.

Diana also comes out differently. Lope’s conclusion has her asserting control over her circumstances and putting herself in a position of power. Rodríguez’s Diana, however, apparently remains blissfully ignorant of the fraud that has resulted in her good fortune; she does not question Ludovico’s claim, nor does she know of anyone else’s involvement in the count’s discovery. Ethically, then, she is not compromised like Lope’s countess, who decides to live a lie, justifiable only by comedy’s liberal privileging of the laws of love over the norms of society. Although Rodríguez’s Diana may have a clearer conscience, she does not exercise the boldness, independence, and power that Lope’s countess does. She has had no agency in bringing about her marriage to Teodoro; rather, it has fallen into her lap, fairy-tale style. She did not have to make the risky decision to transgress societal norms knowingly. She and Teodoro will be on equal terms in their relationship as long as she con-

tinues to believe he is Ludovico's son. Rodríguez thus offers us a less powerful, less independent, but also less ethically compromised Diana than Lope. Yet, in a sense, his countess at the conclusion is more consistent with the Diana we have seen throughout the play. Isn't Diana's conduct throughout the action about flirting with the limits of propriety without clearly and unequivocally crossing the line? Even toward the end of the play, though she is emotionally torn, she is resigned to letting Teodoro go; her *superego*, her obligation to uphold society's expectations, still holds the upper hand. Perhaps Lope's rendering of Diana finally taking the plunge and crossing that line actually stretches the imagination more than Rodríguez's revision, given the character she has demonstrated up to the end.

After the suitors appear and express their frustration at Teodoro's triumph, Tristán ends the show, asking the audience to keep Teodoro's secret, then finishes with a line apparently added by Rodríguez: "Me voy, que empieze otra función cuando acabe esta comedia." While cutting scenes is common practice, adding lines to a play is considered more risky. Why does Rodríguez have Tristán end with this line? If we take the remark at face value, we see Tristán as breaking the fourth wall, as so many *graciosos* do, here not only addressing the audience directly but recognizing a reality beyond the action of the play: the actor needs

time to prepare himself for another show. More figuratively, perhaps here he bawdily comments that he is going to give the lovers their privacy so that they can get on with their next logical “function” after getting married. The fact that Javier Colado, as Tristán, pauses after “me voy” to look back at Diana and Teodoro may support this interpretation. Another possibility is that the reference to a new beginning after this comedy ends points to the open-endedness of the conclusion, and perhaps even invites us to imagine what the next three acts of Teodoro and Diana’s life together might be like. Indeed, with the omission of certain elements, the protagonists are left in a more unstable situation than in Lope’s version. Since Teodoro here keeps the truth from her, if Diana later discovers the lie without him confessing it to her, will she accept it or condemn him for not having the honesty to inform her? Will this Teodoro, lacking any “*naturaleza noble*,” not having transformed from self-serving to selfless in his concern for Diana, try to leave her, as he did Marcela, when the next challenge comes along? Will the suitors, angry and dumbfounded at the end of this play rather than pacified and generous in providing dowries, continue to seek revenge by having Teodoro killed? In his revised conclusion, Rodríguez has sown the seeds of discontent, and he prompts us, in the line he has given to Tristán, to consider what the consequences of the actions we have seen might be. He

has thus managed to create a bittersweet ending: we share in the protagonists' triumph while at the same time sensing the precariousness of their situation. How better to defy expectations than to leave the audience with a nuanced, multi-layered sense of an ending?⁶ Our laughter may be tinged with melancholy as we leave the theater, for, as Wardropper reminds us, tragedy begins where comedy ends (102).

By highlighting the instability of the ending, the complexity of the characters, and the beauty of Golden Age verse, Rodríguez not only reinvigorates Spanish classics, but also appeals to his audience's desire for an alternative to predictable, morally uncomplicated theater. Recognizing his audience's familiarity with Miró's version, he recreates a similar period aesthetic onstage, yet does not allow viewers to become complacent, rejecting facile dichotomies and challenging them to weigh all the evidence for themselves. Ramos likewise tailors the play to her specific audience, alluding to figures, images, and events from current Spanish- and English-language media to give the themes of deceit and fabrication a contemporary resonance. The differences in the two productions owe greatly to the distinct characters of their audiences and the directors' attempts to speak to their particular tastes and experiences.

NOTES

¹ See D'Antuono's summary of Bocaccio's novella in her 1994 article, 109-10.

² Some of the descriptions in the following paragraphs of Repertorio Español's *El perro del hortelano* are drawn from my review of a performance at Lemoyne College, Syracuse, NY, November 15, 2004, which appeared in *Comedia Performance* 2.1 (2005).

³ See, for example, A. David Kossof's note to line 733 on page 105 of his edition of *El perro*.

⁴ The crew and cast of Repertorio Español's *El perro del hortelano* (2004) include: Dirección, adaptación y diseño de sonido, Isabel Ramos; diseño de vestuario, escenografía y fotografías, Awymarie Riollano; diseño de luces, Maria Cristina Fuste; Diana, Karina Casiano; Teodoro, Dario Tangelson y Victor Tirado; Tristán, Emyliano Santa Cruz; Marcela, Belange Rodríguez; Fabio/Federico, Dan Domingues y Jorge Dieppa; Ricardo, José Enrique y Ricardo Hinoja; Anarda/criada de Ricardo/Ludovica, Silvia Sierra y Yaremis Felix; Dorotea/criada de Federico, Mariana Buoninconti.

⁵ The crew and cast of Compañía de Repertorio 2RC Teatro's *El perro del hortelano* (2008) include: Rafael Rodríguez, director; Lili Quintana, Diana; Vicente Ayala, Teodoro; Ángel Cabrera, Fabio/Ludovico; Silvia Padrón, Marcela; Rosa Escrig, Anarda; Cata Blánquez, Dorotea/Furio; Javier Collado, Tristán; Humberto García, Federico; Maykol Hernández, Ricardo. The play was performed in El Paso, TX, 4 March 2009. DVDs of performances of the play in Arucas, Gran Canaria, and El Paso are available from the video archive of the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater, Inc. <<http://www.comedias.org>>.

⁶ Rodríguez also gives a bittersweet twist to the ending of 2RC's current production of Calderón's *El alcalde de Zalamea*. At the end of the play, despite having avenged the rape of his daughter, Pedro Crespo remains alone, rejected by those

closest to him, in a state of moral isolation (Strother 151-2). For Rodríguez, it appears that not only characters, but also conclusions are neither entirely positive nor negative.

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THE METADRAMATIC FUNCTION OF THE ASIDE IN *LA TRAICIÓN EN LA AMISTAD*

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María de Zayas utilizes a variety of asides in *La traición en la amistad* (c. 1632) to increase the participatory role of the spectators, enabling them to decode and process the words and actions of the play. The asides in *La traición en la amistad* offer insight into a character's thoughts and feelings and, by doing so, transform the spectator into a confidant of the character who delivers the aside. The relationship between language and drama is particularly noteworthy in Zayas' *La traición en la amistad*, where metalanguage and metadrama are mutually dependent. An analysis of the function of the aside in *La traición en la amistad* will illustrate how Zayas creates different levels of drama, producing the effect in which the audience is in many instances as much a part of the play as the actors on stage.

The authors of ancient tragedies and comedies first utilized the aside as a dramatic convention, which David Bain describes as a "kind of compact

between playwright and audience which entails the audience accepting without qualm or question some technical device used by the dramatist" (1). There is general agreement regarding the definition of the aside. Bain defines the aside as "any utterance by either speaker not intended to be heard by the other and not in fact heard or properly heard by him" (17).¹ Alan C. Dessen writes that the aside in Elizabethan drama was "to direct a speech so as (somehow) to maintain the fiction that it cannot be heard by other onstage figures" (53). In her analysis of seventeenth-century French drama, Natalie Fournier writes that the aside is a

dramatic proceeding, secret discourse (in monologue or dialogue), concealed by convention from the other characters on the stage and from its consequences, dependent on an essential feature, the convention of secrecy, which implies the presence on the stage of speakers excluded from the aside and demands that one consider the effect on the aside of theatrical editing and theatrical location. (517; qtd. in and trans. by Jure Gantar)

The most basic aside, therefore, can be defined as words spoken by one character on stage whose discourse is not heard, or at the very least not heard clearly, by other characters on stage. If the other characters in the scene respond to the words delivered as an aside, then the utterance loses its in-

tended effect upon the audience. An aside can also exist between two or more characters that may respond to one another, while other characters are oblivious to the dialogue.

While people do occasionally “think” aloud, it is not realistic to assume that the person in whose presence the thought is vocalized does not hear the words. The metacognitive function of the aside, therefore, contributes to what Brecht believes is the primordial intent of the playwright:

For Brecht, the artist’s central aim is to jolt the passively viewing spectator into a more conscious, alert mental state by focusing on the unusual, by forcing the viewer to see characters and events in a new way, to perceive them within a new context. In this way the characters’ actions will be perceived not as the ordinary turn of events, or as inevitable, but will be looked at with a fresh view, with an attempt to understand why the character, being the type of person he or she is, does these particular actions. (Ben Chaim 31)

The aside allows a character to step out of the action and to reveal information for the benefit of the audience. How much of what is spoken aloud is intended for the audience only depends upon the director, who may instruct an actor to direct his speech at the spectators so that it appears he is conversing with them. The actor’s blocking, or place-

ment on the stage, for this type of aside would require him to approach the spectators and distance himself from the other characters in the scene. Emilio Orozco Díaz compares this dramatic technique to the artistic style of the Mannerist painters:

Esa actitud y actuación del personaje buscando la directa comunicación con el espectador, descubriendo lo que siente, o comentando lo que sucede a través de soliloquios y apartes—son equivalentes a los elementos y, sobre todo, figuras que encontramos en la pintura desde la época manierista—y que se multiplican en el Barroco—, personajes que nos miran fijamente y hasta nos introducen y señalan lo que está aconteciendo. Son movimientos y gestos que parecen esperar nuestra reacción. (145)

On the other hand, the director may instruct the actor to reveal his inner thoughts and feelings in an interior monologue that functions as an aside. The actor who delivers this type of aside would remain in close proximity to the other actors, who pretend not to hear a word.

The physical and perceptual relationship of the spectators to the stage affects the effectiveness of the asides in a play. Susan Bennett comments upon this important dynamic in her seminal study of modern theatre titled *Theatre Studies: A Theory of Production and Reception*:

The percentage of seats occupied will inevitably affect reception both through its effect on the quality of actors' performances and through inter-spectator relations. The experience of the spectator in a packed auditorium is different from that of one in a half-empty theatre. When a theatre has very few spectators, the sense of audience as group can be destroyed. This fragmentation of the collective can have the side-effect of psychological discomfort for the individual which inhibits or revises response. When a theatre is at its capacity, not only can this enhance an audience's confidence to respond to the performance, but it can also reaffirm the spectators' sense of themselves both individually and as a group. (131)

The decoding process in which the spectators engage throughout the performance of a play begins when they sit down and notice the location of the stage in relation to their seats. Karen Gaylord describes the play-going experience as involving a "double consciousness:"

[T]he spectator serves as a psychological participant and empathetic collaborator in the maintenance and 'truth' of the fictive world onstage, is 'taken out of himself' [*sic*] and becomes for the time part of an ad hoc collective consciousness, ready to find meaning and significance in the events taking place on stage.

Thus the theatrical occasion involves a double consciousness for all concerned. The performance takes place on at least two levels of 'reality' simultaneously and within at least two frames. The outer frame always embraces both audience and performers. The inner frame demarcates the playing space. (qtd. in Bennett 139)

With each aside, Zayas skillfully draws the spectators closer to the action that takes place on stage, and, in doing so, she creates an atmosphere of metadrama in which the spectators experience the action of the play as if they were characters themselves.

Perhaps it should come as no surprise that Fenisa, the play's antagonist, whom Gwyn Campbell describes as "an almost hermaphroditic monstrosity of masculine and feminine characteristics and, certainly at the conclusion, an almost androgynous character in whose symbolic exclusion s/he appears to be neither completely one sex-gender nor the other" (482), delivers all eleven asides that appear in Act I. Marcia is giddy as she tells Fenisa about Liseo, whom she describes as "con más gala que Narciso, más belleza y gallardía" (2-3).² Upon seeing her friend's unbridled emotions for Liseo, Fenisa tries to warn Marcia about the perils of falling in love: "¿Qué piensas sacar de amar / en tiempo que no se mira / ni belleza, ni virtudes? / Sólo la hacienda se estima" (55-58). When Marcia

shows Fenisa a picture of Liseo, Fenisa's tone becomes unrestrained as she describes her feelings in an aside: "¡Ay, Dios! ¿Qué he visto? / ¿Qué miras, alma, qué miras? / ¿Qué amor es éste, o qué hechizo? / ¡Tente, loca fantasía! / ¿Qué máquina? ¿Qué illusion? / Marçia y yo somos amigas. / Fuerza es morir. ¡Ay, amor! / ¿Por qué pides que te siga? / ¡Ay, ojos de hechizos llenos!" (99-107). Fenisa's aside explains for the spectators why, later in the same scene, she selfishly tries to dissuade Marcia from pursuing Liseo: "Digo, Marcia, que es galán; / mas cuando pensé que habías / hecho a Gerardo tu dueño, / olvidas lo que te estima" (115-118).

Fenisa informs the spectators of her wily nature in asides that prepare the spectators for what is to occur later in the play: "Perdida / estoy por Liseo. ¡Ay, Dios! / Fuerza será que le diga / mal dél, porque le aborrezca" (122-125). A short time later, however, Marcia realizes what the spectators already know because of Fenisa's aside: "¿Cómo pides / que no me enoje, si quitas / a mis deseos las alas, / a mi amor la valentía, / a mis ojos lo que adoran, / y a mi alma su alegría? / ¿Quiéresle acaso?" (139-144). Later in Act I, after Don Juan professes his undying love for Fenisa, she reveals in another aside that she does not limit her love to one man only: "Aunque a don Juan digo amores, / el alma en Liseo está, / que en ella posada habrá / para un millón de amadores" (189-192). Unlike other asides spoken in the presence of another character, Don Juan seems to notice

that Fenisa is speaking: “Pues no quiero / verte así contigo hablar, / si no es que a ti te enamoras, / porque yo no te merezco” (195-198). While Fenisa continues to talk with Don Juan, she reminds the spectators of her true intentions in yet another aside: “Triste de mí si supieras / que este Liseo me mate; / mas amor manda que calle, / disimular quiero” (242-245). Asides that reveal the characters’ inner thoughts serve to clarify and reinforce what the spectators perceive to be occurring on stage.

Asides that appear in the form of a metadialogue between two characters and consist of juxtaposed discourse serve to intensify both the exterior dialogue as well as the action of the play. Instead of the participation of one character in a momentary, phenomenological suspension of both time and space, there are two characters that depart from the action and engage the audience. At the beginning of Act II, Belisa, Marcia’s cousin, informs Marcia that Laura, a lady whom neither cousin knows, wants to speak to her. Upon seeing Laura, Marcia comments on her beauty in an aside to Belisa: “¿No sale, prima, el aurora / con tan grande presunción? / ¡Buen talle!” (891-893). Even though Belisa does not respond with dialogue, it is likely that she and Marcia look at each other while Marcia speaks her aside. When Marcia notes Laura’s uneasiness, she remarks on it in another aside to Belisa: “Confusa, Belisa, está” (908). In an aside of her own, Laura confirms for the spectators her anxiety: “¿Que

tiemblo? ¿Que estoy cobarde?” (907). Then, Laura explains that she found out that Liseo, who promised to marry Laura and subsequently slept with her, adores Marcia. Two of Marcia’s three asides in this scene follow Laura’s asides, and even though the asides are delivered one after another, the characters are unaware of them.

Later in Act II, asides inform only the spectators that Belisa still loves Don Juan in spite of what she tells him. After Belisa learns from Laura that no man is impervious to Fenisa’s amorous advances, Belisa confronts Don Juan, whom she suspected of turning his attention away from her and toward Fenisa. At one point during their argument, Belisa appears to give up on her relationship with Don Juan: “Vete con Dios, que me cansas. / Que rosas y perlas finas / para Fenisa, las guarda, / a quien gusto te inclinas” (1209-1212). Shortly thereafter, however, Belisa reveals in an aside that she is not quite ready to say goodbye to Don Juan: “¡Ay, mi Don Juan, que en mirarte / casi me tienes rendida” (1249-1250). In another aside, she informs the spectators that she is willing to give Don Juan a second chance: “¿Qué me dices, pensamiento? / ¿Qué pides, afición mía? / ¿Qué me dices, voluntad? / Que parece que inclinas, / porque al fin todas las cosas / vuelven a lo que solían” (1253-1258). The juxtaposed asides are examples of the parallel linguistic behavior of the two characters that is present throughout the play. Zayas’ place-

ment of the asides in this manner increases dramatic tension by quickening the pace of the action. The asides that are not juxtaposed slow the pace of the play.

Asides in which characters directly address the audience diminish the physical space between the spectators and the stage in such a way that the audience becomes an accomplice to the characters' actions. In Act I, Fenisa delivers a lengthy interior monologue as an aside, in the presence of Liseo, in which she reveals her inner turmoil to the spectators:

¿Qué espero?
Dejé a Marcia con Don Juan,
y vengo llena de miedo
a ver de mi dulce ingrato
la gala que no merezco,
hurtando a Marcia sus glorias
las cortas horas al tiempo,
escribí un papel y en él
mi amor y ventura apuesto.
Enojada me fingí
y con este engaño dejo
a Don Juan pidiendo a Marcia,
que desta paz sea tercero.
Y aunque a mi Don Juan adoro,
quiero también a Liseo,
porque en mi alma hay lugar
para amar a cuantos veo.
Perdona, amistad, que amor
tiene mi gusto sujeto,

sin que pueda la razón,
ni mande el entendimiento.
Tantos quiero cuantos miro,
y aunque a ninguno aborrezco
éste que miro me mata. (419-442)

Following the aside, Don Juan's reaction reminds the spectators that he did not hear the words spoken by Fenisa: "Fenisa, ¿tanto silencio? / No dilates más mis glorias" (443-444).

In Act II, León, who is the *gracioso* and Liseo's servant, directs an aside to the spectators in which he comments upon Liseo and Fenisa's relationship: "¡Ved aquí, ya están en paz, / y yo cual niño que mamá! / ¡Así medran los terceros; / desta suerte me regalan! / ¡Mal haya, amén, el oficio!" (1425-1429). The spectators can appreciate the intensity of León's frustration with Liseo and Fenisa's relationship because of the aside he delivers about his feelings for Fenisa before he addresses the spectators: "¡Pluguiera a Dios te murieras / y que el Diablo te llevara!" (1423). The other characters do not react to León after he addresses the spectators. When León finishes, Fenisa continues to talk to Liseo as if there were no interruption: "¡Que tibiamente me abrazas! / ¿Estás también enojado?" (1430-1431). The actor who plays León would need to distance himself from the other actors in the scene and approach the spectators as closely as possible so that the aside in which he addresses them directly would have a semantic impact.

Lucía, who is Fenisa's servant and the voice of Fenisa's moral conscience, addresses the female spectators two times in Act III. First, after Fenisa becomes angry when she learns that none of the men she juggled wish to see her anymore, Lucía warns the female spectators not to imitate Fenisa's lifestyle: "Señoras, las que entretienen, / tomen ejemplo en Fenisa, / Huigan destos pisaverdes." (2473-2475). In the same scene, Lucía remarks once again on Fenisa's behavior, but this time she makes fun of Fenisa's earlier boast that her heart is capable of loving many men at the same time: "Digán, señoras, ¿no miente / en decir que quiere a todos? / Cosa imposible parece, / mas no que quiera una muger / que vive mintiendo siempre / pedir verdad a los hombres. / Necias serán si lo creen" (2481-2487). Similar to the blocking of the actor who plays León, the actress who plays Lucía likewise would deliver these asides in close proximity to the spectators. While there is no evidence of a performance of *La traición en la amistad* in the seventeenth century, I believe that it is reasonable to conclude that the actress would have projected her voice in the direction of the *cazuela*, the seating area of the seventeenth-century playhouse where unaccompanied ladies sat.

The asides delivered by the character of the *gracioso* are noteworthy as much for their comedic content as for the effect they have upon the spectators:

El gracioso no es un simple recurso mecánico que se aplica para arrancar carcajadas al auditorio y calmar el bullicio de los mosqueteros y demás público de la cazuela. Sus raíces son mucho más profundas, ya que conecta el teatro con una corriente cultural subterránea, autónoma y antagónica de la cultura oficial, que lo enriquece, le presta autenticidad y hace que el auditorio, el de los nobles e hidalgos, pero también el de los mosqueteros, criados, campesinos y artesanos, vibre y se deje fascinar por sus lances y lenguaje paródico. (Cano-Ballesta 778)

In *Outside, Inside, Aside: Dialoguing with the Gracioso in Spanish Golden Age Theatre*, Monica Leonni also notes the impact the *gracioso* has on the spectators: "Indeed, what often appears to be a very typical portrayal of a clown figure becomes, upon closer examination, a much more multi-faceted literary creation that adds a significant dimension to the audience's theatrical experience" (5). The witticisms of the *gracioso* León that appear in asides not only produce moments of levity, but they also create for the spectators a feeling of exclusivity, as they are aware of humor that the other characters on stage do not "hear." In Act III, for example, after Liseo reads in a letter from Laura that she is going to enter a convent, he tears it up. When Fenisa comes across the pieces of the letter, she orders León to pick it up. In addition, she infuriates León

when she pulls at his beard. León considers Fenisa's tug of his beard, which, in seventeenth-century Spanish drama was a symbol of a man's honor and manhood, an offensive gesture: "¡Pobre León! ¿Y cuál andas, / mógicón y remesones, / sin respetar a mi cara? / ¡Eso sí, escupamos muelas! / ¡Dete Dios tan buenas pascuas / como regalos me das! / Servida aquesta tarasca, / guardando la calle al tonto / a quien la fengida engaña" (1384-1392). Even though Fenisa does not hear what León says in this aside, she does know that he is talking, for she threatens to knock León's teeth out after she asks him: "¿Qué habláis pícaro entre dientes?" (1393). Subsequent to another aside in which León expresses self-pity, he turns to the spectators and talks directly to them: "Señores, ¿saben si acaso, / pues hay quien encubra calvas, / habrá quien adobe muelas?" (1405-1407). The spectators must focus closely on the dialogue of the play in such a way that they can appreciate the *gracioso's* comical asides without forgetting the more sober tone of the dialogue interrupted by the asides. In the case of León or any other *gracioso* who delivers asides within the same dialogue in which he converses with other characters, the spectators must be especially attuned to what is taking place on stage.

Asides through which the actors and actresses reveal to the spectators their thoughts and emotions intensify the characters' exterior dialogue by divulging inner conflicts that are not otherwise

apparent. Furthermore, the spectators' knowledge of this information places them in a privileged position, because they are made aware of details that are not known by the characters. Due to the absence of electricity, acting companies staged seventeenth-century plays during daylight hours, and the ability of the actors to see the spectators must have contributed to the effectiveness of the aside. As the mediator between thought and the spoken word, the aside in its various manifestations transforms the spectator of *La traición en la amistad* from a passive eyewitness to an active participant. Zayas manipulates the spectators in a way that they must enjoy, but they also have to be engaged fully in the dialogue in order to have a true appreciation of the function of the asides. While only 117 of the 2,914 lines of *La traición en la amistad* are asides, their impact is important to the development of the plot and to the spectators' overall appreciation of the play.

NOTES

¹ Bain's definition is based upon the presence of two actors on stage. He allows for the presence of a third actor, and, in this case, defines the aside as any remark made by one actor to another that is not heard or heard properly by the third actor. I discuss this type of aside later in my article.

² All citations are from Barbara López-Mayhew's edition of the play (Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta Hispanic Monographs, 2003).

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ON THE BRICKS: THE TERRA NOVA CONSORT, GREENSHOWS, AND THE SPANISH JONGLEURESQUE

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In his well-known prologue to his *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses nuevos, nunca representados*, Miguel de Cervantes offers us one of our most valuable eyewitness accounts of the early Spanish stage. Cervantes bases this account on first-hand memories of performances of Lope de Rueda's itinerant street theater, which he describes as follows:

No había en aquel tiempo tramoyas, ni desafíos de moros y cristianos, a pie ni a caballo; no había figura que saliese o pareciese salir del centro de la tierra por lo hueco del teatro, al cual componían cuatro bancos en cuadro y cuatro o seis tablas encima, con que se levantaba del suelo cuatro palmos; ni menos bajaban del cielo nubes con ángeles o con almas. El adorno del teatro era una manta vieja, tirada con dos cordeles de una parte a otra, que hacía lo que llaman vestua-

rio, detrás de la cual estaban los músicos, cantando sin guitarra algún romance antiguo. (179)

As I note in *Radical Theatricality*, the presence of the *Romancero* at the margins of Rueda's simple stage—as an integral performance text, existing alongside Rueda's *pasos* themselves—demonstrates the jongleuresque essence at the heart of early modern Spanish theater (176-77).

For those unfamiliar with my work on jongleuresque performance, a brief recapitulation is in order. My use of the term “jongleuresque” involves much more than just the quasi-literary activities traditionally associated with the Iberian *mester de juglaría*. Borrowing Hollis Huston's notion of the “simple stage”—which he defines as the circular performance space brought into being by the performance itself (75-78)—and combining it with Ramón Menéndez Pidal's definition of the *juglares* as “*todos los que se ganaban la vida actuando ante un público, para recrearle con la música, o con la literatura, o con charlatanería, o con juegos de mano, de acrobatismo, de mímica, etc.*” (*Poesía juglaresca y juglares* 12; original emphasis), my own use of the term jongleuresque encompasses a performative aesthetic and set of theatrical praxes that define a whole range of interrelated performance traditions, from ancient Greek rhapsody to American vaudeville, from medieval European minstrelsy to contemporary Latin American street performance. The jongleuresque is a performer-centered

mode of theater characterized by the intimate “dialogue” that exists between actor and spectator in performance (there is never a “fourth wall” within this tradition) and by the performative multiplicity that occurs on the jongleuresque simple stage. It is a tradition most vividly depicted (at least in its medieval context) in the anonymous Provençal romance *Flamenca*, where a small army of jongleurs descend upon a banquet hall in order to treat its audience to an evening of narrative songs, puppet shows, knife juggling, and acrobatic feats (Blodgett 32-39). Indeed, as I argue in *Radical Theatricality*, it is precisely the performative multiplicity of this jongleuresque tradition that eventually gave rise to the theatrical practice of performing *entremeses* between the acts of full-length *comedias* (158-66). The textual variety we encounter in a work such as Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz’s *Festejo de los empeños de una casa* —whose implied entire performance text includes various *loas*, *letras*, *sainetes*, *saraos* and *coros* (627-704)— owes its multiform poetics to a popular tradition exemplified above by Lope de Rueda and encompassing the itinerant street performers of the Iberian Middle Ages.

Yet, as we know, the performative multiplicity associated with early modern *corral* performance has largely been lost to us during the ensuing centuries. Our long-standing academic and literary traditions, devoted to the publication of critical editions of early modern Spanish plays, have paid vir-

tually no attention to the particular *entremeses* that were performed between the acts of various *comedias*, despite this academic tradition's meticulous philological preoccupation with questions of linguistic integrity and recuperation, and despite the fact that many of the texts cited in such works as Cristóbal Pérez Pastor's *Nuevos datos acerca del histrionismo español en los siglos XVI y XVII* often mention a particular *comedia* in connection with "its" concomitant "música y entremeses" (36-37; my emphasis). Thus, it is extremely rare today to find a theatrical troupe willing (or even able, for a variety of economic and social reasons) to perform a *comedia* within anything approaching the multi-form performative context suggested by Sor Juana. This is true of even the most "authentic" performances staged at the Chamizal National Memorial in El Paso, Texas and the *Corral de comedias* in Almagro, Spain.¹ Indeed, about the only time contemporary audiences ever get to see *entremeses* is during amateur events produced by students (in the most expansive sense of the word) of Spanish classical theater. And even under the best of circumstances, these *entremeses* are usually divorced from their original performative context by being performed alone, instead of as coetaneous performances associated with other performance texts. Ironically, Cervantes's description of the performance of *romances* on the early Spanish stage—as part of his publication of plays that were never per-

formed to begin with— unwittingly serves not just as a prologue to his *Ocho comedias y ocho entremeses*, but also as a prelude to the literary dismemberment of these once-coetaneous entertainments.

Having said this, there are still theatrical venues today where this type of jongleuresque multi-formity continues to thrive. I refer to US Shakespeare festivals and to their associated greenshows, which, while not usually cohabiting the same performance space as the more respected (and more “respectable”) works of “the Bard,” are nonetheless an essential part of the total experience of theatergoers, in much the same way that Sor Juana’s *loas*, *letras*, and *sainetes* are all an essential part of her total performative vision for *Los empeños de una casa*.² More importantly, during the 1994 and 1996 seasons, at least one US Shakespeare festival—the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, along with its then-resident early music ensemble, the Terra Nova Consort— resurrected a “latent” performance tradition that both Cervantes and Lope de Rueda would have recognized as their own. What I mean by this is that Menéndez Pidal’s theory of the “estado latente” of the jongleuresque tradition—defined as the hidden status of traditional and popular culture “en que viven ciertas actividades colectivas, ciertas modalidades literarias, lingüísticas o sociales, que llevan una vida incógnita” (*Romancero hispánico* 2:361)—helps to explain why a group of twentieth-century jongleuresque performers, seeking to add an early

modern “Spanish” flair to their non-Spanish performance tradition, would uncannily gravitate toward the *Romancero* as the performance text most suitable for their theatrical needs.

Today, there are some 70 Shakespeare festivals existing in the United States and Canada.³ The Oregon Shakespeare Festival, which represents one of the oldest and most important of these North American festivals, is located in the town of Ashland just north of the California/Oregon border. Founded in 1935 by Angus Bowmer on the ruins of Ashland’s abandoned Chautauqua building (a site chosen precisely because of its spatial similarities to Shakespeare’s Elizabethan Globe [Bowmer 9]), the Oregon Shakespeare Festival has expanded over the decades to become one of the United States’ premier theatrical institutions, producing eleven plays each year (including several non-Shakespeare plays) on three different stages during a season that runs from mid-February through early November.⁴

As I argue in *Radical Theatricality*, Shakespeare’s Globe—like the Spanish *corrales*, and in stark contrast to such neoclassical theaters as the Italian Teatro Olimpico—represents an architectural accommodation to the medieval jongleuresque tradition (142-48). Thus, despite the Oregon Festival’s current size and scope, its original performance space did not differ substantially from that of Lope de Rueda. Compare Bowmer’s own description of the 1935 Oregon Festival stage to Cer-

vantes's description above of Rueda's platform stage (as well as to what we know about the evolution of the Spanish *corrales* themselves):

Our conception of this stage [...] was based on the theory that players at one time played in the open courtyards of Elizabethan inns. [...] No roof protected us from sun or rain in the back-stage area, and there were no dressing rooms or toilets. Actors had to attend to nature's calls by going to a neighboring building before putting on their tights. Costumes hung on racks under the open sky, and modesty was a luxury we could not afford. We placed the benches and chairs in straight parallel rows [...], not wrapped around the forestage as we learned to do later. We used a curtain between the pillars of the penthouse, or shade, and I cast shapely coeds as "Curtain Boys"[] (76, 79-80)

I mention the similarities between these various jongleuresque performance spaces —what Bowmer calls a sparsely-decorated "'inn yard' type setting" (71)— precisely because it is this spatial resemblance that helps to explain the aesthetic development of the greenshow genre in the first place.⁵

In its most basic form, a greenshow is the 20-45 minute "warm up" act that can be seen prior to the performance of the main play (or plays) at various Shakespeare festivals each summer. As a discrete theatrical entity —not unlike what Hispanists call the *género chico*— the greenshow

largely seems to be the creation of a very small group of individuals at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival: Angus Bowmer (and, later, Gertrude Bowmer), who invented the idea during the late 1940s; W. Bernard Windt and Shirlee Dodge, who oversaw the greenshow's initial development during the 1950s and 60s; and Todd Barton, Judith Kennedy, Patricia O'Scannell and Sue Carney, who molded it into its definitive shape during the period from the 1970s until 2007.⁶ Because the Oregon Festival was founded on an artistic desire to recreate "what must have been seen and heard in the original sixteenth and seventeenth century productions" (Bowmer 32), the peripheral performance activities that eventually became the Oregon greenshow were originally designed to familiarize the audience's collective ear to the rhythms of Elizabethan speech and Shakespearean verse. For this reason, the Oregon greenshow has its origins in a series of concerts and, later, madrigal entertainments provided by strolling singers dressed in Renaissance costume. (Although, ironically, the very first Oregon "greenshow" actually seems to have been a series of boxing matches held prior to the performance of *Twelfth Night* on July 4, 1935. In this regard, greenshows inadvertently demonstrate their uncanny connection to the kind of bull and bear baiting entertainments one might have seen prior to a play during Shakespeare's own lifetime.) These concerts and madrigal entertainments were slowly

modified as the years went on. In the 1950s, dancers and musicians were added to what the Oregon Shakespeare Festival Association's newsletter then called "musical 'curtain-raisers'" (*OSFA Newsletter* 8 May 1952, special edition: 1). Over the next three decades, these greenshow dancers and musicians were eventually asked to function as actors as well, when comic bits of dialogue were added to the performative mix. With this inclusion of dialogue in the 1980s, the genre coalesced into what I have come to call the "classic" greenshow form: a fully-scripted, Renaissance-themed, jongleuresque variety show that includes singing, dancing, skits, magic, juggling, and acrobatics.⁷

As with the performance space of the Oregon Festival stage itself—which started out as an ad hoc simple stage carved out among the ruins of the Chautauqua site, but which eventually became a thrust-style stage located at the center of an architectural re-creation of an Elizabethan theater—so too did the Oregon greenshow performance space pass through a parallel evolution of its own. In the earliest years, the strolling singers moved throughout the Festival site, singing as they went. Later, as the greenshow became more and more structured, adding musicians and dancers, it co-opted the roof of the original stage management booth that was located at the back of the Chautauqua site. When various renovations of the Festival's original stage (now called the Elizabethan Stage/Allen Pavilion)

did not include adequate performance space inside the theater itself, the greenshow moved to its current location just outside the doors of the Allen Pavilion (see figure 1).



Figure 1. Oregon Shakespeare Festival Green Show (1992). The Green Show Ensemble. Photo by Christopher Briscoe. Courtesy of Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

This current greenshow stage—which, like Lope de Rueda’s own simple stage, consists of a raised platform that faces a grassy hillside on which audience members set up their own blankets and lawn chairs—sits in the middle of a public plaza. It is this location at the center of this brick-cobbled courtyard that gave rise to the expression “on the bricks” to describe the Oregon greenshow’s jongleuresque performance space.

While not all Shakespeare festivals offer greenshows (or at least something that functions as a greenshow), many of the larger festivals typically include two or three separate greenshows, each thematically tied to one of the Shakespeare plays they precede. But it is precisely this intimate connection to the Elizabethan-style stage that has given rise to something of a “greenshow dilemma.” At a time when many Shakespeare festivals now house two or three separate stages, each simultaneously offering a different play (many of which are written by contemporary playwrights); in a multicultural age where an increasingly diverse audience may not be quite so interested in watching what could be seen as a rather “old-fashioned,” Eurocentric warm-up act; the classic greenshow form has come under pressure to morph into something else, something more “hip,” something more multicultural, something more appropriate perhaps for theatergoers who might not *all* be on their way to see *Hamlet*,

but rather August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean* instead.

To put this current greenshow dilemma into context, by 1998 the Oregon Festival had dispensed with its classic greenshow actors and dancers — while still retaining its resident ensemble of musicians, the Terra Nova Consort— and had contracted the Indianapolis-based modern dance troupe, Dance Kaleidoscope, to spend its summers in Ashland. Thus, from 1997 to 2007 the Oregon greenshow essentially consisted of a nightly modern dance concert accompanied by an early music consort. Beginning in 2008, however, the Festival decided to eliminate both the Terra Nova Consort and Dance Kaleidoscope (at least as the Festival's permanent and exclusive greenshow performers) in favor of a new greenshow model, one that offers a wider variety of acts each season. A 2008 promotional pamphlet describes this new model as follows: "You might experience a children's hip-hop troupe mixing it up with Renaissance dancers one night and a jazz sextet the next. If you stay long enough, you might get chamber musicians having some artistic fun with mariachi singers, belly dancers, or even jugglers" (Oregon Shakespeare Festival, Promotional Pamphlet 26). Indeed, the 2009 Oregon Festival greenshow lineup included (among many others) the Ballet Folklórico Ritmo Alegre, the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra, The Wild Zappers ("All-deaf male dance company, combining dance and

sign language”), Rutendo! Marimba (“High-energy, joyful dance music from Zimbabwe”), and The Acrobuffos (“The Moulin Rouge revisited: hilarious half-mask comedy with no words”) (2009 Oregon Shakespeare Festival website). Thus, while it no longer exists as an exclusively Elizabethan-style event, the Oregon greenshow remains a very jongleuresque—if uncompromisingly multicultural—performance tradition.

But this is why Oregon’s 1994 and 1996 “Spanish” greenshows are so important. They mark the beginning of the Festival’s transition from the “classic” greenshow model into what could be called the “postmodern” one. Indeed, the 1995 season (situated precisely between these two Spanish greenshows) is the year that the Oregon greenshow abandoned scripted dialogue entirely: “This season’s edition, while not exactly simple, is a set of concerts rather than dramatic entertainments. With new sounds and new looks, it provides a showcase for what the members of the ensemble—many of whom are scholars as well as gifted interpreters of historical music and dance—do best” (*Souvenir Program* 46). Thus, having decided to minimize the kind of scripted dialogue that became so prevalent in the 1980s and early 1990s, and seeking to expand the greenshow’s thematic content, Barton, Kennedy, O’Scannell, and Carney began to explore strategies for providing a cultural variety that went beyond the folk traditions of the British Isles. This

cultural expansion first included music and dance from France, Italy and Germany (see *Guide to the Green Show* [1990-1996]). Beginning in 1993, however, a Spanish *romance* ("Triste estava") first appears on the Oregon greenshow stage in connection with John Webster's *The White Devil* (*Guide* [1993] 21).

Recall that, surrounding the 1992 quincennial of Columbus's first voyage to the Americas, a number of early music groups around the world released recordings of early Spanish music. These recordings included (among others) the Waverly Consort's *1492: Music from the Age of Discovery* and Hespèrion XX's *Juan del Enzina: Romances and villancicos, Salamanca 1496*. The artistic directors of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival were not unaware of these cultural developments. Thus, during the early to mid-1990s the Festival's various auxiliary lectures, concerts, and other peripheral diversions included material devoted to Spanish culture. In 1992, for instance, the Festival offered a summer concert entitled "1492: The Discovery of America" (*Summer Pleasures* [1992]). In 1994, the program of auxiliary entertainments included a concert entitled "Music of the Spanish Renaissance," for which the Terra Nova Consort is accorded specific billing (*Summer Pleasures* [1994]). And the Festival's 1995 program offered theatergoers a concert based on the *Cantigas de Santa Maria* (*Summer Pleasures* [1995]). What all these concerts have in

common, of course, (beyond just their obvious Spanish theme), is their function within the Festival's larger strategy of "multiculturalizing" a sixty-year-old theatrical tradition that had been founded in 1935 on a very Eurocentric Anglophilia. As the Festival's 1995 informational pamphlet expressly notes, medieval Spain was "religiously tolerant and ethnically diverse and yielded a rich blend of musical influences—Christian, Arabic, Moorish, Jewish" (*Summer Pleasures* [1995]).

Given these new multicultural efforts, it is no coincidence that the Oregon Festival's 1994 greenshow for *Much Ado About Nothing* (which Shakespeare sets in Messina, but which involves a number of characters from Aragon) was also set in Spain and included a great deal of Spanish music. Unfortunately, the script for this 1994 dialogue-based greenshow seems to have been lost.⁸ Still, the various materials stored in the Oregon Shakespeare Festival archives—such as the 1994 *Guide to the Green Show*, whose function (among other things) is to provide the audience with historical information about the dances and songs performed (including translations of the original Spanish lyrics)—do allow us to partially reconstruct this performance. For instance, archival photographs allow us to glimpse—albeit through an extremely narrow window—bits and pieces of its visual elements frozen in time (see figure 2).



Figure 2. Oregon Shakespeare Festival Green Show (1994). Nicholas Tennant, Matthew Powell, and Séva Anthony (front). Daniel Stephens and Sue Carney (back). Photo by Judith Kennedy. Courtesy of Judith Kennedy.

Likewise, O'Scannell's directorial note "About the Script" richly describes the frame narrative for this greenshow as follows:

I decided to set our *Much Ado About Nothing* Green Show in the north of Spain in "Borja," a city situated in the foothills of the Moncayo Mountains. Such a setting would be close to our very own town of Ashland, and also resembles the territory held by the Prince of Aragon from the play *Much Ado About Nothing*. The proximity to the province of Castille provides us with the justification of our comic character and host of the evening's festivi-

ties: Francisco de Pasqual, whose quaint Castillian dialect will pepper our show with humor. I have chosen two themes as the centerpiece for our evening's festivities; a celebration of St. Cecilia's Day, patron saint of music, the betrothal of Don Antonio to Princess Juana Enriquez, and his return home following successful political ventures abroad. [...] We find our characters in a quaint country setting, with a pageant of sorts in which five country maidens will compete in various trials for the honor of being crowned 'Queen of the Day.' Watch our story unfold as the Princess decides to crash the party with her servant, both dressed as humble country *senoritas*, in order to observe her fiancée incognito. (*Guide* [1994] 27)

Setting aside the "quaintness" of Francisco de Pasqual's Castilian speech patterns, we can derive a wealth of information from O'Scannell's note. We can see, for instance, that the varied performance constructed inside this frame narrative — within which a number of performers come forward to present a multiplicity of performance texts — closely resembles the *jongleuresque* performance described in *Flamenca*. We can also assume that, as both "comic character and host of the evenings festivities," Francisco de Pasqual would have functioned as a kind of *gracioso* figure, mediating between the world of the actors and the world of the spectators (see figure 3). In this regard, he is doubly *jongleuresque*. Not only does he serve as the primary *jongleur* within the frame narrative itself, me-

diating between the performances of the “five country maidens” and the internal audience that watches them, but he also serves as the primary jongleur for the external greenshow spectators who stand outside the frame narrative looking in.



Figure 3. Oregon Shakespeare Festival Green Show (1994). Nicholas Tennant. Photo by Judith Kennedy. Courtesy of Judith Kennedy.

Still, while documents like these archival photographs and O’Sconnell’s note “About the Script” may help us envision the internal workings of this greenshow, such items tell us very little about this performance’s moment-to-moment pro-

gression. For this reason, the closest thing we have to an actual “script” for this 1994 greenshow is the set list of the songs and dances performed inside this play-within-a-play; songs and dances that, in fact, would have constituted the vast majority of the performance text. The following is the 1994 set list (and, for those interested, I have indicated the sources for each of these pieces of music):

1. “Fata la parte” (Anglés, *Reyes Católicos III* 173; *Reyes Católicos IV-2* 474)
2. “Del rosal sale la rosa” (Vásquez 29)
3. “The Irish Lady” (Playford 48)
4. “A tierras ajenas” (Anglés, *Reyes Católicos III* 122-23; Jacobs 119-22)
5. “Hide Park” (Playford 91; Heffer and Porter 52-53)
6. “Goddesses” (Playford 52)
7. “Pues que no puedo olvidarte” (Querol Gavaldá 1:72-73)
8. “Saint Martins” (Playford 66)
9. “Ninpha gentil” (Querol Gavaldá 1:78-83)
10. “The Spanish Jeepsie” (Playford 23)
11. “Soccóreme, pastora” (Querol Gavaldá 2:29-33)
12. “Kettle Drum” (Playford 89)
13. “Sleights Sword-Dance” (Sharp 2:13-27)
14. “¡Amargas oras!” (Querol Gavaldá 1:22-25)
15. “The Spanyard” (Playford 36)
16. “Jack Pudding” (Playford 56)
17. “Trahe me post te” (Guerrero)

18. "Con amores" (Anglés, *Reyes Católicos IV-2* 427-28)
19. "Navego en hondo mar" (Querol Gavalda 1:74-77)
20. "Ysabel" ["Isabel, perdiste la tu faxe"] (Jacobs 42-44)
21. "Ay, mudo soy" (Jacobs 100-04)
22. "Recercada tercera" (Ortiz 113-16)
23. "¿Qué razón podéis vos tener?" (Jacobs 123-25)

While this 1994 greenshow represents a considerable expansion in the amount of Spanish material performed on the Oregon greenshow stage (a thirteen-fold increase over 1992's lone "Triste estava"); and while all these Iberian songs were sung in their original (often archaic) Spanish; it is also true that a great deal of this 1994 performance is still comprised of material related to the British Isles. Moreover, as the photographs of this performance clearly demonstrate (again, see figure 2), the costumes for this Spanish greenshow remain unmistakably English. There are a couple of reasons for these transcultural discrepancies. In the first place, like all good performers, O'Scannell, Carney, and Kennedy knew their audience well and knew what this audience wanted to see. Thus, even as they introduced new (and unfamiliar) elements into this 1994 greenshow performance, they retained enough of the old, familiar material to ensure that long-time Oregon Shakespeare Festival audi-

ence members would not be too disoriented. Moreover, due to the necessary funding priorities of the Festival (which allocates most of its operating funds during any given season to the staging of the Shakespeare plays themselves), the Festival had purchased new costumes for the greenshow dancers during the mid-1980s, after which time these costumes were re-cycled year after year (Kennedy). Hence the unmistakably “Elizabethan” quality of the 1994 “Spanish” greenshow costumes.

But this brings us to the 1996 greenshow for *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (a play which, like *Much Ado About Nothing*, involves various Spanish characters, but which Shakespeare actually sets on the Iberian Peninsula in the kingdom of Navarre). Like the 1994 greenshow, this one also lacks a formal script (although, in this case, the lacuna is due primarily to the Festival’s 1995 decision to abandon scripted dialogue entirely). Unlike the 1994 edition, however, this 1996 greenshow is made up almost entirely of Spanish material. Indeed, the 1996 greenshow for *Love’s Labour’s Lost* marks the apogee of the Spanish jongleuresque on the Oregon greenshow stage. Here again is the set list for the 1996 performance (and I have again indicated —where possible— the original sources for these songs and dances):⁹

1. “Pase el agoa” (Anglés, *Reyes Católicos III* 124; *Reyes Católicos IV*-2 443-44)
2. “Pavaniglia” (Negri 132-35, 157-59)

3. "La mañana de Sant Joan" (Binkley and Frenk 72-74)
4. "La bella malmaridada" (Anglés, *Reyes Católicos III* 8-9)
5. "Mira Nero de Tarpeya" (Binkley and Frenk 27-28)
6. "Sarabande" (Playford 17)
7. "Por los caños de Carmona" (*Lope de Vega*)
8. "Rey don Sancho" (*Lope de Vega*)
9. "La rubia pastorçica" (Querol Gavaldá 2:25-26)
10. "Dexó la venda" (Querol Gavaldá 2:85-87)
11. "Hermosa Cathalina" (Querol Gavaldá 2:151-53)
12. "Galleria d'Amore" (Negri 189-91)
13. "Alta vittoria" (Caroso, *Ballarino* 104-05)
14. "Recercada segunda sobre: O felici occhi miei" (Ortiz 76-78)
15. "Recercada segunda" (Ortiz 53)
16. "Gratioso" (Negri 137-38)
17. "Celeste Giglio" (Caroso, *Courtly* 74-85)
18. "Por las almenas de Toro" (*Lope de Vega*)
19. "Deja las avellanicas, moro" (*Lope de Vega*)¹⁰
20. "Biscia amorosa" (Negri 165-68)
21. "Contrapasso" (Caroso, *Ballarino* 147-50, 173-74)
22. "Dindirín, dindirín" (Anglés, *Reyes Católicos III* 120; *Reyes Católicos IV-2*: 440-41)
23. "Tu dulce canto, Silvia" (Querol Gavaldá 1:61-63)
24. "Para misa nueva" (Querol Gavaldá 1:91-93)

25. “Esos tus claros ojos” (Querol Gavaldá 2:27-28)
26. “Ribericas del río” (*Lope de Vega*)
27. “La tricotea Samartín la vea” (Anglés, *Reyes Católicos III* 20-22)

Archival photos of the 1996 Oregon green-show season highlight the aesthetic changes that were implemented in 1995. In place of the breeches, doublets, bodices, and peasant dresses of the previous decades, the musicians —both men and women— now wear simple outfits consisting of long black pants and white collarless shirts (see figure 4).



Figure 4. Oregon Shakespeare Festival Green Show (1996). David Rogers (front), Nicholas Tennant, Robert Dubow, and Sue Carney. Photo by Christopher Briscoe. Courtesy of Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

In this regard, the absolute lack of collars can be read as a wholesale sartorial attack on that most iconic of Renaissance fashion pieces: the starched ruff collar. Meanwhile, the dancers —particularly in the “Variety” greenshow that preceded *Coriolanus* (which also included a “Spanish” section, although one featuring 19th- and 20th-century music)— wear various thematic costumes, ranging from Baroque dresses (see figure 5) to traditional flamenco attire (see figure 6).¹¹ And it is in this flamenco costuming —among various other elements— that we can detect, I think, the incipient postmodernity of what are still somewhat traditional Oregon greenshows.



Figure 5. Oregon Shakespeare Festival Green Show (1996). Kim Saunders, Séva Anthony, Judith Kennedy, and Elizabeth Wood. Photo by Christopher Briscoe. Courtesy of Oregon Shakespeare Festival.



Figure 6. Oregon Shakespeare Festival Green Show (1996). Séva Anthony and Michael De Smet. Photo by Christopher Briscoe. Courtesy of Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

I have already mentioned the lack of residual “scripts” for these 1994 and 1996 Spanish greenshows. To my knowledge, there are no available recordings of these performances either, whether audio or video. Thus, to a great extent, the performance texts of these Spanish greenshows are as lost in time as Lope de Rueda’s own jongleur-esque moments. Still, because the Terra Nova Consort produced a 2001 CD entitled *¡Baylado! Music of Renaissance Spain* (on which the Consort recorded five of the fifty songs and dances that they performed as part of both of these 1994 and 1996 Spanish greenshows), we at least have access to an approximation (however limited) of what Festival

audiences might have heard. These five recorded songs are: “Fata la parte,” “Con amores,” and “Ysabel” (from 1994); and “Pase el agoa” and “La trico-tea Samartín la vea” (from 1996). Given the limited space available here, I cannot possibly analyze all five of these songs in detail, much less do justice to the theatrical context of their performance on the Oregon greenshow stage among the several other songs and dances enumerated in the two set lists above. Nevertheless, a few comments on the aesthetics of these recorded performances are in order.

Like the Festival’s 1992-1995 supplementary summer concerts that focused deliberately on Spanish music, *¡Baylado!* is extremely invested in the multiculturalism of medieval Spain, especially that of Andalucía. The cover image for *¡Baylado!*, for instance, consists of a reproduction of Emile-Etienne Esbens’ *Gitanos de Alcalá de Jénarez*. The liner notes, meanwhile, include an essay on “The Musical Heritage of Andalusia” in which Kurt-Alexander Zeller briefly traces the history of Spain from the Muslim invasion of 711 up through the expulsions of the Jews in 1492 and of the Moriscos in 1609 (3-6). Zeller glosses Rodrigo de Zayas’s theory that “some Moriscos may have avoided the prohibition [against performing Moorish music in Golden Age Spain] by assuming new identities as Gypsies” (6) and then concludes his essay by tying Andalucía’s various cultural elements together: “It may be that today’s *flamenco* tradition is a living,

direct descendant of the unnotated and unrecorded music of the Moorish culture in Renaissance Andalusia” (6). Immediately following Zeller’s essay, the liner notes also include an interview with O’Scannell and Carney in which the two discuss the aesthetic choices they made in performing this music:

[Carney]: There’s a “Spanishness” to it that is recognizable to us even across the centuries. By this time, Spanish music had already been changed by so many other cultural influences—the *oud* tradition, non-Gregorian modes. It’s already a distinctive blend of other elements not normally found in European music. That Arabic fixation on the *oud* translated eventually to the Spanish fixation on the guitar.

[O’Scannell]: When you listen to an *oud* player and singer from the Arabic world, you’re hearing something not all that different from those [Luys Milán] *romances* in terms of the flow and even the style. (O’Scannell and Carney 8)

Indeed, Carney sums up the multicultural ethos of these performances by saying, “What we’re attempting is an Andalusian re-focusing of this material. That repertoire came from northern courts, but if it traveled down south, what would have happened to it on the journey?” (8).

Thus, the five “greenshow” songs and dances included on *¡Baylado!* exude a distinct mix of Eu-

ropean, Arabic, and Gypsy (flamenco) elements. Many of these songs exemplify the “bright” sound we traditionally associate with European Renaissance music. This “brightness” is partially achieved, of course, through the performers’ use of sopranino recorders and tambourines (which are as prevalent in Renaissance music as the harpsichord is in Baroque music) as well as through these songs’ upbeat tempo. At the same time, the percussive components of these songs—which include castañets and clapping hands—are clearly intended to echo those flamenco elements assumed to derive from both Arabic and Gypsy sources. But the most multicultural aspect of these recordings, I think, are the vocal performances, particularly the vocal solos provided by Carney on “Fata la parte,” “Pase el agoa,” and “La tricotea Samartín la vea.” Carney’s opening solo for “Pase el agoa,” for instance, echoes (like so many other flamenco solos) the Arabic call to Friday prayers. In “Fata la parte,” whose primary soloist is O’Sconnell (singing in a mostly traditional European style), Carney provides a kind of “counter-cultural” solo in which she sings the line “Fata la parte” in an unmistakably percussive and vocally aggressive flamenco manner. These “Arabic” and “flamenco” borrowings culminate in Carney’s final solo for “La tricotea Samartín la vea,” a solo uncannily reminiscent—as is so much of Carney’s vocal work on this CD—of Manolo Sanlúcar’s 1989 *Tau-*

romagia (which, is itself infused with a great deal of “Arabic” inflection and intonation).

Some academic purists may object to the Terra Nova Consort’s “re-focusing” of these songs in this manner. But such objections miss the point. Would Lope de Rueda (or Lope de Vega, for that matter) have refused to modify his own performances in order to please the crowd at hand? Probably not. Such a refusal would not only be “un-theatrical” (Rueda’s *pasos*, after all, are deeply indebted to the *commedia dell’arte* scenarios he picked up from Zan Ganassa), it would also be “deadly” (Brook 9). As Menéndez Pidal notes, the jongleuresque tradition survives precisely through its relentless modification: “vivir es variar” (*Flor nueva* 39). Or, as Carney puts it: “My focus always, forever, was outside of the academic; to use the scholarship as a springboard to entertain people. And even with the Renaissance [music], Pat and I always wanted to bring it across the centuries to people. Because we believe that the same thing that makes music work in sixteenth-century Spain is what makes it work here. So, we were always trying to please the audience that way” (personal interview). In short, no greenshow performance is ever intended to be solely a museum piece, recreating absolutely the original performances of these early modern songs and dances. Greenshows, like any live performance, are designed to entertain a particular audience at a particular place and time.

These 1994 and 1996 Spanish greenshows are no exception. They were created for an audience that had seen numerous greenshows over the years; that was acutely aware of the historical context surrounding the 500th anniversary of the “encounter” between the Old and New Worlds; and that was attuned to the multicultural spirit of the early 1990s.

Having said that, it is also true that Barton, Kennedy, O’Sconnell, and Carney are serious scholars as well as successful performers. In creating these Spanish greenshows, they did not simply invent their performance texts out of whole cloth. As Barton indicates, when he became the Festival’s Music Director in 1972 one of his goals was to make the Oregon greenshow “*the* early music hub” of the United States (personal interview). He largely succeeded by passing this philosophy on to the very musicians he hired (people such as O’Sconnell and Carney, who were perhaps hired precisely because they already shared Barton’s vision). Likewise, when Kennedy took over as the Festival’s choreographer in 1971, she insisted that the period dances should be as “historically informed” as possible. And to achieve this end, she spent significant time and expense researching Renaissance and Baroque dance in the United Kingdom. O’Sconnell and Carney, for their part, spent considerable time and effort (as the various issues of *The Guide to the Green Show* clearly demonstrate) in not only finding and selecting the most appealing early modern

Spanish music, but also in researching the most historically appropriate modes for performing this music using historically accurate instruments.

But this is precisely why the Oregon Shakespeare Festival's 1994 and 1996 Spanish greenshows can be seen as genuine re-articulations of Lope de Rueda's own performance of *romances* on his early modern jongleuresque stage. In fact, these Spanish greenshows should be viewed not just as an important part of Anglo-American theater history, but also as significant moments in the history of modern *comedia* performance. Vicente Pérez de León considers Rueda's *pasos* to be one of the earliest forms—as well as the “máximo representante” (646)—of the Spanish *entremés*. From a purely literary perspective, such a statement might very well be true. From a performative perspective, however, the *romances* Cervantes describes at the margins of Rueda's stage have to be seen as the “*entremeses*” to the *pasos* themselves; which is to say, in between performances of “El convidado” and “Las aceitunas,” Rueda kept his audience from wandering away (while his actors were perhaps changing costumes as quickly as they could) by entertaining them—and we should not forget that the word “entretener” literally means “to hold between”—with the same jongleuresque *romances* that countless generations of audiences had seen performed in the streets of Spain since at least the 12th and 13th centuries, when a *juglar* would sud-

denly appear in the town square and gather an audience for a performance of the *Poema de mio Cid*.

In many ways, these Spanish greenshows represent something of a return of the repressed. During the summer of 1994, thousands of people in Ashland, Oregon experienced the closest thing they will probably ever see to a Spanish *entremés* (or, at least, a *loa*) in its original performative context. They arrived at the Festival a good hour before the start of *Much Ado About Nothing*, perhaps setting up a small picnic on the grass in front of the greenshow stage, and they watched the performance of a short one-act play full of Spanish songs and dances conceptually tied to the full-length play that would immediately follow. Moreover, in 1996 these same summer audiences witnessed a mode of Spanish jongleuresque performance not generally seen since the time of Cervantes's youth: the simple singing of *romances* at the margins of a larger performance space within which other theatrical pieces would also be performed; which is to say, this Spanish greenshow formed part of a "Festejo de *Love's Labor's Lost*" that also included the embedded humorous pageant of "The Nine Worthies" (which, like the comedic performance of "Pyramus and Thisbe" inscribed within *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, functioned as an "internal *entremés*" in its own right). If, as I have argued, the jongleuresque tradition was *the* popular theater of medieval Spain, then the Terra Nova Consort's revival of this jon-

gleuresque tradition marks an important contribution to our understanding and appreciation of performance on the early Spanish stage. Indeed, these 1994 and 1996 Oregon Shakespeare Festival Spanish greenshows confirm the radical theatricality of the *Romancero* itself.

NOTES

¹ There are rare exceptions, of course, such as the 1992 “Fiesta barroca” performed in the streets of Madrid in connection with Calderón’s *El gran mercado del mundo*. See Amestoy; “Fiesta barroca,” and Fuente Arjona.

² The term “greenshow” originated as a reference to its function as the “show” located on the “green” (as in, the village green). The word appears alternatively in various locations as “greenshow” and “green show.” Unless quoting a specific source, I will use the single-word version because it implies a discrete theatrical form, not just a generic show that happens to occur on the green.

³ This number does not include a roughly equal number of North American Shakespeare companies that produce one or more plays each season; nor does this include the sizeable number of Shakespeare festivals and companies that exist throughout the rest of the world, from the Royal Shakespeare Company in the United Kingdom to the International Shakespeare Festival in Poland, from the Tokyo Shakespeare Company in Japan to “Shakespeare in the Streets” of São Simão, Brazil. For more information, see Engle et al.

⁴ The Chautauqua movement, which began in the late 1800s and continued through the 1920s, provided educational and cultural opportunities to rural communities across the United States.

⁵ I would like to thank Todd Barton, Sue Carney, Patricia O'Scannell, and Judith Kennedy for generously taking time to meet with me, and for providing me with many invaluable resources, both tangible and intangible. I would also like to thank Kathleen F. Leary, archivist of the Oregon Shakespeare Festival, for all her help and guidance in sorting through the various archival documents involved in this research.

⁶ Although the Oregon Shakespeare Festival was founded in 1935, it effectively went on hiatus during World War II. After it reopened in 1947, the greenshow began to take shape. The 1952 Oregon Shakespeare Festival Association newsletter describes the "inauguration of an Elizabethan music program under [the] professional direction" of Hans Lampl (*OSFA Newsletter* 8 May 1952, special edition: 1). The following year, Windt was named Music Director, a position he would hold for the next twenty years. During the 1950s, the Festival hired a series of choreographers before finally hiring Dodge, who then served as the Festival Choreographer until 1969. In 1971, Kennedy (who first came to the Festival as a young dancer in 1958) was named Festival Choreographer and held the position until the mid-1990s. Meanwhile, upon Windt's retirement in 1972, the position of Music Director went to Barton (who had served as Windt's Assistant Music Director the previous year). Barton has served as the Festival's Music Director (now Resident Composer) from 1972 to the present. During the 1980s, however, Barton began to hire separate music directors for what was called the Tudor Fair (of which the greenshow was the main component). At about the same time, O'Scannell and Carney began performing together as Festival musicians. In 1988, they co-founded the Terra Nova Consort, which eventually became the Festival's resident music ensemble from 1990 through 2007. In 1990, O'Scannell also became the official greenshow Music Director, while Carney served as the Associate Music Director. Shortly thereafter, the

two became Co-Directors of the greenshow, working closely with Kennedy for the next six years.

⁷ The Oregon Shakespeare Festival Association's 1953 newsletter demonstrates, however, that the nucleus of the "classic" greenshow form was already emerging: "On August 23, the Festival will present 'An Evening's Revels,' in which the Festival music groups and dancers will perform, under the direction of Music Director Bernard Windt. [...] The scene will be the manor house of an Elizabethan lord (Richard Graham) who entertains his guests (festival actors and actresses) by calling upon his servants (musicians and dancers) to perform" (*Shakespeare Festival Newsletter* 20 July 1953: 1-2).

⁸ Because greenshows are often considered to be artistically inferior, marginal events (compared to the Shakespeare plays themselves), festivals do not always devote the same attention to their greenshows archives as they do to those of their full-scale productions. The Oregon Festival's archives are among the best in the US; nevertheless, its greenshow collection does occasionally lack this or that document. Hence, while copies of several Oregon greenshow scripts from the 1980s and 1990s are readily accessible, the script for this 1994 Spanish greenshow remains missing (at least for now).

⁹ The 1996 *Guide to the Green Show* indicates that a number of these songs come from a document that the *Guide* calls a "16th century manuscript entitled: *Lope de Vega*" (25). To date, I have been unable to track down this manuscript. All references below to "*Lope de Vega*" refer to this missing source.

¹⁰ As Gustavo Umpierre notes, this song appears in Act 3 of Lope de Vega's *El villano en su rincón* (83-85).

¹¹ Despite the appearance of these flamenco costumes within the *Coriolanus* "Variety" greenshow, the *Love's Labour's Lost* "Spanish" greenshow dancers continued to re-use the Elizabethan costumes of previous years.

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THE TRANSFORMATION OF *LA PRUEBA DE LOS INGENIOS* INTO *THE LABYRINTH OF DESIRE*: ADAPTING LOPE DE VEGA FOR A CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN AUDIENCE

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Women's equality, cross dressing, homoerotic desire—all the makings of a twenty-first-century comedy—were the focus of a seventeenth-century play by Lope de Vega, *La prueba de los ingenios* (1612?-1613?). In the last two decades, interest in this work has increased considerably. Evidence of the rising popularity of the play is an English-language adaptation by Caridad Svich,¹ which she titled *The Labyrinth of Desire*.²

The adaptation was originally commissioned and produced by the University of California, San Diego Department of Theatre and Dance in La Jolla, California in November 2006 under the direction of Gerardo (Jerry) Jose Ruiz and developed at New Dramatists in New York City under the direction of Jean Randich. Ruiz was a third-year student in the Directing MFA Program at UCSD, and the produc-

tion served as the culminating experience for his degree. It was subsequently performed by the Ohio State University Department of Theatre in February, 2008, directed by Jimmy Bohr, a member of the faculty. The professional premiere was at Miracle Theatre, in Portland, Oregon, in May 2008, directed by Devon Allen, head of the Portland State University acting program. A second professional production by an American theatre company in San Diego was scheduled for an April 25 through May 23, 2009 run but ultimately was done as a staged reading on March 23, 2009.³ The professional production at Miracle Theatre is the focus of this study.⁴

I am a member of the Spanish faculty at Portland State University, which is just a few miles from Miracle Theatre. Coincidentally, the play was produced during the term I taught a junior-level culture and civilization course focusing on Early Modern Spain. Capitalizing on this coincidence, attendance at the play—as well as a 250-word reaction to it—was one of the assignments of the course. For most of the students, the class was their first exposure to the history, culture, and literature of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain. Very few of them were familiar with Lope de Vega, and none (myself included) had read *Prueba*. Having never read the original nor the adaptation, I had no idea what to expect from the production, but my intent was to provide the students a first-hand experience with early-modern Spanish culture. This essay will

explore whether or not that actually happened. After a brief discussion of the homoerotic theme of the work and general issues of the translation and/or adaptation of the *Comedia*, I will then examine some of the specific changes Svich made to Lope's original work in her adaptation and will use my class of students as a type of case study of the reactions to the modernization of a seventeenth-century work.

Louise Fothergill-Payne has noted that "*La prueba de los ingenios* . . . holds sufficient emotional moments to turn this play into a truly modern drama" (84). Although to my knowledge, there have been no modern productions of the Spanish-language original, the quantity of recent critical studies of Lope's work supports her assertion. The growing interest in and acceptance of cross dressing and homosexuality have played a role in the growing attention paid to this play, as evidenced by the fact that the primary focus of many of these studies has been the play's treatment of gender issues, particularly homoerotic desire (see Fothergill-Payne and González Ruiz).

The gender and sexuality elements drew Svich to the work:

It is a piece that true to its genre revels in the comedy of love and intrigue, and does so with Lope de Vega's characteristic warmth, wit, and poetry. What raises this play above its genre is its great understanding of the essential mutabil-

ity and fluidity of human desire. Pre-queer theory, pre-feminism and pre-*Sex and the City*, this play challenges the boundaries of prescribed sexual roles, and advocates for the delightful and essential mystery of love. The performance of self, gender identity, and sexual identity is at the core of this comedy, yet it also manages to address issues of class and the heteroglossic play of language. (*In-Translation*)

As Olga Sanchez, Artistic Director of Miracle Theatre Main Stage where *Labyrinth* was produced, has noted, “The homoerotic elements . . . are part of Svich’s exploration as a writer into the fluidity of identity, the spectrum of sexuality and sexual orientation” (E-mail). While they are present in the original work, Svich’s adaptation brings the sexuality and gender issues even more to the forefront, as I will discuss below.

Portland, Oregon, a particularly appropriate choice of venue for the professional production, is a city known for its tolerance and acceptance of alternative lifestyles. In the city itself, there is a thriving gay community which has lobbied for and gained health insurance and leave for partners. For a brief time (March 3 - April 20, 2004), Multnomah County, where Portland is located, issued marriage licenses for same sex couples.⁵ Early in 2009, the state itself passed two gay rights bills—one granting same-sex couples domestic partnerships (with the full benefits of marriage) and another outlawing

discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity in employment, public accommodations, and housing. The gay community in Portland was targeted as a potential audience as evidenced by the announcement of the production of the play on the Portland Latino Gay Pride events website for 2008.

While the adaptation was not written specifically for a Portland audience, the audience is a factor for any adaptor or translator of the *Comedia*. As Marta Mateo remarks, “a translation depends . . . on the interests and cultural assumptions of the receiving system” (99). Dawn L. Smith notes that a translator works “with a view to making the text resound with an English-speaking audience” (95). Svich clearly had her audience in mind as she transformed *Prueba* into *Labyrinth*:

[M]y intention throughout my conversation with Lope de Vega across the centuries has always been to illuminate his vision for a new audience, one that most likely only knows, if at all, his classic historical play *Fuenteovejuna*. It is an audience, though, that is perhaps familiar with Marivaux’s *The Triumph of Love* and surely with Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*—plays that are clear cousins to this one in spirit, if not in form, and I’ve taken this into account when re-considering this play.

There are two basic approaches that the translator/adaptor can take while considering the relationship s/he wishes to create between the audience and the work in question. One must decide whether the goal is to transport the audience back in time to seventeenth-century Spain by staying “true” to the original work or to modernize the play and thereby make it more accessible to a contemporary audience. Robert Bayliss has addressed this issue previously in *Comedia Performance*:

Does privileging the criterion of “authenticity” lead the twenty-first-century audience to a faithful reproduction of a classic or “classical” text, or does it render it a mere historical curiosity, unable to engage a twenty-first-century audience? Do substantial alterations to a Golden Age play (both as text and as spectacle) breathe new life into a linguistically and culturally fossilized artifact, thus allowing a contemporary audience to access the *Comedia*, or do such changes defraud the original and corrupt its classical aesthetic merit? (122-23)

Bayliss refers to this as a choice between “an early modern and a postmodern staging of the *Comedia*” (123). I acknowledge that I fall into the early modern camp with a preference for textual authenticity; my intent when I organized the attendance of the play for my students was to expose them to a work that captured the “essence of the aesthetic experi-

ence of the original” (Stroud 94). As is clear from her comments above, and as I discovered during the performance, Svich adheres more to the notion of cultural authenticity, and her adaptation is unquestionably postmodern.

The answer to the question regarding an early modern or a postmodern staging informs other fundamental issues facing any adaptor or translator of the *Comedia* to English. These include the use of verse or prose, formal or informal lexicons, two or three acts, the size of the cast, set design, costuming, props, etc. Svich has addressed many of these issues in a brief essay published in the on-line journal, *In-Translation*, announcing the Miracle Theatre production:

In freely adapting this play for the American stage (and this is the first American English adaptation of this piece), I have taken many liberties with the original text: cutting minor scenes and characters, re-assigning some roles and lines, borrowing a very short comedic sequence from Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*, reshaping and expanding scenes, and adding text of my own to clarify and deepen emotional moments as well as comedic ones. The ending in particular has a new twist that speaks to what I feel were Lope’s wholistic intentions with this play. In the use of language I have emphasized the colloquial and direct over the baroque. This choice is actually a mirror of the original’s taut

and sharp energy. However, the meter and rhythms have necessarily changed.

Before discussing Svich's changes, a brief synopsis of Lope's plot is warranted.

The central character in *Prueba* is Florela, who finds herself dishonored. Alejandro, the man she must marry in order to recover her honor, has decided to compete for the hand of Laura, the only child of the wealthy Duke of Ferrara. Finding herself abandoned, Florela follows Alejandro and, as Diana, serves as a lady in waiting to Laura. Having been given the right to select her future spouse by her father, Laura finds herself unable to choose between the three suitors: Alejandro, the Infante of Aragon, and París, Prince of Urbino. Diana/Florela suggests a "prueba de los ingenios" to allow the suitors to prove their merit. This tripartite test of wits includes a riddle, a debate, and finally a labyrinth. When Laura begins to show a preference for Alejandro, Diana/Florela announces that she is actually Félix in disguise as Diana and begins her own pursuit of Laura to distract her from Alejandro's attentions. Having been seduced herself, Florela proves herself rather adept at the art of seduction, and Laura begins to fall in love with her. París, the one and only suitor to complete the labyrinth, wins Laura's hand. When Laura announces "que marido tengo" (336), the time has come for Florela to confess her true identity and for Alejandro to acknowledge

Que Diana es mi mujer,
y todos estos enredos
han sido para estorbar
conmigo tu casamiento;
esta es Florela de Mantua. (337)

With Florela's honor restored, *Prueba* ends on the happy note typical of Lope.

A female character in male disguise was a popular dramatic convention in Early Modern Spanish theater. As Lope himself mentions in *El arte nuevo de hacer comedias en este tiempo*, "suele / el disfraz varonil agradar mucho" (283-84). Indeed, Melveena McKendrick has noted that it became "monotonous in the regularity of its appearance" (52). Not surprisingly, the very appeal to male audiences of a woman in male disguise resulted in efforts by moralists such as the Jesuit priest Ignacio de Camargo to abolish the practice, since it caused female actors to reveal parts of their bodies "que la naturaleza misma quiso que estuviese siempre casi todo retirado de la vista" (qtd. in Bravo-Villasante 154). The twist on this convention found in both *Prueba* and *Labyrinth* is that Florela never actually dons male clothing; rather, she is a woman claiming to be a man disguised as a woman.

Although Svich "is faithful to Lope's architecture" (*In-Translation*) and the basic plot line is the same, there are some significant differences between the two works which are the focus of the bal-

ance of this essay. First is the cast of characters of the original and the adaptation. Svich has eliminated eleven minor characters with speaking parts; the only servants to survive her cuts are the three that are key to the denouement (Estacio, Finea and Camacho, the *gracioso*). In addition, she combines two characters: Ricardo, who she characterizes as a “steadfast friend to Florela and Alejandro” (Svich, *Labyrinth* 2) and who appears in just the opening scene in Lope’s work, and the Infante of Aragon. In *Prueba*, the Infante is a serious contender for Laura’s hand, while in the adaptation the Infante is merely Ricardo in disguise, keeping an eye on Florela and Alejandro. Another change is Svich’s renaming of Florela’s masculine persona Felipe rather than Félix. A final difference is the gender transformation experienced by the Duke of Ferrara, who is now the Duchess. None of the actors was double cast, unlike acting companies during Lope’s day. The one exception noted above—Ricardo/ Infante de Aragón—was a plot twist created by Svich and was not necessitated by the size of the company.

While it could be argued that these character changes are minimal, they did result in a lack of textual authenticity. The audience did not experience multiple actors playing multiple roles, which was very much a part of any seventeenth-century performance of a Lope play. The Duke of Ferrara is an authority figure in the original work, while the Duchess was a comedic character. Félix is phoneti-

cally similar enough to Fénix so as to bring to mind the image of the Phoenix. That play on words is lost with the renaming to Felipe. Most of my students missed the fact that the Infante was actually Ricardo. Those few who noticed reacted differently to the Infante than the rest did.

The character of the *gracioso*, Camacho, generated considerable reaction from my students that saw the play, and the actor portraying him was the most favorably reviewed. Bonnie Tinker of the *Portland Alliance* described his performance as “delightful, providing the speed and glue that hold the production together,” while Holly Johnson of *The Oregonian* characterized him as the “cheekily delightful . . . fool and trickster Camacho.” Svich adhered to the rules of decorum by portraying him as a member of the lower class and reflecting this distinction through his speech. To highlight the fact that he was not noble, Svich opted to have him literally speak with a vulgar dialect. His speech was splattered with sexual innuendo and profanity. Multiple students commented that they felt that the vulgarity and profanity were excessive.

In general, my students perceived the language to be a mixture of past and present word usage. Some appreciated being able to readily follow it, while others found the perceived mixture of linguistic registers to be confusing. Most were grateful that it was in English, although a few of the more

advanced students expressed a desire to have seen it in the original Spanish.

Another issue related to the issue of language is the choice between verse and prose. In a recent essay, Dakin Matthews persuasively makes a case for verse translations of the seventeenth-century Spanish drama, arguing that “verse and rhyme are at the heart of the *Comedia* experience, and that it is . . . necessary for translators . . . to try to capture both its form and its effect” (52). While on paper it appears that Svich has utilized verse in her adaptation of *Prueba*, her text bears no resemblance to Spanish verse style. Rather, it could be categorized as free verse. To be honest, however, the question of prose vs. verse was a non-issue for my students, as they were more focused on the action and themes. Any comments they made regarding the language of the performance were limited to the lexical register choices noted above.

There were multiple references to twentieth-century pop culture, particularly music. For example, in the opening scene of the play, Florela says to Ricardo, “I can’t stop loving him (as the song goes)” and the script is footnoted as follows: “The song ‘I Can’t Stop Loving You’ was a hit for Ray Charles and other singers. Throughout the text there are references to other pop songs that inform the world and emotional register of this piece” (7). Lope is known for incorporating music into his works; Svich followed this practice but rather than

using period music, the audience heard snippets from the popular songs alluded to in the text. When asked what drew her to fill the play with so many pop music references, Svich responded:

Well, I love pop music. I'm not ashamed to say. We live with so much pop music in our brains, even if we think we're inured to it. Phrases from pop songs are part of our cultural language. With this play, I kept thinking especially about a certain period in U.S. pop music: the early 1960s and the kind of pure pop that era evokes, and that in some ways so many of the chart-topping songs from that era reflect in an elemental unadorned but often witty manner the kind of go-for-broke machinations of love and desire in this play. It's an era in pop music also where "veiled" odes to love were inscribed in the voices of singers singing for the general public what seemed like a straight song when it was actually queer. This too is something operative in the gender coded and uncoded world of *Labyrinth*, [. . .] so . . . the references seemed apropos. Moreover, and above all, I wanted to create moments that acknowledged the audience's involvement with the piece—that broke the "wall" between the action and world of the play and the world we live in—winks, as it were, to collective pop music unconscious! (Study Guide 5-6)

Again, some students quite enjoyed the presence of pop culture in the work while others found it distracting and anachronistic.

Costuming, set design and props were authentic in the sense that the actors wore contemporary clothing—just as actors did in Lope's day—and minimal props were used to suggest changes in scenery. When asked if the fact that the original work was from the seventeenth-century had informed in any way any of the decisions about the production, Sanchez responded:

The production was presented in modern dress, but in a setting that reflected a gentle sense of Spanish architecture. Our goal was to maintain the integrity of the social rules that dominated the play, as they stood in the original work. The action of the protagonists and the machinations of all the characters would not have been nearly as important without the context in which they appeared. (E-mail)

Svich described the setting for her adaptation as follows:

A world of mirrors and transformation.
Simple, elegant and somewhat ornate in design.
A playing area that is open, but can suddenly become obscured.
There is the possibility of magic here and of getting lost. (*Labyrinth 2*)

Students noted that the play felt Spanish and that the setting of the production had the feel of being from the early twentieth century, yet characters used cell phones and blue-tooth technology. The lack of a clearly defined time period was confusing to some, while others were intrigued by the anachronistic use of twenty-first-century technology.

Like the original play, *Labyrinth* ends with the union of multiple couples: Florela and Alejandro, Laura and Paris, and Camacho and Finea. But Svich altered the ending in two significant ways. First, the “new twist” mentioned above, is the pairing of Ricardo and Estacio. While this can be seen as a continuation of the homoerotic theme, this union would have never occurred in Lope given the difference in their social classes; Ricardo is noble and Estacio is a servant. This union was nonsensical to some students, coming out of nowhere as it did; there was nothing in the play to suggest a possible relationship between the two. The second alteration is Laura’s palpable grief in the final scene. Her final words in *Prueba* after learning that Florela is not in fact Félix are: “París, perdonad; que creo / que un ingenio de mujer / es prueba de mil ingenios” (337), and there are no stage directions to indicate any physical manifestation of grief on her part. In *Labyrinth*, however, while her final words do not reveal her heartbreak—“Paris, you must forgive me. / . . . / I’ve been a fool”—there are clear instructions as to Laura’s state of mind: “Laura faints. A mo-

ment. Duchess revives her, helps her up. Laura is weeping; she is devastated” (117). She does not speak again, but the final stage direction reads: “Laura cannot stop weeping as her eyes meet Florela for what may be the last time” (120). What was not entirely clear, however, is if her sorrow stemmed from discovering that Diana was really Florela and not Felipe or from her realization that everything Florela had done and said to her was part of her attempt to get Alejandro back and not a reflection of any feelings towards Laura herself.

The comments of the reviewer for *The Portland Alliance*, the city’s oldest alternative progressive newspaper, regarding the denouement reflect the sentiments of many of my students:

It is easy to see why the original play could not end with Florela and Laura leaving stage as a happy couple, but the logic is harder to follow in today’s world. Given that Florela is shallow and deceitful, if also witty and charming, from the beginning, it is entirely reasonable that she should reject the woman she has courted throughout most of the play to return to the man who didn’t want her in the first place. It is, however, disheartening to have one more sweet lesbian romance end with the jerky boyfriend getting the girl. True, she isn’t worthy of the girl she rejects, and it is also true that the play is about the transgressions and foibles of human love and attraction. It is still disconcerting to see two of the boys go off happily with each other,

and several of the straight couples find their appropriate matches while the smart lesbian seductress leaves her lady love for an incompetent man who evidently never loved her in the first place. (Tinker)

Sanchez describes the ending as “challenging . . . , not exactly happy at all, it’s a victory of the smart/ruthless, not necessarily the wise or the kind” (E-mail). Even with the pairing of the Infante and Estacio, students perceived this to be a very traditional ending, primarily because Laura and Florela did not end up together. Several felt that the post-modern elements of the adaptation suggested a less traditional denouement.

While reactions to modernizations of the production among my students ran the gamut, most connected on some level with the underlying theme of love in its multiple manifestations. The homoerotic tensions manifest in the relationship between Laura and Florela/Diana/Felipe were intriguing to some and uncomfortable to others because those students were made to feel like voyeurs in the seduction scenes. The small, intimate space of the theater accentuated this feeling.⁶

The very naming of the adaptation is symbolic of the changes made. The Spanish title *La prueba de los ingenios* is generally translated to be *Trial by Wits* or *Test of Wits*. Svich’s choice of *The Labyrinth of Desire* reflects her decision to emphasize the metaphor of the labyrinth. Much of the ac-

tion of Act III takes place in the labyrinth that is the third of the tests created by Florela to help Laura choose among her suitors. The penultimate line of the play is “el labertinto de amor” (27), and the substitution of desire for love reflects the shift in focus of the adaptation. One student commented that the work was indeed a labyrinth of not just desire, but also love, honor and deceit. Svich affirms this observation: “The play is a labyrinth and desire is its compass” (Interview 4-5). When asked to describe the layered definitions or functions of the labyrinth, Svich responded: “There’s that place emotionally when you’re in love that is a labyrinth from which you cannot see the beginning or end, only the endlessly joyous and fraught circumlocutions of desire itself. But then again life in and of itself is a labyrinth: a journey and test of contemplation, discovery, and the self meeting itself” (5). The choice to make the labyrinth the central metaphor of the adaptation de-emphasizes the tripartite nature of the test, which is reiterated over and over in the original with repeated use of the word *prueba*.

Both reviewers of the play commented favorably on the alterations Svich made to Lope’s work, one noting she had “made it palatable for today’s audiences” (Johnson) while the other commented that the work was “updated to be accessible and relevant to modern English speaking audiences” (Tinker). Neither had access to the original play and therefore based their comments on the adaptor’s

own assertions in the essay from *In-Translation* that was also published in the study guide Miracle prepared for the production:

[T]his is a free adaptation. It is faithful to Lope's architecture, but it is very much suffused with my own artistic sensibility as a playwright, which also centers on the crossing of normative social and sexual boundaries, women in society, the carnival-esque play with language and genre, and interculturalism. . . . So call this a hybrid text, a fusion, if you will, of Lope de Vega and Svich.

Perhaps it was the very hybrid nature of the *Labyrinth* that was so disconcerting to some of my students and, due to the intent of my assignment to them, to me. I had intended for them to see a play by Lope de Vega, yet parts of the work were obviously by Caridad Svich. The complexity of the question of authorship of an adaptation is evident in a comment by Gerardo Ruiz, director of the original student production:

Transformation stands out as one of the most intriguing thematic elements of Lope de Vega's play, specifically transformation via love. The playwright also unsentimentally explores the mutability of the self and of desire. Every character in *Labyrinth* falls in love with more than one person; to a certain extent, they fall in love with the aspects of themselves they see reflected

in the object of their passion. Our production focused on this theme, and actively heightened Lope's dazzlingly rich handling of it. (v)

He refers to Lope as the author of a work billed as "A play by Caridad Svich adapted from Lope de Vega" (v).

If, as A. Robert Lauer asserts, "[a]ny translation suggests an act of violence, transfer, or change" (202), then an adaptation does this to an even greater degree. In spite of the fact that I had not yet read *Prueba de los ingenios*, I had a strong reaction to what I perceived as "violent" departures from the original work. As a professor of Early Modern Spanish literature and culture, I felt the need to discuss with my students what I had perceived as the unauthentic elements of the production. This was done in a post-performance class session, following the submission of the students' written responses to the play. During the course, we had discussed the importance of honor in Early Modern Spain. The postmodern elements of the play—and the sense that it was not reflective of seventeenth century values—de-emphasized the honor issue central to the original work. One of the few advanced students in the class, who was concurrently taking a senior-level course on Early Modern Spanish women writers,⁷ commented that the de-emphasis of the theme of honor, while intended for a "modern audience, who may not fully understand the complex and intense role that honor plays in Spain during this Gol-

den Age of writers, poets and playwrights. . . , undermines the intelligence of the audience, and essentially assumes too much” (McConnell). Only upon understanding why Florela was required by society to marry the man that had seduced her in order to regain her honor did the students in general comprehend why it was so important that she ended up with Alejandro. Without that context, the fact that Florela does get Alejandro back made less sense, especially since she had connected with Laura in a way that she never did with him.

When asked if the fact that *Labyrinth* was based on a Lope de Vega work had played a factor in her decision to produce the play, Sanchez responded,

Absolutely ~ one of our goals at Miracle is to share works that reflect the diversity of the Latino experience, and this includes its history. That the play is based on Lope de Vega allowed us the opportunity to present a play that presented a historical background (and social structure) of the 1600s, while the adaptor through her adaptation held a dialogue with the original work.

Plus this work was in English, which made it accessible to a greater number of people. Through this production more people would become familiar with Lope de Vega and his work. We've found that these older texts are challenging for our English and Spanish-speakers to fully enjoy (E-mail)

Perhaps ultimately this is the real issue. As much as I would love to be able to take students from Portland State University to early modern productions of the *Comedia*, it is not in Miracle Theatre's economic best interest to produce such works. If they are to perform works from seventeenth-century Spain, they must do so in a way that guarantees an audience.

While for adherents to textual authenticity like me an adaptation of a *Comedia* may not be the preferred vehicle for teaching Early Modern Spanish culture, the truth is I am grateful for any chance to expose my students to the drama of seventeenth-century Spain. Most of them commented that they would have not attended the production if it had not been a class assignment. Live theater was simply not an activity in which they had participated, and many thanked me for exposing them to the experience. *Labyrinth* engaged the students and left them wanting more: more Lope, more live theater, more visits to Miracle. That, for me as a professor of the *Comedia*, made it a success, and I look forward to the opportunity to take more students to future productions of the *Comedia*—translation, adaptation, or Spanish-language original—at Miracle Theatre.

NOTES

¹ “An artist of Cuban-Spanish-Argentine-Croatian descent, Ms. Svich is the recipient of New Dramatists’ 2007 Whitfield Cook Prize for New Writing for her play *Lucinda Caval*, and the 2003 National Latino Playwriting Award for *Magnificent Waste*. She’s also received a Harvard University Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study Bunting fellowship, and a TCG/Pew National Theatre Artist Grant. Caridad is currently on commission from Spanish Rep/Repertorio Español in New York City and Marin Theatre Company in California. She is an alumna playwright of New Dramatists, contributing editor of *TheatreForum*, on the editorial board of *Contemporary Theatre Review* (Routledge/UK), affiliate artist of New Georges, and founder of the international theatre alliance and publishing press NoPassport.Caridad” (Study Guide 6).

Among her many credits is the translation and publication of multiple works by Federico García Lorca. The production of *Labrynth* was her first collaboration with Miracle Theatre.

² The play was translated before, also with the title *The Labyrinth of Desire*, by Michael Jacobs and was published by Ob-eron Books in *Plays Two* (along with a translation by John Osborne of *La fianza satisfecha* as *A Bond Honoured*) in 2002. In association with The Globe Theatre in London, OUT OF THE BOX had a staged reading of the play directed by Gerry Mulgrew in December 2002. I cannot speak to any awareness Svich may have had of this translation.

³ “In early 2009, ion theatre de-installed its home-base, the Lab, when the company learned that the owners of the property were the largest supports in the state toward the passage of Prop 8—a measure that the company considered a formidable obstacle to its mission of inclusiveness and diversity. Though ion is flourishing despite the hardship of a new itinerant phase, it struggled to find homes for its remaining productions and completed Season 3 with a staged reading of *The*

Labyrinth of Desire by Caridad Svich (in a co-production with MOXIE Theatre) . . .” (ion theatre company website).

⁴ I have written previously in *Comedia Performance* about Early Modern Spanish productions at Miracle Theatre Group.

⁵ In November 2004, Oregonians voted 57% to 43% in favor of Ballot Measure 36, a constitutional amendment defining marriage to be between one man and one woman. Although Multnomah County had argued that the state constitution violated the rights of same-sex partners, in April 2005 the Oregon State Supreme Court decided *Li & Kennedy vs. State of Oregon*, ruling that Multnomah County did not have the authority to remedy a perceived violation of the Oregon Constitution. The ruling voided all same-sex marriages; as a result of the passage of Ballot Measure 36, the court further ruled that the Oregon Constitution now expressly limits marriage to opposite-sex couples.

⁶ The theater seats 120. It is an intimate space whose configuration—the stage area is approximately 20' x 24' in a 3/4 thrust configuration—results in an unobstructed view of the stage for each audience member. Audience members are often within touching distance to the actors.

⁷ Students from this more advanced class were encouraged to attend the production and many did, but it was not a course assignment.

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DESIGNED FOR AN EXPERIENCE: THE NATURAL ARCHITECTURE OF *CORRALES*¹

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*Art does not surpass nature but perfects it;
therefore, when nature is mixed with art, and art with nature,
the result is a perfect poet.
Miguel de Cervantes, Don Quixote*

In Spain, the public playhouse (*corral*) presented a different type of theatre than its European counterparts—one very much influenced by its unique architectural design. In late sixteenth-century, existing houses that framed a large courtyard were adapted to form the first permanent *corrales*: *Corral de la Cruz* in 1579 and *Corral del Principe* in 1583. The addition of rooms, benches and entrances to the *corrales*, the unpredictable weather conditions, and the unstable economic and political climate contributed to the natural evolution of the architecture of the Spanish playhouse, creating a host of ‘happenings,’ events with no particular message or goal that eventually led to a complete experience for the spectator.² Allan Kaprow, in his

essay "Manifesto" (1966), writes "precisely because art can be confused with life, it forces attention upon the aim of its ambiguities, to "reveal" experience" (82). Spectators and actors alike benefited from a polysemic art form that played to the senses of the "humblest and most personal experiences" (McKendrick 74). Building upon studies from scholars of early modern Spain, I intend to take a pragmatic aesthetic approach to show how the *corral*'s intrinsic structure contributed to a holistic experience, the importance of the whole and the interdependence of its parts, that not only inspired playwrights and actors, but also played a role in the audience members' theatrical experience, enhancing their individual perceptions of the presentations.

The *Corral*: A Unique Theatrical Space

In the 1500's, Spain's urban development reached beyond its capital, Madrid, to cities such as Seville, Valencia, Toledo, Granada, Barcelona, Zaragoza and Valladolid, and the demand for plays, which offered the growing population a legitimate diversion, led to the construction of *corrales*. Jodi Campbell, *Monarchy, Political Culture, and Drama in Seventeenth-Century Madrid*, observes that *corrales* enjoyed large popularity by all classes regardless of hard economic times. She states that "popular and elite elements came together in the audience, themes, creation, and reception of the theatrical ex-

perience (40). The Renaissance gave birth to a cultural resurgence in this Spanish theater, with the architectural design of the playhouse resembling the natural environment and secular experiences of individuals, and making it “probably the most flexible and, in a sense, modern stage in Renaissance Europe” (Allen *Reconstruction* 46). Paris’s *Confrérie* and the *Théâtre du Marais* (1634) were built in a converted indoor tennis court, and the English playhouses were either custom-built or were in existing buildings, like churches or inns, with yards that were converted for plays. Unlike these playhouses, the *corral*’s design, framed by blocks of houses, was intimately connected to the owners of the houses.

Consequently, this ingenuous architecture of the courtyard—a mixture of private residences and public constructions of theatre and retail space—played a part attracting a diverse crowd to its performances. The stage in Madrid’s two permanent playhouses, measured about 28 feet wide by 23 feet deep, in addition to a five-foot apron that projected forward into the yard at one end. It had trapdoors in several areas of the stage, portable staircases, and doors or openings in curtains located at the rear of the stage, all of which facilitated multiple entrances and exits for the actors. The actors’ understage wardrobe measured 10 feet by 18 feet, making the stage 10 Castilian feet in height. After the rebuilding of the *Príncipe*’s façade structure in 1645, the height of

the stage was lifted to 13 feet, with more ‘understanding’ than in England’s Globe (Allen *Reconstruction* 33).

As opposed to its English and Italian counterparts, the Spanish *corral*’s ground floor or pit represented a mixture of spectators from high and low economic classes— young noblemen, and *mosqueteros* (similar to England’s groundlings). Directly in front of the stage in the yard were *taburetes*, where many of the playwrights and literary critics would sit. These stools or seats were opened to the weather until 1713 when a belvedere roof was put over the *corrales*.³ After 1719, the *taburetes* were replaced by three curving rows of seating that stretched out to the length of the stage. These single-board benches with a backrest divided into seats were called *lunetas* for its half-moon shape. The platform, which resembled the ‘orchestra’ of the French and Italian theatres, did not obstruct the view of the spectator standing in the pit or patio, or the view of those sitting on the *gradas* (stands attached to the lateral walls of the *corral*) (Shergold *History* 411-12; Allen *Reconstruction* 88). Above these seats, flushed with the walls, were *rejas*, grilled windows, and *apuestos*, boxes or self-contained rooms located inside people’s homes, which were elaborately decorated according to each owner’s taste. For example, inside six boxes owned by the Condesa de Grajal, “some twelve paintings and ‘some billiard cues’” were found (Allen *Recon-*

struction 66). At the west end of the *corral*, on the third floor, a separate section called the *tertulia* was reserved for clergy who frequented the *corrales*. The *cazuela* occupied the entire second floor below the *tertulia*. It was a partially grilled box or balcony facing the stage built exclusively for the women of the lower classes, who by law had to sit separate from the men. The manager of the *corral* optimized the space by doubling the seating. Juan de Zabaleta, a playwright, essayist, and chronicler for King Philip IV, observed that an attendant known as an *apretador* (pusher) could be seen packing as many female spectators as possible into the *cazuela* (McKendrick 194).

After the initial building of the entrances, the galleries, and the stage, change to the *corrales* occurred more slowly and, as Melveena McKendrick in *Theatre in Spain, 1490-1700* and John Orrell in "Spanish *Corrales* and English Theaters" observe, in 'piecemeal.' Later more boxes on the upper level floors and in the attic (called *desvanes*) were added for extra seating and storage space. Inside these boxes, located above and behind the stage, boys operated the *tramoyas*, modern theatre machinery. In 1608, in order for women to enter and "leave freely and the harm and vexation said women [sometimes] receive may be avoided" (Allen *Reconstruction* 28), a separate entrance with its own staircase was constructed for the *cazuela*, and

an *alguacil* (law officer) was stationed in front of the door for their protection.

Theatre became almost a way of life for the Spaniards, yielding a steady salary for the individual owners of the courtyards.⁴ Acting companies, such as that of playwright/actor Lope de Rueda, paid private individuals for the use of their patio to present plays on temporary stages erected for the particular productions. By the sixteenth century, the commercial theatre was “well established as part of the national life” (Shergold *History* 209), and as early as 1568, the custom of acting companies hiring from individuals was superseded by *Cofradías*, charitable organizations that cared for the poor, ill, orphaned, and old. Similar to Paris’s *Confrérie de la Passion* (Confraternity of the Passion), who in 1548 owned the only permanent theatre in Paris, the *Cofradías* received exclusive rights to the performances in Madrid’s *Corral de la Cruz* and *Corral del Príncipe* (Allen *Reconstruction* 4). Through this new arrangement, charitable brotherhoods, like the *Cofradía de la Pasión* and *Sangre de Jesucristo*, provided funds for their hospitals from the profits made at the *corrales*. The success of these ventures eventually led to full ownership of Madrid’s two permanent *corrales*.

From 1604 to 1615, officers designated by the *Cofradías* (*Comisarios de comedias*) rented benches and boxes and sublet the concessions called *alojería* or *alojero* where fruit, cups of water and

aloja (a mixture of honey, spices, and water) were sold. However, a financial crisis due to unfortunate events, like the closing of the theatre for a period of time due to the death of Philip II or due to outbreaks of plague, impeded on the profits the *Cofradías* used to maintain their hospitals.⁵ This led the municipal authorities, the *Ayuntamiento de Madrid*, to adopt the system of leasing the *corrales* to *arrendadores* (lessee-managers), in addition to donating yearly sums of money to help sustain the hospitals. The *arrendadores* became liable for the maintenance of the physical integrity of the theatre, paying “a lump sum to the hospitals in return for the right to administer and retain the profits” (Shergold *History* 503). According to Walter Cohen, in his article “The Artisan Theatres of Renaissance England and Spain,” the continued relationship with charity was what effectively led to the longevity of what N. D. Shergold refers to as “the character” of the *corrales*.

Except for the women who sat in the *cazuela* and for those who entered through hallways in individual homes that housed boxes, most spectators entered through the doors that led to the patio or to the refreshment concession area. Behind the *alojero* was a small balcony raised about three feet off the level of the yard. This is where the *alcalde* (mayor) would sit when the side of the stage where he usually sat with two or three of his guards behind him was occupied with scenery. Besides maintaining order in the *corrales*, the role of the *alcalde* was to

announce the start of the plays and to ensure that all who enter through the entrances located on the ground level below the *cazuela* paid at the door, where the entrance charges varied. John J. Allen writes that “general admission prices were cheap enough for a wide spectrum of society to be able to afford, roughly equivalent to the penny theatres of Shakespeare's London” (“Documenting” 999). However, according to McKendrick's findings, in 1600 the fee for the *mosqueteros* to stand in the middle of the pit was about 0.6 of a *real*, a significant amount compared to the laborer's day-wage at three *reales*, which may have led many spectators to sneak into the *corrales* without paying.⁶ The spectator had to pay an extra fee to sit on a bench or *gradas*. A flat fee of 12 *reales* for the *apostentos* was paid separately to the *arrendador* (Shergold *History* 387; McKendrick 193). Shergold points out that the price for leasing the boxes varied depending on the floor they were located in, “which must have been either larger, or which gave a better view of the stage” (387). Allen observes that “arrangements between the leasing management and the owners of boxes varied widely, depending upon the circumstances and the particular deal an owner was able to strike with the lessee” (*Reconstruction* 56). The boxes were leased out annually by the owners of the house, one of which was for the king; however, some owners of the homes would sublet the boxes when they were not in use. The owners either paid a

set fee to the *arrendador* or handed over a share of their profits. Some received viewing rights in exchange for access through their house to other boxes or were paid a fee for the use of the passageway. For example, a doña Juana González Carpio was paid an annual fee of 50 *ducados* for the women's right to enter through her house to the *cazuela* in the *Corral del Príncipe* (Varey *Teatros* 31). In addition, the *corrales*, which at a full capacity sat almost 2000 spectators each, enjoyed a certain amount of freedom from the stronghold of the Inquisition censors—who together with the reigning monarchs worked for autonomous control in Spain—thanks in large part to the contribution of most of its profits to the hospitals for the poor.

In 1615 the hospitals were “placed under the jurisdiction of a member of the Council of Castile, known as their ‘Protector’, and in view of the close connexion between them and the *corrales*, he became the ‘Protector’ of the latter” (Shergold *History* 386), providing the acting companies that performed in the *corrales* protection from censorship by the Inquisition. Shergold explains:

The theatres were nevertheless, from the sixteenth century onwards, the subject of a prolonged moral debate on the legitimacy or otherwise of having stage plays, and at times it was only the association of the hospitals with the *corrales* that save the latter from total closure. If

the *corrales* were shut, the hospitals were deprived of their funds. (522)

The protection by the Council of Castile permitted the *corrales* to remain open for most years during its lifetime; creating a unique theatre space for its *comedias*.

Towards a Pragmatic Aesthetic “Experience” in Spanish Theatre

A pragmatic aesthetic approach to characterizing the *corral* provides a foundation for understanding how the architecture of the Spanish playhouse not only influenced the production and reception of plays, but how the design of the architecture itself was shaped by personal, everyday encounters. In *Performing Live*, Richard Shusterman defines pragmatism as “a philosophy of embodied, situated experience. Rather than relying on a priori principles or seeking necessary truths, the pragmatist works from experience, trying to clarify its meaning so that its present quality and its consequences for future experience might be improved” (96). In other words, ideas work when derived from experience (both of the individual and the community), and their validity or value essentially depend on what they produce in experience. These values are as relevant for architectural structures and works of art as it is for structures of belief. Pragmatist aesthetic sees art and culture as emerging out of our basic

drives; “by its more consummate and zestful integration of all the elements of ordinary experience, ‘making a whole out of them in all their variety’ and giving the experience a still larger feeling of wholeness and order in the world” (*Pragmatist Aesthetics* 15). It provides a perspective for understanding how the *corrales* allowed for multiple encounters of ‘an experience’ in the lives of all participants in the Spanish playhouse throughout its history —sharing many of the same fundamental structural features as the comedia, “a genre that was dedicated to and supported by its audience” (Campbell 40).

The *corral*’s architectural design contributed to a holistic experience for the artists and audiences alike. According to Shusterman, in *Pragmatist Aesthetics: Living Beauty, Rethinking Art*, holistic experience is “the idea that no element or concept had an independent identity or essence but rather is entirely a function of its interrelations with all the other elements and concepts of the whole to which it belongs” (*Pragmatist Aesthetics* 5). Furthermore, Orrell observes:

The Corral del Príncipe developed piecemeal over the years to satisfy the demand for revenue and changing audience conditions [...] Clearly the Corral del Príncipe was not a fully worked-out design to begin with. It grew by stages, as if by an organic process. The side boxes cut through from the neighboring houses were the

result of commercial enterprise, not deliberate architectural thought.” (Orrell 28)

Hence, the nature of the physical design of the *corral*, built within existing blocks of buildings that limited future expansions, was “not a self-contained theatre. It was a curious and uneasy mixture of public and private seating, of theatre property and private property” (McKendrick 184). Orrell goes on to say that the *Corral de Príncipe* “was a succession of *accidents* influenced by the central theatrical impulse and ultimately giving that impulse full expression” (Orrell 37 [my emphasis]). These ‘succession of accidents’ are a host of ‘happenings’ or what the American philosopher John Dewey, in *Art as Experience*, would term as ‘an experience.’ Dewey, one of the leaders in the school of thought known as pragmatic aesthetics, writes “experience occurs continuously, because the interaction of live creature and enviroing conditions is involved in the very process of living” (36). *An* experience is when “a piece of work is finished in a way that is satisfactory” (37). In other words, when it is the realization of an action or process that has reached completion in the sense of fulfillment, like when you finish a meal or solve a problem. Homeowners, artists and patrons contributed to the enhancements or alterations of the public theatre, which included adding windows and boxes, or altering the size of the stage, molding the unique architecture of the playhouse with ‘an experience,’ consequently changing the

linguistic definition of the Spanish word *teatro* (theatre). *Teatro* changed from a reference to the playhouse as a whole to mostly a reference to the stage.⁷ The playhouse then became known as the *corral* “because it was in fact a courtyard” (Shergold 556); a theatre set in a patio surrounded by houses.

The architecture of the *corrales*, as well as the dramatist, director, and audience, played a major role in the creation of the *comedias*, a mixture of comedy and tragedy, which appealed so widely to people of all classes; giving birth to seventeenth-century Spanish *comedia nueva* of Félix Lope de Vega y Carpio (1562-1635), at the time considered experimental art. Lope’s *comedia nueva* fuses the natural elements of the *corrales* to form a new genre of theatric presentation, what Dewey might call a “collective individuality” that “leaves its indelible imprint upon the art that is produced” (344). This apparent collectivity can be found in the experience of *comedia nueva* as an integral part of the *corrales*. The prolific playwright Lope de Vega writes *Arte nuevo de hacer comedias en nuestro tiempo* (*New Art of Writing Plays in Our Time*) in 1608, a practical guide to writing plays that introduces a new artistic vision fitting for the times. This new *comedia*, “born in the *corrales*” as McKendrick observes, is a “new recipe for art [...] that] puts the pleasure of audiences above the concerns of the academics and therefore privileges nature rather than theory and

artifice” since for Lope “dramatic poetry is life not doctrine” (110). Its themes include “honour and ‘virtuous actions’, masculine disguise for heroines, suspense and surprise, versification suitable to the subject, and plots without superfluous elements which unfold in as little time as is feasible” (110).

McKendrick points out that Lope, nicknamed the “monster of nature,” combined everyday experiences to create “intricately crafted, multifaceted and often tonally complex and ambiguous works” (77). She continues, “In dedicating himself to a naturalistic theatre that ignored the rigid shaping of art, Lope embarked on a mixed drama which by definition resisted the tidy orderings of old labels” (79-80). In the *comedia*, Lope reduced the Aristotelian categories of literature from lyric, epic, tragedy, and comedy, to just three: lyric, epic, and drama (Campbell 1n1). In addition, kings and ordinary people appeared together in the *comedia*, breaking with the classical form, which also mimicked the *corral* where people of all social classes shared the same theatrical experience. Campbell explains:

This brought the figure of the king down from his Greek association with divinity and heroism, set above other men, to the position of an ordinary mortal, having to deal with the conflicts, passions, and obstacles of life on earth. Placing kings in *comedias* emphasized their human side. (*Monarchy* 1)

Consequently, contemporary playwrights, like Tirso de Molina and Calderón de la Barca, who wrote primarily for a stage without curtains, scenery, wings or lighting, aimed to please the audience aurally, probably more so than visually—evident in the stage directions. This ‘new’ genre allowed for art to express itself through a multitude of ‘actions’ and ‘reactions’ in an ever changing environment “seen by audiences drawn from all sections of society, all of whom it was their aim to please” (Shergold 541). In his aesthetic analysis of architecture, Dewey explains “the scene formed by the buildings may be looked at as colored and lighted volumes in relation to one another” (141) and its natural environment. The structure of the new *comedias* took into account the natural elements of the existing houses and court-yard, allowing scenes to be formed by an ‘artistic sense.’ The physical structure of the *corrales* changed as it became an extension of the existing private homes, with individuals affected by the environment; as they dealt with the changing of the seasons and the unpredictable weather conditions; and as they adapted to economic and political pressures. The changes above-mentioned provoked not only the lessees and owners of the *corrales* but also artists and the various audience members to contribute to the architecture, continuously modifying and transforming the physical performance space from their perspective.

Hence, if one “see[s] esthetically, as a painter might see” (Dewey 141), the continual changing and addition to the architectural space of the *corrales* created holistic experiences shared by audiences for over a century and a half.

The diversity of the audience played an important role in the structure of the playhouse with their demand for theatre —“nobles, prelates and the wealthy in the boxes, traders, shopkeepers and artisans on the benches and raked seating, manual workers, soldiers, servants, young bucks and those who lived by their wits in the *patio*” (McKendrick 193). Shergold points out that audiences of seventeenth-century Spain included those with “cultivated sensitivity” and those who sought “simpler pleasures.” He writes that “it is this combination of the highest and the lowest in the theatre audience of the period that accounts for the combination in the plays themselves of elements of extravagant popular appeal and of refined subtlety of language and ideas” (*History* 153). The cultured and uncultured people found ways to view the *comedias*; even to the extent of climbing through windows without grills onto the roof top. For example, in 1632, the manager for the *Corral de la Cruz* filed a complaint claiming that a young man damaged roof tiles after climbing through a window to watch a play, “*salio un moço a querer ver las comedias y llego asta el caballete del texado [...] y por ella se quiebran y echan a perder los dichos texados*” (Shergold *Los*

corrales 54). This complaint resulted in an order to which all windows that faced the courtyard had to have grills in order to prevent spectators from viewing the *comedias* without paying entrance fees. Others took a more practical and lucrative approach. Individual owners requested to add *rejas* in chambers in an effort to accommodate more viewers from their house, as in the case of a don Rodrigo de Herrera y Ribera who requested permission to break a bedroom wall for a window to the *Corral del Príncipe* (Shergold *Los corrales* 16). Similarly, attic space on the fourth floor of the buildings was converted to boxes for additional observation space, whose composite was also made up of various social classes who incorporated their own personal interpretation to the character of the *corral*.

As evident in the entries of Shergold and J.E. Varey's *Genealogía*, actors and playwrights started off as noblemen, peasants, servants, or artisans, attesting to a holistic sense of theatre the audience could relate to. In addition, McKendrick notes that "the *corral*'s neutral or unlocated stage meant that during each act nothing impeded the free and natural flow and speed of the action" (McKendrick 195). As a consequence, the actor did not merely imitate, but instead interpreted every movement with her own personal life and professional acting experience to create an expression of art, especially since there were few stage props or scenery to rely on. The "fairly natural acting style" (McKendrick

195) suggested that the actor captured the essence of her character and emotions (anger, fear, joy, etc.) without impulsions of recognition, but of understanding. Her artistic energies and impulsions engaged the viewers, who by the end of the play actually believed her to be the character she played and not the actor, even though their objective reality comprehended the difference. For this reason, actors, men and women alike, were “often identified in real life with the characters they played and treated accordingly” (195); so much so that some actors went as far as fusing art with life. For instance, Ángela (Rogel) Dido adopted her surname from the popular character Dido, the queen of Carthage, which she successfully portrayed in Guillén de Castro’s *Dido y Eneas* (Shergold *Histories* 532). And the actress Bárbara Coronel continued to play the part of a man outside of the *corral*, “siempre casi vestida de hombre, particularmente en los caminos y a caualllo” (Shergold and Varey *Genealogía* 422). As the receiver interprets the artist’s object, the experience is fulfilled, and hence propels the art forward with the very action of the discourse, rendering a continuous experience. Dewey explains “in the end, works of art are the only media of complete and unhindered communication between man and man that can occur in a world full of gulfs and walls that limit community of experience” (109). The inherent design of the *corral* allows for such a holistic aesthetic experience. Erika Fischer-Lichte and Jo

Riley, in *History of European Drama and Theatre*, substantiate:

Like cinema and television today, seventeenth-century *corrales* theatre was obliged to find new plays to serve the audience ever new productions. Such constant changes, both to the repertoire and to the sequence of single performances, fulfilled very different functions. First, the audience was entertained and diverted from an increasingly desolate reality. At the same time, the theatre provided a model of changeability and continual change, in the same way that fortune was believed to control all human relations. Finally, it confirmed the unchanging importance of certain values and ideals contained and realised in all the plays, despite their great differences. These values and ideals clearly defined an identity which all spectators recognized as binding and controlling in their lives, regardless of their social position and despite, or even precisely because of, the economic depression and political crisis in the Spanish empire. (85)

The experience is complete once the receiver engages her/his senses in relating to the product. It is with this in mind that the artist, engaging her/his own senses, “works to create an audience to which he [or she] does communicate” (Dewey 109). The playwrights and actors continued to create *comedias* that evolved with its audience, in conjunction with

the natural evolution of the *corral*, even through times of economic and social unrest.

Spanish artists dealt with an economic and social crisis, at times disastrous, which consequently contributed to a lack of maintenance and upkeep of the *corrales*. In addition to Spain's economic weakening due to the costly wars with Portugal and France, and the political unrest within its territories during the 1600's, the rise in unemployment for the actors and others in the theatre profession caused much dismay, forcing many to go hungry. Catherine Connor points out "in seventeenth-century Spain and in earlier societies, comedy and comedic elements are at least loosely based on conditions and conflicts occurring commonly in those societies" ("Marriage" 25). Prohibition of plays due to concern with actors' costumes (especially women dressing as men) ordered the closing of the *corrales* in 1644 and then in 1646, lasting until 1651. Furthermore, authorities suspended all kinds of entertainment in observation of the death of the royal couple, Isabel of Bourbon in 1644 and King Philip IV in 1665, in addition to the annual 40-day observation of Lent. Mandates also forced the suspension of all *comedias* due to the outbreak of plagues and other contagious diseases at various times (Shergold, *History*, 520 – 22; McKendrick 189). Substantiated in legal documents preserved in the *Archivo de la Villa de Madrid*, these events also affected the *corral*'s physical structure and property. The clos-

ing of the public playhouses caused them to go unattended, suffering severe neglect. The lack of maintenance practically left the theaters in ruin, evident in such declarations as the one filed by the *arrendador* Bernando de Villavelarde, which claimed that the *corrales* were “amenazando ruina” (Varey *Teatros* 30).

Besides the turbulent economic and political environment, inclement weather attributed to the decay of some of the property and structure to the *corral*, and early nightfall at times presented a challenge to the artists and spectators. Unlike its European counterparts, the *corral* did not have a permanent roof for most of its lifetime, causing much distress from rough weather to the benches in the courtyard. The stage, illuminated only by natural lighting, also became difficult to manage. Therefore, starting times were adjusted to fit the seasons—two o’clock during the autumn and winter months, and three or four o’clock during spring and summer months, closing the theatre during the roughest months of the year. Adapting the hours of performances to the natural environment allowed for proper viewing of the plays. Still, the *arrendadores* and acting companies accrued hefty fines for not adhering to the specified hours for performances, not to mention expenses for wear and tear due to awful weather conditions. Regardless, many defied the rules for start and end time. Records indicate that some performances lasted well into the late after-

noon or until after dark because actors insisted on waiting until the theatre filled up before beginning. One such record shows that in 1695 Andrea de Salazar was fined 50 ducats for starting just a quarter of an hour late, although it was later reduced to 10 ducats. This example of leniency by the court further demonstrated the popularity of the *corrales*, which served as an escape from economic and social pressures. For this reason, apart from the times of royal mourning, epidemics, or financial difficulties, everyone took part in the maintenance of the *corrales*: the spectators through the purchase of tickets or the leasing of *aposenos*; the *arrendador* through part of the profits; and even the actors contributed a portion of their pay to fund repairs to the stage, benches, etc. (Shergold *History* 387).

Madrid's *Corral de la Cruz* and *Corral del Príncipe* remained as its two public theatres until well into the eighteenth-century when they were superseded by proscenium-stage theatres. By the late 1600's, due to the court's control of the content, the *comedia* no longer reflected the interests of the audience, and the popularity of the *corrales* declined (Campbell 30). By the mid 1700's, both permanent theatre houses were demolished and replaced by theatres built *a la mode* of Italian theatrical architecture. The Italian opera, which tailored to the cultural elite, dominated the stage under the reign of the early Bourbon monarchs, until the succession of Charles III in 1759 that brought an end to

the opera. Nonetheless, before its demise, the public theatre in Spain enjoyed immense popularity, contributed primarily to the artists and the audience's (residents and spectators, literate and illiterate alike) shared pragmatic aesthetic experience of the *corrales*.

Just as "plays naturally express irony" (Albrecht 260), so did Spain's playhouse, where the *corral* itself was a play within a play, which changed identity over time. Orrell claims that, except for England's playhouse, Boar's Head,

The Spanish theaters of the same period appear to have evolved slowly, developing by degrees to their completeness at some point early in the seventeenth century. It would, I think, be unwise to claim that they imitated their London contemporaries in any fashion: no observer of the time seems to have suggested such a thing. (Orrell 37)

And even though the *corrales* resembled stages of Western Europe at the time, adapting elements from the Italian and English stage, the Spanish playhouse epitomized the Renaissance architecture response to man's need to exert control over his environment. McKendrick writes:

At a time when Spanish military hegemony was beginning to yield to outside pressures and social tensions and economic decline started to

gnaw at the vitals of Spain's self-confidence, the *corrales* responded with a national drama of epic achievement and individual self-assertion which allowed the Spaniard, when he gazed for a while into its mirror, to burnish his self-image and go away reassured. (74)

For example, the physical location of the *cazuela*, located directly opposite the stage, gave the women sitting in this box a full view of the actors. The *mosqueteros* in the pit also had a front view of the stage, giving them a better view to the *comedias* than most of those from the upper class. This allowed them freedom to express their likes and dislikes more directly with the actors, exerting a sense of control over the plays. Campbell remarks "[the *mosqueteros*'] loud and enthusiastic support guaranteed a play's success, and their disapproval meant that a torrent of insults, rotten fruit, and any other objects on hand would pelt the stage and the unfortunate actors" (40). The women in the *cazuelas* exercised control by also voicing their disapproval and by banging their keys against the railings. In contrast, the boxes for the royal and noble classes, located in the buildings framing the sides of the stage, had a limited view of the actors. The *apostentos* faced each other as opposed to the stage, making it difficult visually and aurally to follow the play. The design of the *corrales* reflected the seventeenth-century Spanish society that separated the classes as well as the men and women; however, it enabled the

working classes to voice their opinions. The voices of the plebeian and poor classes ultimately determined, not only the success of the *comedias*, but also the direction the playwrights took their plays.

Conclusions

Dewey claims that “esthetic values in architecture are peculiarly dependent upon absorption of meanings drawn from collective human life” (Dewey 242), an inherent quality found in the *corrales*. Everyone’s aesthetic experience was interconnected to the *corral*’s unique architecture design which brought esthetic meaning to their everyday encounters. The *corral*’s architectural design had a part in the illusion of the *comedias*, converting the homes and the yard it surrounded into a stage where players engaged in various roles: spectators were both actors and audience; families that owned the neighboring houses played multiple roles of resident/lessee/spectator; actors incorporated their real-life roles into character roles, convoluting the reality/unreality of the *comedias*; and playwrights became spectators who negotiated for smaller roles as they intermingle with the *mosqueteros* in the yard. The arbitrary manner in which some windows were created in the walls, an example of a ‘piecemeal’ change, accommodated the audience’s as well as the owner’s needs. Windows and boxes also gave way to free or unauthorized viewing by servants or

young people, who at times climbed through the windows to the roof top for a bird's eye view of the *comedias*. The structure of the *aposenito* blended in with the design of the home as it spontaneously served as a social gathering and theater balcony for its spectators. The unique smells and designs of the home were carried into the box, as in those owned by the Condesa de Grajal. The buildings that housed the boxes and the windows to the courtyard converted into a theatre space, business, and residential home, playing *a* part in the theatrical experience as opposed to functioning *apart* from it.

Moreover, the *corrales* did not need the three dimensional stage designs as seen in the Italian and French theaters, since their natural settings created a multi-dimensional stage where all the players—artists, spectators, and owners—had a part in the performance. McKendrick observes:

The theatre was shaped by practical imperatives. Even the availability of props could determine the formula's variations: it has been plausibly suggested that a spate of lion plays might be explained by the fact that during this time some company had a tame lion or a lion skin at its disposal. (75)

Old ideas, interconnected with new ideas, were applied for a practical aesthetic. McKendrick ascertains that “the Golden-Age theatre was the servant of many masters—*autores*, actors, *corrales*, moral-

ists, literary theorists, censors, municipal and central authorities and a socially and geographically heterogeneous public—all of whom had to be reckoned with” (200). One can then deduce that the *corral*’s unique architectural design helped give shape to a different theatre found only in Renaissance Spain, allowing for playwrights such as Lope de Vega to develop a new genre of theatre, the ‘*comedia nueva*.’ And as in the *comedias* where the audience was included in the ‘joke,’ in the *corral* the audience was included in the ‘imagining’ of the scenes through painted curtains and stage trapdoors. The natural physical space allowed all the players involved to envision their own theatre design, making them collaborators in the creation of art by mixing ‘immediate reality’ with artistic expression to make a perfect theatre.

NOTES

¹ Dr. Bárbara Mujica’s article “Golden Age / Early Modern Theater: Comedia Studies at the End of the Century.” *Hispania* 82.3 (1999): 397-407, was invaluable in my initial investigation of the architecture of the *corrales*. I would also like to recognize Professor Gvozden Kopani for his suggestions on earlier revisions of this paper.

² Allan Kaprow coined the term ‘happenings’ in the late 1950’s.

³ Before 1713, a canvas awning, operated by boys through a trap door in the *cazuela*, was used to cover the yard. (Allen *Reconstruction* 102; McKendrick 183)

⁴ Erika Fischer-Lichte and Jo Riley, *History of European Drama and Theatre*, write "If one takes into consideration the frequency of performances, the size of the theaters and the fact that all the seats were sold out, and the size of the population in Madrid (in 1594, 37,500 inhabitants; in 1630, 180,000 residents and 20,000 non-residents, such as foreigners, visitors, vagabonds and beggars), then one must assume that a high percentage of the population regularly went to the theatre" (84).

⁵ See Shergold *History* 521 for more information.

⁶ In her article, "The *Preceptistas* and Beyond: Spectators Making "Meanings" in the *Corral de Comedias*," Catherine Connor writes "although the best indications are that the public of the corrales was somewhat loosely representative of high and low economic and social-cultural groups of a city like Madrid (Allen "El papel"), Jane Albrecht has raised significant questions about how whether the most poor and the laboring classes could have paid the price of admission. In the context of my current study I must point out that Zabaleta wrote that many entered without paying" (427n5). Also, Shergold mentions that people of all classes tried to get in free, "such as soldiers, servants of the royal household or of ambassadors, noblemen, and public officials, and many other persons, who seem to have claimed privilege" (*History* 539). Others included are "thieves, rogues, and skilful pickpockets" (539).

⁷ Shergold, in the "Glossary" section of *History*, defines *teatro*: 'Theatre'; but more commonly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, 'stage'. Cf. the 'teatro dorado', or 'gilded stage' set up for plays in the 'salon dorado', or 'hall of gilt' in the old Palace" (563).

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Interviews

KAREN BERMAN: STILL DREAMING

BARBARA MUJICA
Georgetown University

In *Sueño*, José Rivera's postmodern adaptation of Calderón's classic, Segismundo riles against God and winds up marrying Rosaura. Using *La vida es sueño* as a starting point for his exploration of political, religious, and sexual repression, Rivera produces new play that constitutes an invective against those social forces that he sees as staid and stifling, in particular, the Church. While maintaining the basic structure of Calderón's original, Rivera obliterates its message, replacing it with an anthem to self-fulfillment. I have written elsewhere about Rivera's play and the ethics of marketing it as an early modern Spanish masterpiece, as it was for the Washington area Theater Festival in 2000.¹ To her credit, director Karen Berman avoided this deception by advertising her November, 2009 production at Georgia College of State University as a play by Rivera, adapted from Calderón. Furthermore, she invited commentators (including myself) to speak

after every performance and clarify the differences between the source and the adaptation.

For as long as I have known her (many years), Berman has wanted to direct *La vida es sueño*. I was therefore surprised and intrigued by her choice of Rivera's play as the centerpiece of the 2009-2010 theater season, themed "Dreaming Global Justice," at Georgia College, where she is Chair of Theatre and Director of Theatre Programs and Performance. I began my interview by asking her why she chose Rivera's adaptation instead of a translation that stuck closer to the original.

KB: I read many translations before choosing Rivera's adaptation. Because the play was part of an Hispanic Theatre and Culture Symposium, it was important for me to choose an appropriate playwright. I fell in love with Rivera's prologue to the play, which contains a scene of the newborn Segismundo being presented to his father Basilio just after childbirth has killed Basilio's wife. I believe this scene helps to reinforce Basilio's belief in the stars that predicted Segismundo to be an evil monster. This new scene reinforces for the audience Basilio's motivation for rejecting Segismundo. Rivera's adaptation wrenches the audience on a rollercoaster ride between horrific violence, romance, and hysterical comedy. Rivera's text is bold and irreverent and captures this generation's cynicism, especially in Clarin's language. Rivera's irreverence gave me license as a director to play conceptually

without having to give excessive deference to the great Calderón, whom I had put on a pedestal. This script freed me to experiment.

Berman's production begins with a dark shadow that crosses the stage, creating a sensation of doom. Throughout the play she incorporates shadows, unexpected lighting, film clips, commercials and modern music. The use of projections was particularly effective in producing atmosphere and suggesting offstage action. I asked Berman what she was trying to achieve with the use of multimedia effects.



KB: The multimedia effects allowed me to give a postmodern feel to the production, which makes it relevant for today's audiences. Some of the projections were Brechtian in the sense that they

broke the storyline and made the audience realize they were in the theatre. The themes of sleeping and dreaming and our current societal problem of sleeplessness were exposed through the commercials about sleep aids. Other projections allowed me to explore the themes of war and prisoners through a series of war clips that took us from ancient war to the war in Iraq. The father-son battle, both on a familial level and on the grand scale of two warring camps, resonates in the battle scenes on film. The repeated use of the large eye on the screen reflects Rivera's eye imagery in the text. The servant's eye is gouged out in Segismundo's first monstrous act as King. The eye also represents truth and wisdom and how we perceive the world. I wanted the continuing use of the large eye in the projections to echo and enhance this theme.

I asked Berman how the costuming and set, which was laden with machine-like apparatuses, fit in with her vision.

KB: The costumes derived from a genre called Steampunk, which is, in fact, a Jules Verne style Victorian era mixed with science fiction that incorporates elements of the industrial age, such as futuristic gears that look like wheels of fate. Basilio's reliance on astrology made me and my costume designer think of science fiction. However, we wanted to broaden the era beyond Victorian. The costumes borrowed from all eras. Like the battle clips that moved through the history of war,

the costumes were intended to give universality to the play. Basilio mistreats Segismundo as prisoner. The water boarding was an important element as a symbol of our current mistreatment of prisoners. I did hope this would bring the play up to date and help audiences to understand that this was not only a fable of the 1600s, but an issue of social justice that we face today. The commercials for sleep aids brought us into the present and made commentary on today's society, but also added humor to the script, which contains abrupt mood changes.



By removing Segismundo's marriage to Rosaura and nullifying the whole notion of sacrifice for the good of the state, Rivera gives his adaptation a different meaning from the one Calderón intended. As an early modern scholar, I found this alteration perturbing, but Berman found it liberating.

KB: I remember on my very first reading of the play very many years ago being so upset that Segismundo married the haughty and self-centered Estrella in the end instead of Rosaura. I was so unsettled by this turn of events that it made a lasting impression on me. I was so excited that the Rivera version answered my fantasy of having Segismundo marry Rosaura instead.

Upon reflection, I realize that Segismundo had made a sacrifice to marry Estrella and this was part of his contrition and moral growth. Likewise, his marrying Rosaura in the Rivera version, which seemed so romantic at first glance, was equally unsatisfying. While I had hoped this marriage would put the world aright at the end, it only seemed to satisfy the characters' personal desires and did not create any larger world redemption. However, the idea in the original of marrying Rosaura to Astolfo made and continues to make me uncomfortable. The Rivera version hints more at a rape than a simple love-her-and-leave-her affair, making it impossible for me to approve of a match between Rosaura and Astolfo.

The original upsets me for other reasons as well. The depiction of a woman chasing after a man who has been unfaithful conveys a lesson I wouldn't want to teach young women. The endings of both the original Calderón and the Rivera version continue to leave me with questions. I can't wait to direct the play again so that I can further explore this challenge.

Berman always exudes enthusiasm when speaking of her directing projects. I asked her what had been the most satisfying aspect of this experience and what had been the most challenging.

KB: Wow, I finally got to direct *La vida es sueño*, my own lifelong dream! I had always connected this play to Plato's Cave, the parable about prisoners in a cave who believe shadows to be real but who finally see the light and learn about the world. To me, it is a metaphor for lifelong learning and discovery. The production process itself was an example of this same metaphor of discovery. Exploring the characterizations with the actors was very fulfilling. The exploration with Nick Thompson as Basilio and Bren Thomas as Segismundo of the many facets of this father-son relationship was especially rewarding. Working with a wonderfully creative design team of artists from Washington D.C. to Alabama, to Atlanta to create a magical visual production was a delight. But the long-distance collaboration posed challenges. At times, creative ideas from one designer flowed so quickly that ad-

ditions were made to the production before other designers could address their impact. This created a few last-minute surprises involving healthy debate. Our communication via internet was indispensable but not foolproof. Set designer Jon Nooner, Projection Designer Natsu Onoda Power, Fight Choreographer Kelly Martin, student Costume Designer Matt Riley, and student Lighting Designer Nic Marrone were fabulous collaborators and brought a common vision to life.

Berman emphasized the sexual in this production, incorporating a lot of suggestive movements. For example, Clarín was flamboyantly and even aggressively gay. I wondered how Georgia audiences reacted to this and why did you make this directorial decision.



KB: Rivera's version of this *comedia* is particularly bawdy and the actor Steve Holbert as Clarín and I threw ourselves into the style. The Spanish *comedia*

was meant to be performed in a physically stylized manner and we honored this tradition. Because Clarín is on stage throughout the play as a commentator on the action, he must mime his reactions even when he has no lines. Surprisingly, audiences in Georgia seemed to love Clarín and his flamboyant mannerisms.

I asked Berman if she would ever direct Calderón's original play.

KB: I would love to continue to direct this play and tackle the original at some time in the future. There are infinite ways to explore this fascinating play about reality and illusion, and they continue to haunt me. I would love to do the play in its original era costuming and also find out more about my reaction to the ending of the original play. The play resonates with me and my own father-daughter relationship. The father-son relationship and the theme of redemption are very powerful. There are so many ideas in the play to continue to analyze and develop because the it is so rich in themes, philosophy, and storyline. One could make a career of directing *La vida es sueño*.

FROM CASTELVINES Y MONTESES TO CAPULETS AND MONTAGUES: DAKIN MATTHEWS TRANSLATES LOPE

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As Terry Morgan has observed,¹ “the thing one quickly realizes when one sets out to do a profile on Dakin Matthews is that he is a man of many talents.” In truth, they are too numerous and varied to list here in their entirety: artistic director,² director,³ actor,⁴ dramaturge,⁵ professor and scholar,⁶ playwright and adaptor,⁷ and translator of plays from Sophocles and Plautus to Goldoni and Musset.⁸ To *Comedia* scholars, he is known for his rhyming verse translations, which include Moreto’s *El desdén con el desdén* (*Spite for Spite*), Tirso’s *El burlador de Sevilla* (*Don Juan, the Trickster of Seville*), and three by Alarcón: *La verdad sospechosa* (*The Truth Can’t Be Trusted*), *La*

prueba de las promseas (*The Proof of the Promise*), and *Las paredes oyen* (*The Walls Have Ears*).⁹ Most recently, while touring the world with the Bridge Project,¹⁰ Dakin finished a rhyming translation of Lope's *Castelvines y Monteses* (*The Capulets and the Montagues*) that, like all of his translations of Spanish Golden Age plays, attempts to capture the polymetry of the original.¹¹ We conducted the following internet exchange while the Bridge Project was in London during the spring and early summer of 2009.

SPG. Why *Castelvines y Monteses*? What drew you to this play?

DM. About seven years ago I was slightly involved in a Romeo and Juliet workshop with students from San Diego and Tijuana schools on both sides of the California/Mexico border, sponsored partially by the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego, where I was working as a Shakespearean dramaturge. It was then that I thought about the Lope play, and mentioned it to one of the directors of the workshop. He did not know about the play and urged me to look further into it. So I did about sixty or so lines of a translation, and then laid it aside—always meaning to get back to it. I thought it would make a good project precisely because it would be of interest to Shakespeare Festivals that were trying to expand their repertoire but still needed pieces that the audience might be attracted to and that might be performed on a Shakespearean stage.

SPG. What is it about this play that will work for a contemporary English-speaking audience? Obviously, they know the Shakespeare version and are familiar with the characters' names, but the differences are great. Would their expectations (seeing a Spanish version of *Romeo and Juliet*) help? Or would they get hung up on the differences?

DM. I think for audiences, the mix of familiarity and strangeness would be enchanting. They would sort of know the story, but then be surprised when it took a weird turn. To facilitate that, I tried to keep as many of the Shakespearean names as possible, both for actual characters and for characters only mentioned (like Friar Lawrence); and I did try to find spots where the Spanish could quite faithfully be translated into a recognizably Shakespearean line. I didn't want to go too far, however, so that "Marín" remains "Marín," and does not become "Peter" or something like that. And I resisted the temptation of turning "Octavio" into "Mercutio"—though if some director wanted to do that (to emphasize the crazy difference between the two characters), the two names do have the same rhythmic quality.

The challenge of a playable translation is always, for me, the first challenge, especially since I am committed to rhyming verse translations that respect and reflect the polymetry of the original. The greater challenge for me is what I might call the

“polytonality” of the Lope play. While there is nothing like the romanticism or the deep tragedy of the Shakespeare in the Lope version, there are occasions of poetic beauty that do have to be honored. There is also the challenge of keeping the jokes of the *gracioso* funny and contemporary, without making them too anachronistically modern. But more challenging than that was Lope’s tendency to modulate the tonality of a number of scenes, often moving from seriousness to near farce even without altering the verse form. Capturing the exact comic tone and movement of those kinds of scenes was particularly difficult.



To give a few examples, there are scenes which in the Shakespeare are particularly romantic or serious or scary or tragic, while the parallel

scenes in the Lope turn into anything from parody to irony to broad comedy. For instance, the delivery to Romeo of the news of Juliet's burial is turned into a comic *lazzo* about someone delivering an important (and time-sensitive) message so slowly that it nearly drives the receiver (and the audience) mad with frustration. This is particularly true in the Lope, because the audience has been kept in the dark about the actual nature of the potion, and to all appearances, Juliet really has died of poisoning. Another example is the double mourning scene between Paris and the Duke, which contains some wonderful poetry in *octavas*, into which Capulet enters, still speaking highly poetical *octavas*, but whose message finally degenerates into the comic news that he intends to wed his own niece—news which is received by the Duke and Paris with a mix of astonishment and irony.

SPG. How do you start a translation? Do you begin at the beginning and work through to the end, or do you work on key scenes and then fill in the gaps? Do you do a thorough study first? Do you rely on scholarship or do you go with your own instincts or both? Do you consult other translations as you go?

DM. Sometimes I do start right at the beginning, so in some cases I don't know exactly how the play is going to end until I get there. Sometimes, however, I try to do a quick read of the play first—in Spanish sometimes, in English if there are extant

translations. I rarely do a thorough study until I am well into it or even finished. I do consult other translations when I sometimes am stuck on an idiom. But my theatrical instinct has a lot to do with it. In fact, a lot of translations that I do consult are fairly oblivious about how a scene might play, and even fewer attempt anything like the tone and verse shifts that mark the comedia. I do tend to read brief introductions to the text, in Spanish and in English, before I undertake a lot of work—just to gauge if the text is worth the trouble. I get particularly scholarly when it comes time to write an introduction, which I sometimes do if the text is going to have an academic slant and publication. And I am most grateful when good scholars can give me clues about tone and diction level, as those are the hardest for a non-expert in the language like me to catch.

SPG. When did you begin work on *C&M*? What's the status of this translation? What plans are there for productions?

DM. I came back to it, as I say, after a seven year hiatus; I decided to pack the materials in my baggage before we left on the world tour, partially as an incentive to get me back working on it. I've finished my first and second draft of the translation. I always try to translate the play in its entirety, honoring every line; and then I try to have a reading of the translation—again without cutting any lines—to see how it plays in its full form.

I've asked members of the Bridge Company in London to help me with the reading of *C&M*. I do it for a couple of reasons: to get a sense of the time and rhythms; to see if the various scenes "play," but also to see if actors on first experience with a Golden Age play understand it and respond to it. It also helps me proofread, frankly, and make changes to fit the mouths of actors; if they suggest they are having difficulty speaking something or making sense of it, I tend to listen. British or American—little difference, except perhaps in comic slang and phrasing. From that reading, I will get some further information about the rhythms and playability of the language, and then perhaps do a little tinkering here and there, especially with the comic lines.

I try to write for the average American classical audience. There will be no audience at the reading, so I'll have to depend on my fellow actors' reactions. Massive rewrites and cuttings are difficult because a **rhyming** verse play doesn't offer easy opportunities for either. I don't have any firm production plans right now, though I am considering a workshop production of the translation sometime in the next year, either with my own company (Andak) or with Antaeus (which has done two of my translations in the past). I'm also going to send a copy to a few artistic directors I know to see if they have any interest in work shopping or performing it.

[The following is a report of the reading undertaken by members of the Bridge Project on June 26, 2009.]

DM. The reading went well. The play moves quickly, under two hours really. I do have to figure the best place to take an intermission. If I try to play it in two acts instead of three, no place is ideal. The speed is partially because of the shorter lines (so that 3,000 Lope verses run in 80% of the time it takes for 3,000 Shakespeare verses) and partially because of Lope's avoidance of too much introspective or overly dense poetry. Lope's a great plotter. All the same, there are some digressions and diversions that add something to the fun but not much to the story, which in performance I might trim: Lidio, for example, and the Rutilio/Fernando nonsense. There are half a dozen or so terrific scenes, especially for those who know the Shakespeare and will find Lope's treatment a major surprise: the Juliet/Octavio/Romeo scene; the double wooing in the garden; the fight over seat cushions; Juliet's vial scene; Benvolio's bringing of the news; the farce in the dark tomb; Juliet haunting her father—all these are, I think, theatrically striking. The [Bridge Project] actors seemed to enjoy it; some commented that it played much better than it read on the page, but some of that I attribute to their reading skills and some to the strange verse form I use which they have never experienced before. The striking thing, which I think I've mentioned be-

fore, is that some of the very scenes which for Shakespeare were the height of romanticism or of tragedy seemed to be occasions of humor and irony for Lope: the farce in the tomb, for one; the double wooing for another; the delivery of the news to Romeo in exile, for a third; Juliet's rather frisky fooling of Octavio, for a fourth. They're not just fascinating theatre scenes in their own right, but for those who know their Shakespeare, they verge on the mind bending—as if there were an alternate R&J universe where the story goes differently, and ends happily. You know, it's like reading Euripides's oddly comic take on *Helen*, after getting the more serious myth from other sources and plays.

SPG. You mentioned that you've seen translations by Gwynne Edwards and Cynthia Rodriguez-Badendyck, and that Edward's text cuts about 300 lines from each act. If many shows are limited to 1½ to 2 hours, cuts might need to be made, even from a translation that does not itself leave out any lines. If you were dramaturging this play, what would you advise the director to do?

DM. I find that *comedias*, even uncut, play well within the 2:30-2:40 ideal length of a classical production. So I try, when I can, especially for a first production, to give the translation an uncut presentation. *The Truth Can't Be Trusted* and *The Trickster of Seville* were produced virtually uncut and played swiftly enough, I think. *Spite for Spite*, because of the amount of music and the length of

some of the speeches, was slightly cut—though not nearly as much as some Spanish versions I know of. *The Proof of the Promise* was also slightly cut in performance, but that was more for concept than for time—to create a stronger feel of the “Twilight Zone” supernatural. Again, especially since I use rhyming verse and since so much of the Spanish text is stanzaic (which I compound, admittedly, by translating even the *romance* stanzaically), cutting is very difficult. My best advice is: don’t cut something because you don’t understand it; understand it first, what it means and what it’s doing there, and then give it a chance to work. This is especially true, I think, of Lope, who was much more of a theatrical craftsman than most of the other Golden Age writers, and really wrote eminently playable scripts, without the unnecessary density and occasional digressions into morality or poetry or imagery or rhetoric that make other writers’ plays more challenging for a modern audience.

SPG. In *Trickster*, the Lisbon monologue is a challenge for an actor (due to its length and expository nature) and is often cut, but in the Chamizal performance, it was given in its entirety, to the obvious delight of the audience. Are there any similar challenges for actors in your *C&M* translation? **DM.** I don’t think there were similar challenges; this piece doesn’t quite have the verse arias of say *La verdad*, or *El desdén*, or *El burlador*. But what it does have to challenge it is that Shakespear-

ean brilliance and romanticism in the audience's memory that it will always be competing with. And, since *R&J* is so well loved, it's hard to know what an audience will make of, say, the size and parodic nature of the *gracioso*'s role, and the frequent puncturing of both the romanticism and the tragedy that they have experienced of the Shakespeare.

SPG. You've translated Ruiz de Alarcón and Moreto. How does Lope compare (from the point of view of a translator)?

DM. I love Lope's sense of the playability of his scripts, their fast pacing, and dramaturgical surprises. I think they're fascinatingly plotted, without a lot of digressions and with a great deal of irony and humor. They do not challenge an audience to make sense of dense and complex verse, the way some Shakespeares do. Nor is this play so intensely bound with Spanish life and obsessions—incredibly complex intrigues and points of honor—that sometimes lose modern audiences. Of course, he's not the deepest writer, either psychologically or theologically, but he is always entertaining. And he knows what works on stage. And he can be unpredictable, even in the somewhat rigid *comedia* form which he himself invented.

SPG. At least one critic has concluded that Lope's version is dramatically superior, lacking the weaknesses often cited in the Shakespeare.¹² Do you agree? Please elaborate.

DM. I have no problem with Lope turning a tragedy into a happy ending, a tragicomedy—after all that’s what Shakespeare did with *The Winter’s Tale*. The parallels are in fact quite striking. But I feel that Lope was more interested in writing what we call a barn-burner, an audience pleaser, than in a complex play about family and redemption. I know well there are dramaturgical problems with Shakespeare’s play, but please, it’s miles better than the Lope—it’s a masterpiece of its kind. The Lope is a terrific and fun tale with a rather too swift and flimsy ending; burdening it with too much weight will only sink it.

SPG. What would you like to translate next?

DM. No thoughts on that, except that Calderón still intimidates me.

SPG. Why? Please elaborate.

DM. From my limited experience both with translating small excerpts and from playing in a Calderon workshop of *Life is a Dream*, I find the text simply too dense for my poetic skills, and I’m afraid for modern audiences without huge cuts, condensations, and revisions. To put it another way, in that workshop experience, in which I was simply an actor and not a translator, I could sense what was going wrong, but I had no idea how to put it right. I’ve never seen a production that didn’t seriously compromise the text to make it more palatable for modern audiences, that wasn’t in fact more the work of the translator/adaptor or director than the

author. And I'm a bit of a purist—I think we should try to present the play essentially as written, before we start mucking about with it. At least that's my default position.

SPG. What keeps you coming back to the *Comedia*? What appeal does it hold for you?

DM. The plays I have translated so far I really enjoy just as plays. I am particularly fond of unearthing classical plays that have disappeared from the English repertoire, or need to be put into it, because they offer great opportunities for actors and unprecedented experiences for audiences. I'm a great believer in theatrical tradition and in theatrical cross-culturalism. And in my business (acting), when there is so much down time—even when you're employed—translating is a terrific way to keep the mind active, without the added burden of being exhaustingly creative as an author. It's like doing particularly challenging crossword puzzles, except at the end of the process you don't toss them in the rubbish bin.

SPG. Right. The idea is to get them produced. The English-speaking theatre world has traditionally viewed Spanish classical drama as dark, brooding, and violent, heavily dependent on honor (possibly because *Fuenteovejuna* and *La vida es sueño* are the most often performed of the lot). Yet many, if not most, of the plays were comedies with happy endings. As a translator, you've done a lot of lighter plays (*The Liar* and *Spite for Spite* in par-

ticular). Are you more drawn to translating comedy than tragedy? Why?

DM. Exactly for that reason. The lighter plays are easier to stage as written, and have, I think, a better chance of audience acceptance, not by scholars perhaps who always seem to like the serious stuff, but by theatergoers. Also, I think I have better verse skills than poetry skills and a better sense of comic dramaturgy than tragic dramaturgy.

SPG. As I understand, in the fall of 2009 you're doing an original musical version of Goldoni's *La locandiera*, relocated in post-colonial America and renamed *Liberty Inn*. Would you consider doing anything like this with a *comedia*? If you were to do a musical, which Golden Age plays might be good candidates?

DM. *Spite for Spite* would make a wonderful musical; it practically is one already—so might *La verdad sospecha*.

SPG. What about locating a *comedia* in America?

DM. Frankly, I would rarely **translate** it that way; as I say, I'm a bit of a purist, and think each script should be given a chance to work on its own terms without heavy adaptation. That said, the fact is, **in production**, if the script were amenable, I would not hesitate to locate the play in America, even in contemporary America, North as well as South. I have not yet produced *The Walls Have*

Ears, for example, and that is frankly one I have always thought would work well in modern dress.

SPG. You spent half of 2009 on the road with the Bridge Project. What were the high points of your tour?

DM. Madrid and London so far have been the high points—both for audience response and because we played in The Old Vic in London and the Teatro Español in Madrid, revered jewel-box like theatres, each with a long classical history. Another highlight for me was a terrific small cast (7?) production of *Life Is a Dream* in New Zealand by the Silo Theatre, a young company in the theatre connected to ours in downtown Auckland. It was a translation by Beatrix Christian¹³ that premiered in Australia about five or six years ago, and while it was seriously condensed, the young performers played with a great intensity and commitment, and great physical theatricality. I felt they captured the essence without camping it up or dumbing it down.

SPG. What were some highlights of your run in Madrid? How did the Spanish audiences respond to your productions? What theater did you see in Madrid?

DM. Spanish audiences were wonderful and lively. We apparently had a first class supertitlist, but the *madrileños* do like their nightlife and their entertainment, and many of them, I suspect, had enough English to follow the plays. I saw a perfectly wonderful production in Spanish of *Measure*

for *Measure* by a small cast (9?) in the Teatro Abadía. Modern dress, very passionate, very funny. Angelo, a bit of an Opus Dei fanatic, not particularly funny, but the identifiable Spanish type made him extremely recognizable and in an odd way sympathetic.

SPG. Evidently, the Spanish have an appreciation for Shakespeare and a history of producing his plays in translation. Why do you think there are not more productions of Spanish Golden Age theatre in English?

DM. My first obvious thought is the dearth of stage-worthy translations and the difficulty of writing dramatic verse. Face it, after the Shakespearean Age, very little great playwriting was done in verse, and audiences lost the taste for it. And hearing *comedias* translated into prose would be like studying the Great Masters of painting entirely from black and white reproductions. My second is the absence of a theatrical tradition of producing Spanish plays in America—with the possible exception of Lorca. My third is the ignorance (vincible or otherwise) of the cultural wealth of both Spanish and Spanish-American literature in general and drama in particular—though that is getting better. My fourth is the sometimes cultural strangeness of these plays—they do tend to be somewhat insular in their preoccupations, and stereotypical (which may be particularly difficult to modern actors and directors to cope with), even shallow, in their characteri-

zations. The one thing that Shakespeare brought to most western theatre was a deep and immense exploration of character, for which his plays are valued and which influenced all serious subsequent theatre. But the Spanish Golden Age theatre seems, to the modern sensitivity, largely to have missed that development. Granted, there are reams of classical plays for which character development is not a priority (Sheridan, Molière, Feydeau, Wilde, Shaw at times), but today's audiences, when they want shallow characters and complex plots, will watch TV and movies, and when they want to experience something like the musicality and tonality of stage poetry, will simply go to musical comedies. The *comedia* tends to fall between two.

NOTES

¹ Terry Morgan. "Dakin Matthews: The Accidental Renaissance Man." Back Stage West. March 17 2005.
<http://www.allbusiness.com/services/amusement-recreation-services/4396494-1.html>

² Matthews is artistic director of Andak Stage Company, former Artistic Director of California Actors Theatre, the Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, and founding artistic director of the Antaeus Company.

³ He has directed at ACT (American Conservatory Theatre), Trinity Rep, Denver Center Theatre, San Jose Rep, the Old Globe, California Actors Theatre, Berkeley Shakespeare Festival, among many others.

⁴ A founding member of John Houseman's Acting Company and Sam Mendes's Bridge Project, Matthews has formed part of such companies as ACT in San Francisco, the Old Globe in San Diego, the Center Theatre Group in Los Angeles, South Coast Repertory Theater, and numerous summer festivals. A Shakespeare specialist, he has recently played Warwick and Glendower in his own adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* at Lincoln Center Theatre, performances which earned him a Bayfield Award for acting; the production garnered multiple Tony Awards. Among the many stage roles Dakin has played are Capulet in Sir Peter Hall's *Romeo and Juliet* at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles, Dick Cheney in *Stuff Happens* at the Mark Taper Forum, Alfred Hitchcock in *Hitchcock Blonde* at South Coast Rep, and Cardinal John in his own award-winning play *The Prince of L.A.* at the Andak Stage Company in Los Angeles and the Old Globe in San Diego. In 2008, Matthews played Cardinal Wolsey in *A Man for All Seasons* at the American Airlines Theater in New York City, and in 2009, he travelled with the Bridge Project playing Antigonus in *The Winter's Tale* and Simeonov-Pishchik in *The Cherry Orchard*. Upcoming appearances include the title role in Antaeus's Classics Fest 2010 production of *King Lear*. He is a member of both the Motion Picture and Television Academies, and has appeared in over twenty films and two hundred television shows, including recurring roles in *Desperate Housewives*, *The King of Queens*, *Gilmore Girls*, *The Practice*, *L.A. Law*, and *Huff*.

⁵ Dakin Matthews has been dramaturge to the Old Globe Theatre in San Diego and has dramaturged Shakespeare for Jack O'Brien, John Rando, Darko Tresnjak, and Daniel Sullivan, including the Denzel Washington *Julius Caesar* on Broadway.

⁶ Matthews is Emeritus Professor of English from Cal State, East Bay, where he taught English literature as well as linguis-

tics and modern dramatic theory. He also taught at ACT and Juilliard. His translations of Spanish *comedias* have been published by Smith & Kraus, University Press of the South, and by his own Andak Theatrical Services. His verse-speaking handbook *Shakespeare Spoken Here* (Los Angeles: Andak, 2008. 5th edition) is widely used in universities and training programs. He has given master classes in Shakespeare across the country and in Singapore, New Zealand, and at the Old Vic in London. He co-wrote the introduction with filmmaker Michael Almereyda to the recently published *Shakespeare and the Middle Ages*, edited by Martha W. Driver and Sid Ray ("The Skeleton in the Mirror." Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2009. 1-6), and a chapter in *The Comedia in English* (see note 11 below). As a graduate student he published (as Richard Matthews) "Edmund's Redemption in King Lear" in *Shakespeare Quarterly* 23 (1975) 25-29.

⁷ Matthews's play *Uncommon Players* was commissioned and produced at the Old Globe. His comedy *The Great Fugue* was premiered in ACT's Plays in Progress program. Two more plays, *The Savannah Option* and *A Magic Christmas*, have been produced by Andak Stage Company, and *The Prince of L.A.* was produced by Andak and played at the Old Globe as well. His adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry IV* into one play for Broadway (starring Kevin Kline and Ethan Hawke) won the Tony Award for Best Revival, and Dakin received a Drama Desk Award for adaptation and the Bayfield Award for acting.

⁸ His other translations are mostly theatre-commissioned and exist in unpublished manuscripts or in self-published play-scripts from Andak Theatrical Services.

⁹ All but the last have had professional productions in Los Angeles and El Paso.

¹⁰ The Bridge Project began in 2007 as a three-year joint venture: Sam Mendes and Caro Newling of Neal Street Productions joined forces with Joseph V. Melillo of New York's Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) and Kevin Spacey of London's Old Vic. Each year a company drawn from leading British and American actors performs a double bill of classic works at BAM and at The Old Vic, with other international visits. According to a press statement, the project—essentially an exchange of ideas, talent and creativity between London and New York—seeks to “produce large-scale, classical theater for international audiences.” (“Sam Mendes, Old Vic and BAM Team Up for The Bridge Project” *Broadway.com* 4/3/2007).

¹¹ Dakin explains his theory and practice of rhyming translations in his article “Translating Comedias into English Verse for Modern Audiences” in *Comedia in English: Translation and Performance*. Eds. Susan Paun de Garcia and Donald R. Larson. London: Tamesis, 2008. 37-53.

¹² Cynthia Rodriguez-Badendyck’s “The Neglected Alternative: Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet* and Lope de Vega’s *Castelvines y Monteses*” in Peter and Louise Fothergill-Payne’s *Parallel Lives*. Lewisburg : Bucknell UP; London : Associated UP, 1991. 91-107.

¹³ In 2008, it was produced successfully by the VCA Drama Company. For a review of the Australian version, see <http://theatrenotes.blogspot.com/2008/09/review-life-is-dream.html>.

ENTREVISTA A SANDRA SAMPAYO, ELVIRA EN *EL MEJOR ALCALDE, EL REY*

GLADYS ROBALINO
Messiah College

Sandra Sampayo es actriz, productora, y presentadora. Desde hace más de diez años ha estado involucrada en la industria del entretenimiento. Por mucho tiempo, trabajó con MTV Latinoamérica como Gerente de Relaciones Artísticas y Programación, y a la vez como productora. Sandra ha entrevistado y trabajado con artistas internacionales como Shakira, Juanes, Alejandro Sanz, The Rolling Stones, y muchos más. También ha dedicado su tiempo a la actuación que ha sido una de sus pasiones más grandes en la vida. Sandra se mudó a Los Ángeles, donde participó en varios proyectos de cine independiente y teatro local, en 2005. Desde septiembre de 2008 ha vivido en Washington, D.C., donde hizo su primera obra clásica, *El mejor alcalde, el rey*, escrita por Lope de Vega. La obra fue

adaptada y dirigida por Macarena Baeza y se presentó en el GALA Hispanic Theatre de Washington, D.C. entre el 29 de enero al 22 de febrero de 2009. Esta obra del teatro clásico español es la historia de una pareja de jóvenes campesinos enamorados que piensan casarse y, por consejo del padre de la novia, deciden pedir permiso a don Tello, amo de la comarca. Al conocer a la novia, éste se siente atraído por su belleza y, abusando de su poder, impide la ceremonia, secuestra a la joven, y la viola. Tanto el padre como el novio lucharán por recuperar su honor en este drama de amor e injusticia cuyo final está marcado por la figura del Rey, quien entra a restablecer el orden.

Sandra, quien participó en el papel principal haciendo de Elvira en esta obra, tuvo la amabilidad de concedernos una entrevista exclusiva el pasado cuatro de julio, fecha en la que toda su familia se reúne para celebrar la independencia de EEUU muy a la colombiana.

GR: Sandra, ¿nos puedes contar un poco de cuál es tu experiencia en actuación?

SS: Bueno, siempre tuve mucho interés en la actuación. Cuando estuve en bachillerato, hice una obra aquí en EE.UU., y después tomé otro camino por un par de años, pero otra vez regresé a la actuación. En Los Ángeles, también hice un poco de teatro. Como dije, siempre he estado interesada en el teatro, pero terminé haciendo un poco más de cine

independiente y producción primero. Ahora que estoy en Washington, estoy retomando el teatro. Lo primero que hice fue la obra de *El mejor alcalde, el rey* en el GALA Hispanic Theatre en Columbia Heights.

GR: ¿Cómo se escogió esta obra?

SS: Bueno, la obra la escogieron los directores del teatro, quienes además están en el grupo ejecutivo: Hugo Medrano, Director de Producción Artística del Teatro GALA, Abel López, Director Asociado de Producción, y Rebecca Medrano, Directora Administrativa. Sé que es algo que ellos querían hacer desde hace mucho tiempo. Surgió la idea de hacer *El mejor alcalde, el rey* porque querían traer algo nuevo, algo diferente al teatro. Creo que por mucho tiempo habían tenido los mismos directores que han usado en el pasado y, por eso, decidieron traer a Macarena que ha trabajado mucho con teatro clásico. Ella trabaja en la Universidad Católica de Chile, traerla fue como traer sangre nueva a GALA.

GR: Tú nos cuentas que fue tu primera experiencia en el teatro clásico, sin embargo, obtuviste el papel principal y tu actuación fue realmente excelente.

SS: Bueno, te digo honestamente que cuando estaba recién llegada a Washington, D.C. conocí a la gente del teatro y unas semanas después me mandaron un mensaje diciendo que me invitaban

para hacer una audición. Originalmente, hice una audición para una parte muy pequeña, que era la parte de Juana, pero después recibí otro mensaje en el que me decían que me querían probar para la parte de Elvira.

GR: ¿Qué elementos crees que influyeron para que te escogieran para el personaje principal?

SS: A pesar de que me veo joven, soy realmente mayor de lo que me veo, entonces, creo que es algo que me favoreció, puesto que tengo experiencia de vida. He pasado por varias cosas cuyas emociones puedo trasladar en la actuación. Creo que pude mostrar esto en la audición a pesar de que al principio tuve mucho miedo por el lenguaje en verso por ser la primera vez que trabajaba con él. Yo había hecho obras de Shakespeare, pero es una experiencia muy diferente.

GR: ¿Puedes contarnos algo sobre la producción de la obra?

SS: Bueno, la producción en sí fue un reto importante para nosotros, puesto que trabajábamos con una obra de Lope de Vega. Además algunos de nosotros éramos nuevos en el Teatro GALA. José Ignacio García (Nacho) y yo no habíamos trabajado con este teatro antes. Es más, ambos estábamos recién llegados a Washington, D.C., de hecho, Nacho vino de Chile específicamente para hacer la obra. Fue un reto también porque el director quería hacer algo muy distinto con respecto al vestuario y con

respecto a cómo iban a funcionar las escenas y el montaje. La escenografía fue muy sencilla. No sé si te diste cuenta que se cambió de escena principalmente con el color y el ambiente, y no tanto con la entrada y salida de elementos. Creo que mantener algo sencillo fue importante para que la actuación sobresaliera.

GR: Esto fue muy evidente en la elección del vestuario.

SS: Tengo que explicar que se usó un vestuario de hoy en día para los campesinos, principalmente para Sancho y Elvira, el par de muchachos campesinos, quienes llevaban jeans y Converse. Los nobles, en cambio, como Tello y su hermana, y el mismo Rey, tenían un vestuario que correspondía a la época en que la obra fue escrita.

GR: ¿Qué le llevó a la directora tomar esa decisión?

SS: La Directora, Macarena Baeza, quien vino de Chile, por lo que vi y por lo que hablamos, quería poner una diferencia muy obvia entre los nobles y los villanos.

GR: A pesar de la intención de mantener una cierta sencillez en la obra, el lenguaje no estaba simplificado. ¿Qué retos significó esto?

SS: Bueno, la mezcla de tener un vestuario más actual con el lenguaje en verso fue una oportunidad increíble y en ciertos momentos muy difícil.

Todos tuvimos mucho entrenamiento con respecto al ritmo y las emociones de nuestros personajes. Macarena nos dio un taller, y por la primera semana de ensayos, lo único que hicimos fue concentrarnos en el lenguaje de Lope de Vega.

GR: ¿Qué retos te representó trabajar con los otros actores en esta obra?

SS: Los actores eran un grupo muy internacional. El actor que hace el papel del padre de Elvira era de Cuba. El chico que roba a Elvira era de Puerto Rico. Sancho era de Chile. Don Tello era de España. El rey era de Argentina. Nosotros pensamos en cómo haríamos la obra, si deberíamos mantener un acento español. Decidimos mantener un acento neutro y nos concentramos en poner énfasis en las emociones y los sentimientos, y mantener el verso en vez de concentrarnos en el acento. Con respecto al verso, en un momento sentí como si estuviera haciendo cuatro años de universidad en tres meses porque aprendí muchísimo. Fue increíble poder hacer ese trabajo, y fue difícil acostumbrarme a la rima y en cómo adaptarla a los sentimientos y los momentos de la obra.

GR: Bueno, recuerdo que cuando te vi después de la presentación, me dijiste que más que la dificultad de memorizar era el cambio de una emoción a otra que son tan fuertes en esa obra.

SS: Todos me preguntaban cómo se puede aprender tanto en tan poco tiempo, siendo que son

casi dos horas de obra. Durante la preparación de la obra, me di cuenta que aprender el guión, aunque fue difícil al principio, en realidad no era el mayor reto, sino hacer la transición entre las diferentes emociones que se requieren en la obra. Me di cuenta que hay que dejar que te lleve el personaje. Hay que dejar llevarse por los sentimientos de manera natural.

GR: ¿Cómo te conectaste con el personaje, un personaje creado hace cuatrocientos años?

SS: Es que yo no lo vi como un personaje de hace cuatrocientos años. Lo vi como una mujer que tenía sus propias ideas del amor y la vida. Al principio ella es cuidadosa, no quiere mostrar su amor por Sancho. Hay que encontrar esos momentos en tu vida, como actor siempre llevamos esos personajes dentro de nosotros. Entonces había que encontrar esa niña de quince años que está enamorada y no sabe qué va a pasar y, de ahí, situarse en la emoción de pasar por un momento difícil. Todos hemos tenido problemas de amor, y hemos tenido esos momentos. Esto te permite conectarte con el personaje y dialogar con quien te está hablando. ¿Recuerdas la conversación de Elvira con su padre en la torre? Al principio, él rehúsa aceptar lo que ha pasado con su hija, pero después su amor de padre vence. Para mí, llevar a cabo este diálogo significó retomar ciertos momentos en mi vida y trasladar esas emociones a la escena.

GR: ¿Cómo fue la recepción del público tanto hispano como americano?

SS: La obra se presentó del 29 de enero al 22 de febrero. Había presentaciones el jueves, por la noche; el viernes, una matiné para estudiantes y en la noche; el sábado, en la noche; y el domingo, una matiné a las tres. Al principio, cuando vi las fechas, pensé que era mucho, y después, no quería que se acabara. Resultó que la gente preguntó muchísimo por qué no se han visto más obras de Lope de Vega, por qué no se ha presentado Lope de Vega en el Teatro GALA. Sentían que había mucha falta de adaptaciones de su obra a pesar de que él ha hecho tanto. La gente hispana y americana que ha estudiado y leído se preguntaba por qué se habla de Shakespeare y no de Lope cuando él está a su mismo nivel en el teatro hispano clásico. De hecho, el teatro Shakespeare estaba haciendo Lope en inglés y hay una gran diferencia. Ellos estaban haciendo *El perro del hortelano*, diferente a la obra que hicimos. Tuvimos la oportunidad de reunirnos con los actores de esa obra y tener una charla con la audiencia en donde hablamos de los temas y del papel de la mujer en esos tiempos. En nuestra obra, el personaje de Elvira sufre mucho, no tiene dinero pero tiene honor que, para ella, vale más que oro. Discutimos sobre el por qué el Rey castigó a Tello, nos cuestionábamos si ese castigo fue por quitarle el honor a Elvira o por desobedecer la ley del Rey. Nos inclinamos a pensar lo segundo. La mujer no

tiene un valor importante en la sociedad, es vista como una propiedad del padre o del esposo. Además, pertenece a una familia de campesinos, quienes están en el estrato social más bajo, por eso son víctimas del abuso de poder. Esto es algo que se ve mucho en el mundo, y creo que era importante que Lope mostrara la susceptibilidad de los más débiles en una sociedad, y es justamente su estatus que hace pensar a don Tello que puede hacer o deshacer de las mujeres.

GR: ¿Qué pasa con Sandra, con GALA, y con los directores después de haber puesto esta obra en escena?

SS: Mi experiencia fue increíble. Conocí a muchísima gente. Siendo una actriz nueva en Washington, esto fue como mi iniciación. Lo primero que hice en Washington, y gracias a esta obra, he tenido muchísimas oportunidades. He hecho audiciones en diferentes teatros. Fui invitada al teatro Shakespeare para hacer una audición, y en el teatro Shakespeare sólo puedes participar si eres invitado a hacerlo. Siendo que era nueva y me buscaron y querían conocer un poco más de mí me pareció increíble, y eso no hubiera pasado si no hubiera estado en la obra. Macarena sigue viviendo en Chile y todavía trabaja con la misma universidad. Mel regresó a España. Nacho regresó a Chile, y los otros actores siguen en Washington haciendo otras obras. Y yo ahora estoy trabajando para el Teatro GALA

durante el verano en un campamento para niños en el que se les prepara en lo que es actuación, teatro, artes, y todo lo que tiene que ver con ser parte de un teatro. Les alentamos a los niños a que expresen sus emociones, si quieren llorar que lloren, si quieren gritar que griten, creo que es algo importante en el teatro. Nos interesa incorporar a la comunidad hispana del área y, para ello, es muy importante involucrar a los niños y a la juventud, y eso es algo que el Teatro GALA ha hecho por casi treinta y cinco años. Para mí, fue un honor trabajar con ellos. De hecho, al final del verano empezaré a trabajar con su sección de marketing, ayudando a propagar su mensaje, las obras y actividades que se ofrecen durante el año.

GR: ¿Cuál es tu próximo proyecto?

SS: Tengo una audición el martes con un teatro en Washington, D.C., así que vamos a ver. Sería para la temporada de otoño. No sé cuál será la próxima obra en la que participaré, pero ojalá tenga la oportunidad de seguir haciendo teatro clásico y tener más audiciones sea en inglés o en español.

En una nota del Washington Post (6 de febrero de 2009) sobre la obra, la actuación de Sandra recibió una mención especial: "From the moment she runs onstage to flirt with her beau, early in Act 1, Sampayo's Elvira is winningly feisty, passionate and, when called for, despairing." Este comentario

reafirma la calidad del trabajo de Sandra y augura más éxitos en su futuro profesional.

**THE YENQUE ACTING TRADITION
AN INTERVIEW WITH TERESA AND JOSÉ
YENQUE**

DARCI L. STROTHER
California State University San Marcos



Teresa and José Yenque

It is not every day that one has the chance to speak with an actress of the caliber of Teresa Yenque, who so embodies the spirit of Spanish-language theatre in the United States. A Peruvian immigrant to the U.S., she arrived from Piura, Peru in 1960 with her parents and brother. In 1974, she

entered the Repertorio Español in New York City, and she has steadfastly and passionately devoted her life to a career in the theatre during the ensuing three and a half decades. Over the years, her numerous roles in plays from Golden Age Spain have included Pascuala in Lope's *Fuenteovejuna*, Clara in Lope's *La dama boba*, Isabel in Calderón's *La dama duende*, and various characters in Casona's *Entremeses*, among other classical works. Apart from being a cast member and performing at Repertorio Español in New York, Ms. Yenque has performed on the stage on Broadway, at Lincoln Center, at the Kennedy Center, and in theatres throughout the U.S. She has toured extensively, including participating in international theatre festivals at Chamizal (El Paso, Texas) and in Zaragoza, Spain. Although the focal point of her acting career has been the stage, Ms. Yenque has also amassed extensive television credits in popular programs such as *30 Rock*, *Law & Order*, *The Sopranos*, and many others. Her honors and awards include recognition by entities such as *ACE*, *HOLA*, and *NY Magazine*. Ms. Yenque's film credits in both feature films and shorts attest to her versatility and perseverance in an industry that is not known for its abundance of roles for Latina women. Her most recent film project involved sharing scenes with renowned actor Al Pacino. Yet despite her success in bringing to life roles for the theatre, television, and silver screen, the role that clearly fills her with the most pride is one she

has played for over four decades, a role called “mom.”

As the mother of two young boys, Ms. Yenque struggled at times to balance her early acting career with the responsibilities of childrearing. Her sons were exposed to the theatre from an early age, and one of the two, José, has likewise chosen to devote his life to a career in acting.



Teresa Yenque with her two sons, César Bayona– left, and José (Bayona) Yenque – right. César is also no stranger to the world of entertainment, and he is a musician with an Andean music ensemble.

José Yenque has more than a decade of experience working successfully in film and television, and he is the recipient of important industry awards such as the SAG Award and the Alma Award. In films such as the Academy Award nominated *Traffic*, HBO’s *The Blue Diner* (where both Teresa and

José Yenque worked together), and Academy Award winning short film *Wednesday Afternoon*, his powerful performances have garnered him strong recognition and critical acclaim. His television credits include frequent guest starring roles on numerous primetime shows such as *CSI Miami*, *ER*, *Without a Trace*, and *Heroes Destiny*.

In his years prior to working in film and television, he gained extensive experience in theatre and dance, and toured Europe in the pivotal role of Bernardo in *West Side Story*. Mr. Yenque has taken the lead in significant humanitarian and educational projects in an effort to utilize his recognition in the entertainment industry to the benefit of those in need.

In the summer of 2009, Mr. Yenque returned to his roots in theatre and co-created and co-directed an intensive program in Almagro, Spain. While there, he taught workshops on *comedia* acting to a diverse group of non-actor university students, coinciding with Almagro's Classical Theatre Festival, through a program with California State University San Marcos.

Both Teresa Yenque (based in New York City), and José Yenque (based in Hollywood), share a love of family and a passion for the career of acting. In September 2009, José returned to his native New York to film an episode of NBC's *Law & Order SVU*. There, mother and son generously took time out from their busy acting schedules to sit to-

gether to reflect on the *comedia*, their careers as actors, and some of the joys and challenges along the way. Their conversation, in both English and Spanish, demonstrates a profound level of mutual respect as professionals, as well as a special tenderness between mother and son.



Teresa Yenque in her role as Clara in *La dama boba*. Teatro INTAR. 1975.

DS: José, what are some of your first memories of seeing your mother perform?

JY: Well, what I remember is that, since my brother César and I were very small, we'd always be at the theatre with my mom. My biggest memory was *Fuenteovejuna*, and I remember it was entertaining, very engaging. I'm very fortunate to have been exposed to Lope de Vega, *Fuenteovejuna* in this case, at such a young age. In *Fuenteovejuna*

there was a scene where my mom played Pascuala, and the soldiers had on black handmade uniforms that had black foam rubber spikes.



José Yenque in a starring role in HBO's *The Blue Diner*, also featuring Teresa Yenque. 2001.

They were glued on the soldiers' uniforms, but they would fall off. And there was a moment where a couple of soldiers grabbed and tried to rape Pascuala and Laurencia and pinned them down to the floor. These were big guys, and they had their bodies on top of these two women, and my mom was struggling and saying something like "the spikes are hurting me." I was scared because I could see my mom struggling. We were young, and I think it was a little bit traumatizing, but at the same time we knew it wasn't happening for real. Seeing the foam rubber spikes falling off was kind of what broke the

illusion for me. And so it was amazing to watch the students [I took to Almagro] do their monologues from *Fuenteovejuna*, because I know them, since I'm very familiar with that play. So when I had to re-read the play when we went to Almagro, it brought back a lot of memories because I could visualize what I remembered I had seen when I was a kid.



Scenes from *Fuenteovejuna*, with Teresa Yenque, Antonio Monroe, Alberto Beraldo, Frank Robles, Juan Granda, and Antonio Flores. Teatro INTAR, 1973

DS: And Tere, were you aware of what José was experiencing? Children reach a certain point where they know that what is happening up there on stage is just a play, but how was it for you performing such scenes in front of your young sons?

TY: No, recién me estoy enterando. Lo que me preocupaban eran las escenas violentas, no aptas para niños. Por ejemplo, en *Fuenteovejuna* tenía un poco de recelo que ellos fueran a ver la escena donde los soldados ultrajaban a Laurencia y a Pascuala, y yo hacía la Pascuala. Una vez recuerdo que estaba preocupada antes de entrar al camerino y les digo a unos amigos, “Cuídenlos, por favor, que no entren, que no vean esas escenas.” Y cuando salgo me dicen, “No, muchacha, ¡ellos estaban allí en primera fila, no se perdieron nada!”

DS: OK, José, the next question is for you, related to your time in Almagro. You saw a lot of plays while you were there, and if you could have been onstage, which role would you have wanted to choose for yourself?

JY: I think the one that really stuck with me was *De cuándo acá nos vino*, because there was such a good connection with the cast, with meeting them, and the fact that it was one of Lope’s plays that was not very popular. I mean I hadn’t heard of it (Teresa shakes head), none of us had heard of it, so I think that I would definitely pick something from there. And the role that I would play would probably be the brother to Doña Barbara.

DS: Why, because of your age?

JY: No, I'm too young for that role.

DS: Yes, you are too young for that role, but for the galán you're maybe a little bit...

JY: I'm a little bit too old, but I would still want to take a crack at it anyway, and I know I'm too young for the other role, but I would put on the white hair. It seems like such a challenging role to play.

DS: Teresa, when you think about different roles in classical theatre, is there one you haven't yet had the chance to take on, that you find attractive? And what classical roles do you think José would be good in?

TY: Me gustaría ver a José en Segismundo (*La vida es sueño*), Calisto (*La Celestina*), El Quijote, Leonardo (*Bodas de Sangre*), son tantos los personajes que haría excelentemente bien. La ventaja de hacer teatro es que puedes hacer caracterizaciones de gente mucho mayor o gente más joven, porque lo sacamos a través de la actuación. El cine no te da esa ventaja, porque la cámara está tan cerca y ve todo el maquillaje, y las líneas de la cara, todo; en el teatro no, creamos magia. A mí, me gustaría hacer el papel de la Celestina. Cuando era joven quería hacer la Juana Azurduy en *Santa Juana de América*, escrita por Andrés Lizárraga, historia de la primera mujer boliviana que se levantó contra el gobierno defendiendo los derechos de los campesi-

nos, y en su honor, se declaró el 7 de marzo, “El día de la mujer.”

DS: A mí me encantaría verte en *La Celestina*; es un papel súper jugoso. ¿Cómo te acercarías a ese papel? ¿Qué matices intentarías darle?

TY: Conozco a muchas Celestinas en la vida real, gente que se beneficia ligando servicios y beneficiándose por las conexiones que hace. Los matices se desbordan en ella, es una mujer que usa todas las artimañas habidas y por haber, para conseguir lo que se propone.

DS: Pues, espero que tengas la oportunidad algún día de interpretar la Celestina, y cuando lo hagas yo cojo el avión y voy a Nueva York a verte, ¿vale?

TY: ¡Sí! ¡Qué bueno!

JY: Y yo también.

DS: El espacio del Repertorio Especial es muy especial por muchas razones. ¿Cómo te afecta el espacio físico a la hora de trabajar? Porque has trabajado en muchos teatros diferentes.

TY: Es pequeño, y muy acogedor, y nos adaptamos al espacio. Yo llevo treinta y cinco años trabajando allí. Es nuestro pequeño mundo donde damos rienda suelta a nuestras ilusiones, y nos entregamos completamente a nuestro trabajo. Los montajes no se privan de movimiento por el espacio. Cuando salíamos de gira con *La Celestina*, llevábamos dos escaleras, una en cada acostado, y una tabla en el centro que era la torre de donde se

tiraba Melibea, y nos adaptábamos inmediatamente a los espacios. Algunos eran tan grandes como el Lincoln Center, donde teníamos que correr de un lado a otro. Otros eran más pequeñitos que el nuestro, teníamos que caminar entre el público sentado en el suelo. Repertorio es pequeño y creamos magia en él.

DS: Y esa idea de romper la cuarta pared, ¿eso se nota más en los teatros más íntimos como el Repertorio?

TY: No, el Repertorio conserva siempre su cuarta pared, con excepción de los montajes del Director, Jorge Alí Triana. Él adapta novelas clásicas al teatro y usa todo el espacio como escenario. Los actores cuentan la historia en el presente, pasado y a veces dirigen sus parlamentos directamente al público. En *Crónica de una muerte anunciada*, por ejemplo, el juez les pregunta “¿Y Uds., qué opinan?” Y pum, el apagón. Es otro estilo de teatro. En los clásicos como *La Celestina* y las obras de Lope de Vega, la cuarta pared se respeta, es la que ayuda a crear el aislamiento, la intimidad y la magia. En el Repertorio, el director René Buch no altera ningún texto, es muy fiel, y respeta mucho al autor.



Teresa and José Yenque with René Buch, Director of the Repertorio Español (left), at the “HOLA” awards ceremony

DS: Tere, ¿cuáles son algunos de los retos que experimenta un actor que tiene que acercarse a un papel clásico? ¿Hay algo que podría considerarse como un obstáculo?

TY: Bueno, son retos que forman parte del proceso de la creación de los personajes. Hay que hacer investigación, saber exactamente el año y la época que estamos trabajando, cuáles son el vestuario que se usaban en aquel entonces, aunque hay un diseñador, a mí me gusta mucho usar desde los ensayos, alguna prenda que se usaba en aquel entonces. Desde que entras al camerino, empiezas a comunicarte con tu fascinante mundo creado, y que ya no es el terrenal. Escuchar la música de la época que más te gusta, la que más te toca la fibra, que te transporta, y que te produce una sensación de complacencia. La ropa interior también es muy importante. Buscas la ropa antigua que se usaba en aquel

entonces, pantalones y enaguas largas de hilo, nada de bikinis o cremalleras de nylon que no existían en aquel entonces. El peinado, los ornamentos para el cabello. Todos esos detallitos que aunque no se ven, ayudan a la transportación de esa época, y a la creación de la magia en el escenario.

DS: Noto en tu currículum que has trabajado algunas veces en El Chamizal de El Paso, Texas. ¿Esto fue coincidiendo con el Festival de Teatro Clásico?

TY: Sí, sí, allí fuimos con *La Celestina*, los *Entremeses* de Casona y *La dama duende*, que, por cierto, me pasó algo comiquísimo con *La dama duende*. En el Chamizal tienen unas cortinas negras que son de pared a pared, y en *La dama duende* yo tenía que salir e interrumpir los diálogos de la señora para prevenirla de la presencia o visita de alguien. Y entonces escucho mi pie, y no sabía por dónde entrar, porque todas las cortinas estaban unidas, y yo desesperada, porque no podía entrar. Usábamos unas zapatillas de ballet, y ellos sólo escuchaban el tac-a-tac-a-tac-a-tá por allí, y tac-a-tac-a-tac-a-tá por allá, y yo les sentía decir “Ah, bueno, ya debe de estar por venir Isabel,” y yo tac-a-tac-a-tac-a-tá. Entonces ya dicen, “¿Isabel?” Y yo decía, “¡Señora!”, corro hasta el fondo, y entro asustada, cansada y casi sin aliento, “Señora, ay...”. Pero ellos estaban muertos de risa. (Risas)



Teresa Yenque and Braulio Villar en *La dama duende*. The Second Golden Age Drama Festival, Chamizal, Texas. (1977)



Elizabeth Ruiz and Teresa Yenque en *Farsa del mancebo que casó con mujer brava*, Chamizal, Texas. (1985)

DS: ¿Me podríais hablar un poco de las ideas erróneas que veis que tiene la gente sobre la vida o profesión de un actor, y que a lo mejor quisierais corregir?

TY: La gente piensa que es lo más fácil del mundo. Piensa que es solo tomar un texto, memorizarlo, salir al escenario y buscar el mejor perfil o la mejor pose para que se puedan lucir. No tienen la menor idea de los estudios que hay que hacer para prepararse. Hace poco me preguntaron qué consejos tenía para una persona que quiere ser actor. En primer lugar tiene que gustarte mucho porque es demandante y requiere mucho sacrificio, mucho estudio y mucha dedicación. Nunca terminas de estudiar, de aprender; no es una carrera en que tú te aprendiste la línea, saliste y punto, no. Hay que seguir estudiando, ponerse al día, estudiar las nuevas técnicas de los jovencitos. Es una carrera demandante igual que las otras.

JY: I agree that people think it's easy.

TY: Ni se imaginan que tienen que estudiar para conocerse mejor y afinar el instrumento, que es nuestro cuerpo, que es el que utilizamos para comunicar. El pianista tiene su piano, el guitarrista su guitarra, los actores tenemos nuestro cuerpo, nuestra voz, nuestros sentimientos, que usamos para poder desempeñar honestamente un personaje.

JY: Y uno entrega el alma, el corazón, y mucho tiempo y mucho deseo. No es que uno se quiera poner maquillaje y se quiera peinar bonito y

ponerse al escenario porque quiere lucir. Bueno, hay actores que sólo quieren lucir. Pero el actor verdadero se entrega.

TY: Sí, y la prueba es que a veces hay actores que dicen mucho, y nadie los mira. Sin embargo, el actor que está trabajando algo internamente, que se ve que ahí está pasando algo, aunque no diga una palabra, está comunicando, cautivando y captando la atención del público.

DS: José, do you have anything else to add about people's misconceptions about actors?

JY: Acting is not just memorizing lines! It's not just walking red carpets, and it's not glamorous. People don't consider it work. They look at it as a hobby, not as a real job. But it's not a hobby, it's a career. It's a job that actors take seriously. People don't realize all the work that goes into building the characters, and that's what moves the lines, the text. The lines come out of the character, and by just saying them, that's only the tip of the iceberg. All the character work that goes into it is not easy. And if it were easy, there would be even more actors. What people don't see is the amount of rejection that we have to go through. We don't book every single job that we go out on. We don't get every role off every audition. So every time there is a rejection, it tends to pick at you. We have to learn how to build that strong, thick skin, and that doesn't occur to people. If I arrive someplace, and I happen to walk on a red carpet, it didn't just start there.

DS: One of the things you did in Almagro was work with students who were new to acting, and you ended up getting them up onstage doing scenes from various *comedias*. But you also helped them get ready to dialogue with actors from Spain's Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico and other companies. That's something that can be intimidating for students who are not used to interacting with professional actors. What did you do to prepare them?

JY: When I was prepping the students, I said, "Remember, they're actors. Actors love to talk about their characters. They like people to ask them about their work. Actors love to talk about themselves." And I said it in a kind of joking way, and what I really meant to say was that we're very expressive, and we love to share. And I was very happy with how it went with the students, because the way I prepped them to get to know me better, I had already shared a lot about myself, and about my approach to acting. So, by the time [the CNTC actors] came in, I had already spent almost a week and a half with the students. The actors that came from the Compañía Nacional were fun, jovial, and the students were comfortable in front of them. They were all smiles, and they were all excited. Because, remember, the students had just seen them onstage the night before, and so if it had been the first day, I would have to say that I think the students would have been a lot more timid, a lot more nervous

around them. Because you have someone open their soul, when you're up on stage, you're putting yourself out there to be judged, to be looked at, scrutinized, and you're in a very vulnerable place. And so the students got to witness the actors' souls, and then the next day they saw them as real people standing right there in front of them.



José Yenque, and members of the CNTC cast, working with students in Almagro, Spain. 2009.

DS: What thoughts do you have about the festival “scene” in Almagro? Did it seem to you that the types of people who devote their lives to classical theatre are in some sense “a breed apart?” And how did they react to having you, a television/film actor from Hollywood, in their midst?

JY: A lot of the actors, theatre people from the classical theatre festival in Almagro, were very good to me, and they embraced me with open arms and open hearts. It was especially interesting to see how they came up to me and complimented me, and they had done their research, they’d seen my work, and they would sit down and ask me questions about what it was like working with certain actors, how I prepared particular characters, etc. It was fun because I had just seen them the night earlier, on-stage, doing verse, doing something that was so impressive. They were brilliant onstage, obviously everything very well crafted, and very professional young actors. And it was amazing having them look at me with these nice, beautiful, open eyes, wide-eyed, and so enthusiastic about talking to me, when I was at the same time enthusiastic about talking to them, and, also, with a couple of directors, too.

DS: So it sounds like there was a lot of respect going back and forth each way.

JY: Yes, it was a mutual respect, and they weren’t complimenting me on doing theatre, although later I shared with them that I started out

doing theatre. They were complimenting me on my art that I do in film and television, and that's my approach—I approach it as art, not just a job.

DS: Another question I have for you, José, is, you went to Almagro in the capacity of someone who was going to teach acting through classical theatre, and also as a *comedia* audience member, who, as we've said, saw quite a few plays. Do you think that the experience changed you in any way as an actor and how you look at your craft? Or has it given you any new goals?

JY: Yes, because now I have to admit that it made me get back on top of my game. I saw some really good work out there, and it inspired me to keep working to be better, to be a better actor, a better person, and they go hand-in-hand, by the way, in my opinion. Watching good work should always inspire another actor, and it inspired me to keep on doing good work, to work on myself. We're always studying, you know. Actors like Al Pacino, Meryl Streep, they're always taking classes. You never "get there." You always strive to be better, and that's what the experience in Almagro helped me to rediscover in myself—to really strive to be the best actor that I can be.

DS: Teresa, me acuerdo que me decía José que a su mamá le hacía mucha ilusión que él fuera a España a ver teatro y a participar en el Festival de Almagro. Yo quería saber qué esperabas tú que sacara él de esta experiencia, y ahora que ha vuelto, si

has observado en él algún cambio, o si crees tú que de dicha experiencia ha sacado lo que esperabas.

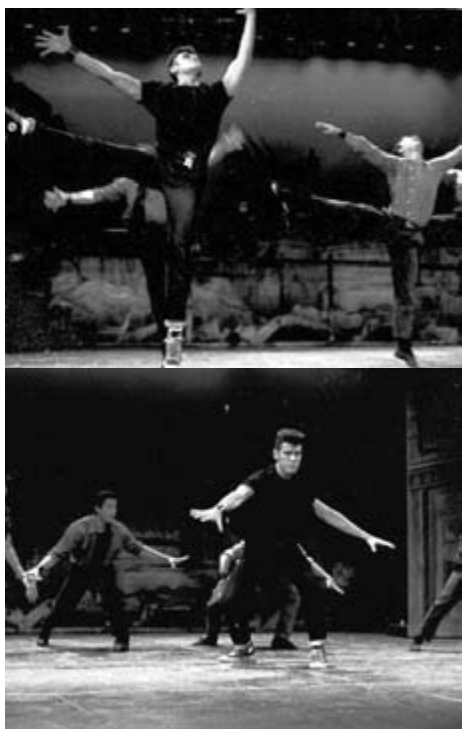
TY: Bueno, yo quedé tan fascinada con España, con la gente, con el teatro, que la verdad es que yo no quería regresar. Yo quería traer a toda mi familia y quedarme a vivir allí, ¿no? Porque el ambiente y el aire que se respira es fascinante. Dentro y fuera del teatro la gente comenta con complacencia y en el mismo idioma. Y bueno, que José viaje a España, para mí fue la gloria, porque sabía que iba a tener un resultado muy fructífero. De hecho, fomentó mucho su visión y su interés hacia el teatro clásico español. Y me gustó que fuera a estar participando en el Festival de Almagro, porque yo sabía que le iba a ayudar muchísimo en su carrera de actor. En Nueva York hacía mucho teatro, y en Los Ángeles lo reemplazó por el cine y la televisión. Y sí, ha cambiado, porque aparte del cine y la televisión, ahora el teatro forma parte de su vida y eso me hace sentirme feliz.

DS: Y ahora que has estado andando en el baúl de los recuerdos buscando fotos para ilustrar esta entrevista, cosa que te agradezco muchísimo, dime si la experiencia de revisar esas fotos de antaño ha hecho surgir algún otro recuerdo que querías contarme.

TY: Durante las giras de *La Celestina*, no había tiempo para ensayar. A veces nos bajábamos del avión e íbamos directamente al teatro a hacer la función.

DS: ¿Sin ensayar ni nada?

TY: Sí. Durante el prólogo mirábamos dónde estaban las luces, y poco a poco nos íbamos ajustando. Sí, fue una gran escuela. Empezó en el '74. Año en el que ingresé al Repertorio Español, con *La Celestina* haciendo Elicia, y bueno, ¡ahora estoy para hacer la Celestina, *La Celestina*!



José Yenque in his European tour as Bernardo in *West Side Story*.

JY: It takes a lot of passion, and sometimes a lot of heartache. *West Side Story* was when I decided that I really loved the character Bernardo. I think Bernardo reminded me of what my grandfather might have been, and so I connected with Bernardo, and that's when I decided I wanted to act. And so, when I told you, Tere, cuando yo te pregunté, bueno no te pregunté, te dije (risas) que yo quería seguir actuando, y no bailando ya, sino actuando, y tú sabiendo que era muy difícil, ¿qué pensabas cuando viste que yo iba por esa dirección?

TY: Bueno yo, no sé si recordarás, pero no te alenté mucho. (Risas).

JY: No, no. Me acuerdo que no. Tú sabes que hay mucha gente que me pregunta, "Oh, ¿así que tu mamá te inspiró?" Y yo digo, "No, ella lo que hizo fue llevarme al teatro a los 8 ó 9 años, me puso en esa silla, y yo miraba el teatro, pero no a la fuerza. Yo quería ir. Y eso fue donde plantó la semilla dentro de mi corazón. Pero cuando llegué más tarde y te dije que estaba haciendo más teatro y..."

TY: Sí, lo que más me preocupó fue cuando dijiste que querías hacer teatro en español. Y yo te dije el Repertorio Español porque allí practicas español. Luego, uno recuerda los sacrificios que hay que hacer, porque no es una profesión de la que puedes depender inmediatamente, a menos de que ya hayas llegado, la hayas hecho, como dicen. Te llaman y vas a trabajar. Es bastante difícil cuando

se está empezando, hay que mantener otro trabajo para poder subsistir. Recuerdo que una vez le preguntaron a mi nieta Julia María, “¿Y tú también vas a ser actriz?” Y dice, “No, no. A mí no me gusta ser waitress.” (Risas). Ahora me siento muy orgullosa al ver todo lo que has logrado en el cine y la televisión. Toda la familia está muy orgullosa del trabajo que has hecho y que estás haciendo. La labor que estás haciendo en estos momentos con los niños, con los huérfanos me parece que es algo, que bueno, viniste con esa misión y me da mucho gusto que la estés cumpliendo.

Es parte de la dicha que estamos teniendo, no solamente yo. Porque mis padres también allá te están bendiciendo y te están acompañando, iluminando y abriendo el camino para que sigas progresando, compartiendo y ayudando a la humanidad. Debo añadir que cada vez que estreno una obra, José viene a verme. Yo, a veces, le digo, “No viajes, que mi papel no es el papel principal,” pero él viene a verme de todas maneras. (Risas).

JY: I do! I take that trip.

TY: Me da notas también. (Risas)

JY: ¡Eso sí! Nos damos notas. Mi mamá trabaja con directores y la admiran mucho y conocen su trabajo. Muchas veces el director, por respeto hacia ella, no la quiere dirigir mucho, porque dicen que como lo hace ya está bien. Pero a mi mamá le gusta que le den notas. Eso le ayuda. Es una labor de equipo. Como yo conozco cómo trabaja mi

mamá, yo la puedo dirigir. En el futuro eso es un reto que me he propuesto, es un deseo que se va a hacer realidad: dirigir a mi mamá en alguna obra.

DS: ¡Estupendo! Pues está bien que exista ese nivel de confianza de poder intercambiar esas notas sin sentirse demasiado criticados. ¿Y no existe ninguna envidia entre los actores de la familia? ¿Simplemente se siente uno orgulloso cuando el otro triunfa?

JY: Totalmente orgulloso. Por eso yo viajo a Nueva York para ver una obra de mi mamá, e incluso si yo estoy haciendo películas o televisión, estoy viviendo la vida de un actor de teatro en ese momento por la energía de mi mamá. Y si ella está en el escenario, yo estoy viviendo ese momento en el escenario con ella, aunque esté sentado en el público.

DS: Qué imagen más bonita. ¿Alguna otra cosa?

TY: Sí, mencioné lo difícil que es la sobrevivencia de la profesión del actor, pero no mencioné la parte positiva de ella. Aunque no tan bien reconocida y remunerada, la profesión del actor es una de las más gratas, porque el placer que se siente al interpretar un personaje y conseguir que el público de alguna manera se identifique con él, que ría y lllore a través de él, *no tiene precio*. La satisfacción y el regocijo que se siente al recibir los aplausos compensa todos los sacrificios que uno hace para

hacer teatro, especialmente en este país, donde el idioma principal no es el español.

DS: Pues con estas palabras como broche de oro, cerramos esta agradable entrevista. ¡Muchísimas gracias a los dos!

Theater Reviews

The Staging of Calderón's *Life Is a Dream* at Rose State College (Midwest City, OK)

A. ROBERT LAUER
The University of Oklahoma

From 27 September through 7 October 2007, drama professor Richard Nelson, of Rose State College (Midwest City, OK), staged at the H. B. Atkinson Theatre Pedro Calderón de la Barca's *Life Is a Dream* (*La vida es sueño*). The play lasted two hours and fifteen minutes, counting a 10-minute intermission. For this rendition of Calderón's play, the director used the John Clifford English translation.

Although the Clifford translation does not subdivide the acts or *jornadas* of Calderón's play into "scenes" or actors' entrances (*salidas*), as, for instance, the José Martel edition does, the staged version followed the Calderonian text very closely and made these subdivisions clearly distinguishable. In the Richard Nelson theatrical text, there were also several *cuadros* or scenic changes within each act; these one may call the Tower, the Prison, and the Palace. These scenic changes were accompanied with transitions in illumination. Hence, the

confined spaces in the Tower and the Prison were darkly lit; while the wide spaces in the Palace were brightly illuminated. In addition, Richard Nelson's text successfully utilized 8 blackouts for the following purposes: to create dark and ominous tones; to make spatial transitions; to mark temporal changes; and to mark final and decisive choices, as when Basilio decides to send Segismundo back to the Tower in 2.10-2.11, when Clotaldo chooses to help his daughter Rosaura in 3.8, and when Segismundo opts to wage war on his father Basilio in 3.9.

In addition to the blackouts, the Richard Nelson production of *Life Is a Dream* used original background music by composer Joshua Rosalis, as well as a section from Vangelis' *Chariots of Fire*. The thematic electronic music, creation of Rosalis, had a Slavic flavor that imitated violins and the neighing of horses. The Vangelis music, which was played during a blue blackout, was heard only once between scenes 1.4 and 1.5 and served to separate the Tower from the Palace scene. Its slow, happy, and melodic tone suggested the dissipation of chaos and darkness and the beginning of order and brightness. The Rosalis music dominated the rest of the play. Cymbals introduced the King in 1.6, thus adding a sense of majesty to Basilio's entrance. An ominous sound ended act one as a total blackout engulfed the theater. Slow royal music introduced Segismundo in the palace in 2.3. Drums, cymbals (associated previously with Basilio), and an omi-

nous-sounding music occurred at the end of 2.10, during a blackout, as Basilio resolved in anger to imprison Segismundo again in the Tower. At the beginning of 2.17, during another blackout, the music remained ominous and, by its emphatic and incessant rhythm, insinuated an objection to Segismundo's return to the Tower and Clarín's imprisonment. At the end of 2.19, during another blackout, drums (now clearly associated with Segismundo) beat fast at first as Segismundo's chains made a screeching noise; afterwards the music slowed down, as if in resignation to the Prince's fate. In 3.4-5, during a blackout between the Prison and Palace scenes, slow and ominous music was heard, creating a sense of uncertainty as to the outcome of Prince Segismundo's future battle. In 3.8-9, during a blackout, a fast banging music (accompanied with horse riding thuds and the sound of trumpets) was heard as Clotaldo resolved to help Rosaura and Segismundo to fight Basilio. Finally, in 3.12, music suggesting swords clashing and horses neighing were evinced. This brilliant use of music, associated at times with blackouts, scenic changes, and dramatic resolutions, was most effective and impressive. Crew members Martin Steger (set and sound design), Laura Tucker (light design and operation), and Zachary Brown (sound operation) deserved acknowledgment.

Other aspects worthy of note in this production were the wardrobes, designed by Catherine

Baird with the assistance of Paul Kim, and the props, for which Matthew Lerma should be acknowledged. The actors wore long capes, Slavic fur hats, and tall leather boots with fur tops. Basilio dressed in black and wore a modest crown. Estrella wore green and white dresses. Astolfo wore a light blue attire which was similar to Segismundo's, with the difference that the latter's was of a darker tone, as if to show his superiority. As Segismundo initiated the war of liberation, he wore a crown bigger than Basilio's, as if to show his supremacy over the former king. Rosaura wore a combination of yellow and brown clothes, similar to Clotaldo's, whose tones, moreover, were darker. In her final encounter with Segismundo, Rosaura wore a red dress and a sword. Clarín wore a white shirt. The soldiers wore long gray tunics, epoch swords with wide blades, and, at times, armor.

The stage sets (the product of Kevin Redden) were judiciously designed. In effect, the Tower, the Prison, and the Palace used the same platforms, although in different configurations. The Tower consisted of two wooden structures with a top watchtower design and a door on each surface; when the two planes met in the middle at an outward angle they formed Segismundo's Tower. The same structure, meeting at an inward angle served as Segismundo's Prison. These two constructions, when separated and placed to the sides, allowed for a panel with an attached red throne on a pedestal to

appear in the back of the stage. That front wall, likewise, had a window to the right and the left of the throne, serving, in one case, to defenestrate the second servant in 2.5. That constituted the Palace set. With much attention to detail, above the red throne there was a white shield showing an eagle facing west, suggesting Poland's coat-of-arms. These two icons, needless to say, recalled the colors of the Polish flag. Another fascinating detail was that in 2.9, Segismundo and Astolfo began dueling by moving in a clockwise circle, with swords pointed at eye level, as would be the Spanish fencing style in the time of Luis Pacheco de Narváez (1570-1640). There was also a lot of kneeling, both full body and half-body. Finally, in the beginning of act one, Rosaura was ingeniously brought on stage above a horse mount sustained by four soldiers. This coincided with Rosaura's initial lines of the play: "Call yourself a horse! You hippogriff." Indeed.

The acting was overall very good. Segismundo was played by Michael E. Glover, a strong African-American student with long braided hair. His presence was magnificent at all times, both when chained and when enthroned. Gravelly E. Finley III, another African-American student, played Clotaldo to perfection. He was tall, mustached, and bald, and had an excellent bearing and an emphatic voice. Spencer Carter as Astolfo was convincing in his hypocritical and slippery ways,

always trying to seduce Rosaura and Estrella. Clarín was played by Beth Rollings, a young woman who was capable of provoking both humor and pathos. Chelsea McIntire as Estrella was powerful and majestic. Tiffany Sebring, on the other hand, was perhaps too young, lean, and vulnerable-looking to play a convincing strong-willed Rosaura. The guards (Brad Whitehead, Billy Johnson, and Brandon Alvis) did not have enough lines to distinguish themselves, but when Brad Whitehead, as an understudy, played Astolfo, he gave dignity to that role. This particular rendition had Ashley Untrauer as a dancer, and Elicia Reynolds-Medaris as a musician. The most truly majestic role, however, was undertaken by Zorro P. Montevideo, who played a highly dignified Basilio.

The John Clifford translation, which follows the Zaragoza 1636 version of Calderón's play and is thus highly theatrical, was very appropriate for this student production. Some of the lofty tone of the play can take turns into scatology with references to loos, defecation, shits, and atypical phrasings like "The anorexic school of thought" [Clifford's ingenious resolution of the original pun on *Nicomedes* and *Niceno*]. But that, as well as the inventive references to Clarín, "You know. From the Latin," served to humanize the play in order to make it more palatable to a modern audience. Although director Richard Nelson followed Calderón's poetic text very closely, in a stroke of gen-

ius he deleted, after the imprisonment of the so-called rebel soldier, the obsequious lines from Asolfo (“How very wise!”), Basilio (“What statesmanship!”), Clotaldo (“How much you’ve changed!”), and Rosaura (“How clever you’ve become”). What one is left with at the end of the play is total silence on the part of the principals, and a newly enthroned Segismundo uttering the famous lines “Why are you all so amazed? I still live in dread.” The play, hence, ends on a note of awe that might suggest doubts about the truly changed character of a formerly savage prince. This ending left the audience truly enthralled, much to the credit of Rose State College director Richard Nelson. Indeed, this production truly refurbishes a classic poetic text into a spectacular modern rendition.

Don Quichotte contre l'Ange Bleu [*Don Quixote against the Blue Angel*]. By La Boîte aux Rêves. Directed by Jérôme Savary. Loosely inspired by Miguel de Cervantes's novel. Translated and adapted into Spanish by Piti Español. Original music by Roland Romanelli and French flamenco gipsy singer Paco El Lobo. Cuarto Festival Internacional de las Artes de Castilla y León (FIACyL). May 30, 2008 – June 14, 2008. Centro de las Artes Escénicas y de la Música (CAEM). Salamanca, Castilla y León, Spain. June 11, 2008 (one-day performance at this venue at 8:00 pm). Duration: approximately 90 minutes.

JORGE ABRIL SÁNCHEZ
Reed College

During the sixteen days of this new edition of FIACyL, Salamanca opened its doors to a variety of spectacles that showed the city's active commitment to the world of contemporary artistic creation. Sponsored by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of the Junta of Castilla y León, the festival sought to reflect on the current changes taking place in art, musicals and theater. The organization invited different groups, associations, cultural representatives

and institutions, both Spanish and foreign, that converted plazas and streets into makeshift stages ready to provoke new feelings and sensations. This series of events was thought to encourage the general public to leave behind the role of mere spectator to be an active participant in the performances. The audience, for its part, responded enthusiastically. Around one hundred and seventy thousand visited this emblematic Castilian city of the vanguard to discover the new tendencies in the humanities and the arts.

Among the long list of innovative shows included in the program, one of the most thought-provoking and evocative proposals was Jérôme Savary's musical fable, entitled *Don Quichotte contre l'Ange Bleu* [*Don Quixote against the Blue Angel*]. Performed for the first time in January of 2008 in the Theater of Paris, where it ran successfully for four months, the script needed to be translated into Spanish before Savary's company began to tour the length and breadth of the Iberian Peninsula. During the preparations for the upcoming season, not only did the French director feel obliged to adapt his vision to a different cultural scenario, but he also had to contend with the loss of the female protagonist, Arielle Dombale, who was replaced by the exuberant Marta Ribera in the role of Daisy Belle, after the star soloist decided not to continue with the project. The rest of the crew—including Jérôme Savary himself as a witty director of ceremony, Joan

Crosas as Don Quixote, Frédéric Longbois as Sancho Panza, and a troupe of dancers, singers and musicians that have worked with Savary for a long time—stayed the same. This performance meant the Argentina-born artist's return to the private stage and the first original theatrical production of his company, La Boîte aux Rêves, after twenty years of success at the French national theaters, such as the Carrefour Européen du Théâtre du Villème at Lyon, the Théâtre national de Chaillot and Paris's Opéra-Comique.

As the title suggests, *Don Quichotte contre l'Ange Bleu* is loosely inspired by both Miguel de Cervantes's masterpiece and Austrian-American Josef von Sternberg's film, *The Blue Angel* (1930), which brought world fame to actress Marlène Dietrich. Savary places the beginning of the action at the present time, near a modern airport under construction in Castilla La Mancha to celebrate the fame of their most illustrious literary character. The noise of the planes taking off and landing attracts the attention of the main character, the Knight of the Sad Countenance, who apparently does not know he is immersed in a dream until the end of the performance. Instead, he comes closer to watch a billboard in which his beloved Dulcinea has been replaced by a bare-chested burlesque starlet named Daisy Belle. Infuriated by such a poor portrayal of his idealized love, Don Quixote mounts his famous steed Rocinante and travels to Paris in the company

of his loyal Sancho Panza to destroy the distorted image of his adored damsel. The Manchegan chevalier and his squire arrive at the “Moulin Rouge” of the French capital to meet the depraved actress, to whose beauty they succumb. Fictionally married to philosopher Bernad-Henri Lévy—one of the leaders of the “Nouvelle Philosophie” movement who articulated a fierce and uncompromising moral critique of Marxist and socialist dogmas in 1976—, Daisy is widely known as “the blue angel” in the vaudeville show for her desire to become an incarnation of Marlène Dietrich. The name of the building is also very pertinent for the context. On the one hand, the word “moulin” (i.e. “windmill”) is connected to the treacherous imagination of Don Quixote, who confuses a group of thirty or forty mills with a breed of giants whom he prepares to attack in the famous adventure narrated in the eighth chapter of Cervantes’ *opus magna*. On the other hand, this term reminds the spectator of the celebrated Parisian cabaret built in 1889 close to Montmartre, best-known for being the spiritual birthplace of the modern form of the can-can dance. Without doubt, the latter must have been the thematic connection that Savary wanted to establish when he collaborated with Ezio Toffolutti, and Brian Scott Bagley, Sabine Leroc, Marco Oranje and Laurence Roussarie in the creation of the scenography and choreography, respectively. Savary intended to play with the meaning of words in order to transform the epic bat-

tle of the knight into a stage where illusions are mixed with reality. However, what the knight finds in Paris is not the glamour of the France in the *fin de siècle*. It is a venue in decay where a circus conductor abuses his troupe of can-can dancers, terrorizes his contortionist and addresses the public with prurient expressions.

Apart from this, the story is full of anecdotes—which, on one occasion, describe the death of Rocinante at the hands of the butcher, after Sancho sells it for a bag of coins—; nonsensical musical performances—sometimes with the presence of actors disguised as stuffed chickens that try to rape some of the dancers—; digressions about the state of the arts or the world of politics—where current French president Nicolas Sarkozy’s unusual sexual appetite becomes the topic of all jokes—, etc. This wide range of improvised sketches is fully integrated in the performance, thus allowing all of the actors to show their multiple talents—rehearsing, singing and dancing. Nevertheless, all these additions relentlessly extend the performance in excess. At the end of the play, Don Quixote recovers his sanity and wakes up from his dream. The knight realizes that nothing that has happened to him has been true. Reciting Feliciano de Silva’s famous line cited in the first chapter of the novel—«La razón de la sinrazón que a mi razón se hace, de tal manera mi razón enflaquece, que con razón me quejo de la vuestra fermosura»—, the *hidalgo* decides to com-

mit suicide. Only the appearance of Daisy Belle mounting a resurrected Rocinante makes Don Quixote change his mind. The performance ends with the spiritual rebirth of the Manchegan knight, who is helped to put on his armor and helmet in order to continue pursuing his desire of posthumous glory, while the rest of the cast sings along to The Beatles's 1967 hit single "All You Need is Love."

It may seem that the theatrical free adaptation of Cervantes' novel may lack academic interest. Indeed, at some moments of the performance, Savary's production becomes a *totum revolutum* in which Don Quixote and Sancho are exposed to anything that comes across the director's mind. A few word puns and jokes do not work very well in Spanish, either. This flaw could be the result of the nature of the spectacle, which originally was written in French and took place in modern France. However, all in all, the producer's message came through: to raise awareness about the decadence of a theatrical genre, which, in his opinion, fights not to end up being a bad imitation of musicals made on Broadway. Like in his years in front of the legendary Magic Circus Company, Jérôme Savary made a strong impression on the spectator, masterfully drawing together and blending such genres as opera, operetta and musical comedy. Savary likes to take risks for the sake of authenticity. His motto is to invent without any kind of compromise that may limit the wit of a genius. Sometimes it is mandatory

that we laugh at ourselves. But, with this idea in mind, we will recover the irreverence, uninhibited nature and artistic flavor of the traveling circus/theater that used to visit the fairs of our small towns in the province. These shows brought us pseudo-erotic attractions and displayed local “monsters” such as the bearded woman and the deformed dwarf, thus opening our eyes to specimens that differed from the perfect models that society defends. On the night of June 11, 2008, Savary remained faithful to his ideas, which benefited the work of his protagonists and the unity of a funny and original piece of art premiered in Spanish at the *salmantina* city.

La vida es sueño. By Pedro Calderón de la Barca.
Dir. René Buch. Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts
Theatre, New York. January 30, 2009. (Play's debut:
November 7, 2008.)

CHRISTOPHER D. GASCÓN
State University of New York College at Cortland

Dark, taut, and austere, René Buch's latest staging of Calderón's *La vida es sueño* features impressive individual performances that highlight the beauty and intensity of the playwright's language. Despite a subdued palette and a minimalist set, the production is visually striking, thanks to beautifully composed stage pictures in virtually every scene and dramatic lighting effects. Above all, however, Buch foregrounds the raw emotion of his actors and the brilliance of Calderón's verse. Repertorio Español opened its doors in 1968 with Calderón's *La dama duende*; it is thus only fitting that they should celebrate forty years of memorable Hispanic theatre with the playwright's greatest play, which they have now produced four times.

The rear of the stage is dominated by three tall, black flats, each consisting of vertical black bars behind which are fixed numerous large, rough-

ly triangular shards of mirrored glass. A small, moveable, square platform at center, placed with a corner pointing directly downstage, adds stature and draws focus to whomever plays in that space. When viewed from the balcony areas of the theatre, the backdrop reflects multiple perspectives of the action at center stage. This fascinating effect reinforces the multi-faceted nature of Segismundo, Rosaura, Clotaldo, Basilio, and Astolfo, and underscores the fragmentation they experience as they are confronted with shifting circumstances. The mirrors also reflect dramatic lighting effects shone on the white of the stage floor and platform, such as the grill pattern seemingly created by the shadow of a window grate in Segismundo's prison, or the red lighting used during the battle scenes of the third act. Unfortunately, much of this visual splendor is lost on a good part of the audience, as the majority of seats are on the ground, at or below the level of the actors' feet, such that most of the mirrors do not, for those viewers, reflect the action at center or the stage floor.

The costumes suggest no particular period or place: all of the actors wear tight black pants and shirts with black belts and boots. Variations in silhouette account for differences in social rank or condition: Nobles are distinguished by the muted robes they wear over this ensemble, with Basilio standing out most in his white, embroidered robe. Segismundo is bare-chested as a prisoner in the

tower, robed in white when he plays king at the palace, and black-shirted as leader of the rebellion in the final act. Rosaura carries a sword and conceals her long hair under a cap when cross-dressing as a man, wears it long and goes unarmed as a woman, and combines long hair and sword when she appears as a “monstrous” combination of both genders in the final act. The colorlessness and straightforward semiotics of the costuming seems calculated not only to distinguish the court of Poland as foreign to our experience, severe, cold, and unadorned, but also to offer a visual manifestation of the rigid rules of conduct and honor that govern the actions and decisions of the characters. Overall, the play of black and white, silvery mirrors, sharp lines, and stark contrasts gives the production a vaguely futuristic look.

Luis Carlos de la Lombana demonstrates range and subtlety in his interpretation of Segismundo. Particularly effective is the way he varies his pace and vocal register in his opening monologue as one moment he paints beautifully poetic images of freedom only to funnel them the next into intense anger and bitterness at his imprisonment. A well-conceived stage picture and dramatic lighting make this scene effective: the stage is dark except for spots trained on Rosaura and Clarín down right and left looking out at the audience, and on Segismundo at center, criss-crossed by the shadow of the tower window. Seeing Rosaura and Clarín react to

every verse of Segismundo's lament makes his soliloquy all the more powerful for the viewer. The wide-eyed wonder and childlike joy on Lombana's face as he listens to Rosaura speak in the first scene is endearing and poignant; he shows us that she is the first person who has ever expressed compassion for his suffering. Lombana's physicality is notable: during the first half of the performance (the first and second *jornadas* of the play) he often moves like an animal -- lurking, squatting, hunching, pouncing on his "prey," and even head-butting Astolfo. His movement calls to mind Shakespeare's Caliban. In the final act, of course, he stands up straight and walks with a dignified gait as he assumes the dimensions of a king.

Zulema Clares rises to the challenge of portraying the gamut of emotions that Rosaura goes through, including frustration, fear, sympathy, anger, jealousy, and determination. Clares is at her best in act three, scene two, during the heated exchange between Rosaura and Clotaldo (Alfonso Rey) concerning her resolve to avenge her stained honor by killing Astolfo. When the discussion breaks down into a shouting match with the two hurling fragmented phrases at each other, father imploring her to leave off her madness, daughter determined to bring a violent end to her predicament, the actors combine pace, timing, voice, and gesture expertly as their desperation crescendos to a wrenchingly palpable impasse. The scene in which Ro-

saura implores Segismundo to avenge her honor in act three is not as successful, as Clares' face is turned away from the audience much of the time, unlike in the opening scene of the play.

There are no weak performances from the rest of the cast. Francisco Rivela handles Basilio's long discourses with finesse; Calderon's language seems natural and easy on his tongue. Alfonso Rey is an imposing presence as Clotaldo, though he seems to glower angrily even when tenderness and compassion are called for. Gerardo Gudiño's haughty, sly Astolfo and Silvia Sierra's regal, aloof Estrella provide the perfect contrast to the passion and vulnerability of Segismundo and Rosaura. Arturo del Puerto plays a puckish Clarín; he is at his comic best at the beginning of the third act, pretending he is Segismundo before the rebel soldiers.

Jimmy Tanaka's musical score is most effective when it subtly adds to the dark, mysterious atmosphere at the beginning of each act. Cues such as the clanking of chains and the creaking of the tower door as it opens help sustain the illusion of Segismundo's prison. The martial horn music of the battle scenes and the sexy underscoring of Estrella's first entrance prove heavy-handed, however.

Robert Weber Federico's lighting design effectively establishes a distinct atmosphere for each scene in the play. As noted, he uses only isolated spots on the actors to emphasize the darkness and mystery of Segismundo's tower. He transitions

to the palace by bathing the stage in warm, rosy hues, but shifts to icy, cool lighting for more serious exchanges there, such as Basilio's expository monologue. The court glows with warm golden tones to set a different mood during Segismundo's "dream" sequence, while for much of the final act, red cross-lighting illuminates a smoky battlefield.

Repertorio Español has staged *La vida es sueño* in every decade since its inception, and the company's interpretation has evolved in the direction of simplicity. They presented the play as Buddhist philosophy in the 70s and as a labyrinth of dangling ropes in the 80s. The current production, according to Buch, is his simplest yet. As he remarked in a discussion with the audience after a performance on November 29, 2008: "No le buscamos las cinco patas al gato; fuimos aceptando lo que hizo Calderón." Indeed, what shines through in this version is the actors' engagement not only with their characters' moral dilemmas but also with the beauty and intensity of Calderón's poetry.

Don Quichotte, by Jules Massenet (1910). Dir. Ian Campbell. San Diego Opera. San Diego Civic Theater, San Diego, California. 14 February 2009 (run 14-22 February 2009).

MARIO R. MARTÍNEZ
California State University San Marcos

St. Valentine's Day 2009 was a night to remember at the opera: San Diego Opera's performance of Jule Massenet's 1910 French opera *Don Quichotte* was flawless and received a standing ovation from a full house at the Civic Theater in downtown San Diego, California. Some of opera's leading stars played the major roles. World-renowned American mezzo-soprano Denyce Graves and veteran singer for San Diego Opera, the dynamic Italian bass Ferruccio Furlanetto, played the title roles of Dulcinée and Don Quichotte respectively. As for the comic relief and loyal sidekick, Sancho Pança was played by the rich voice of Argentine bass-baritone Eduardo Chama who, in addition to the rest of the stellar cast of San Diego Opera, charmed viewers. Essentially, the opera's French libretto, written by Henri Cain, is based on a theatrical version of Cervantes's *Don Quijote*, a 1904 verse play

by the French poet Jacques Le Lorraine titled *Le chevalier de la longue figure*. As the subject of many works, *el Quijote* continues to serve as *material prima* for many an artist, yet the extent to which the work is emulated is of constant debate.

Unlike other famous operas by Massenet, such as *Mannon* and *Werther*, this opera is one that's rarely performed despite its intriguing plot and melodic lines. This may possibly be due to the fact that *Don Quichotte* is not based much on the novel at all; therefore, one should not come to this opera and expect to see a faithful rendition of *el Quijote* as it's a few times removed from the famous Spanish baroque novel. Except for the main characters (Don Quijote, Sancho Panza, and Dulcinea), the animals (Don Quijote's Rocinante and Sancho Panza's *rucio* Dapple, the donkey), and the windmill scene; there are really not many similarities to the novel. Nonetheless, the idea of chivalry and dreams, ideas that permeate the novel, are made quite apparent in this operatic work as well.

In essence, the opera consists of five acts; albeit only 2 hours in length, they detail the plot of Don Quijote in search of Dulcinea's pearl necklace that was stolen by bandits. He ultimately retrieves the necklace back from the bandits and returns it to Dulcinea who thanks Don Quijote, yet does not accept his invitation of marriage. Although rebuked, Don Quijote remains steadfast in his love for Dul-

cinea, and dies in a mountain pass under a starry sky with his faithful squire by his side.

On a literary level, this work is very much Dulcinea-based. Unlike the novel, in which Dulcinea is a mere farm girl (*moza labradora*), one whom Don Quijote has briefly seen yet has never spoken too, the opera, in accordance with the play it emulates, has much dialog with Dulcinea in both Act's I and IV. In the opera, Dulcinea is an established woman.



It is implied that she is a high-end call girl, who lives lavishly and has many suitors. For example, when Don Quijote comes back to town and returns the lost necklace to Dulcinea in Act IV, she denies his marriage proposal due to her giving of love “freely”, alluding to her promiscuous lifestyle. She lives lavishly with extravagant clothes as seen in the *fiestas* in Act I and Act IV. As a matter of fact, besides the lavish clothes of Dulcinea, all other characters wear clothing appropriate to their depictions in the novel, including Don Quijote with his antiquated armor from the Middle Ages. Rather than simply an imaginary creation in Don Quijote’s mind, Dulcinea in the opera has quite a real and commanding presence. However, the role of Sancho Panza is similar to Cervantes’ character; for example, in the opera Sancho Panza is clearly the rational mind and is the connection to earth for Don Quijote, balancing both rationality and comic relief perfectly.

The greatest similarity between the opera and the novel takes place in Act II when Don Quijote and Sancho Panza begin their adventure and come across some windmills in the countryside. Just like the windmill scene in the novel (I, 29), Don Quijote views them as giants that he must fight in Dulcinea’s honor. This act, albeit the shortest of the five, is the most lively as the scenery is absolutely breathtaking with life-sized windmills and a smoke screen depicting even more in the distance.

In the opera version, the *caballero andante* is physically caught up in the large windmill in the foreground. From the view from the audience, it looks as if the opera singer is actually taken up in the air. The orchestra peaks in a fury as the rising action and audience amazement peak as well. This was a stunning visual effect to end such an eventful act. Another similar moment, yet not quite identical to the novel, occurs when Don Quijote comes across bandits. However, rather than the bandits robbing Don Quijote and Sancho as in the novel (II, 60), Don Quijote demands the return of Dulcinea's pearl necklace. After making a mockery of the poor, old hidalgo by tying him up to a tree, they let him go as Don Quijote softly talks to the main bandit, Ténébrun, similar to Cervantes' gang leader, Roque Guinart, about having mercy and being a gentleman. Won over, the bandit chief releases Don Quijote and gives him the necklace.

After returning the necklace to Dulcinea and her declining Don Quijote's marriage proposal in Act IV, the opera concludes in Act V on a mountain pass where Don Quijote lies dying. Similar to the novel, he tenderly relates to Sancho the island that he owes him, one that he confesses to be of his imagination. Ferruccio Furlanetto does an outstanding job depicting the dying moments of Don Quixote as he shows labored breathing and the softest pianissimos. Don Quijote dies under the backdrop of a thousand stars with one bright star that reminds him

of Dulcinea, as depicted metaphorically in the Cervantine novel, la “estrella de [su] ventura” (I, 25). The fact that the opera decides to have Don Quijote die under the veil of night studded with stars shows the more romantic, dignified, and dreamy ending befitting a chivalric dreamer. This is in stark contrast with the novel that ends with a disillusioned, albeit sane, Don Quijote, in bed surrounded by friends and family as he denounces chivalry (II, 74). The “happy ending” in Massenet’s opera appears inviting, optimistic and peaceful; it’s just the kind of death that one might wish for el Quijote, a death that ends with his faithful sidekick by his side, and still believing in the dream to the very end.

On a musical level, one has to bear in mind that, as this is an opera, all dialog in the libretto is conveyed via singing in the score. From beginning to end, it’s the voices and orchestra that shed light on characterization and thematic value in the opera. One important element in this opera, unlike many other operas, is the fact that the singers can sing across stage to one another rather than face the audience at all times, as the orchestra is never too powerful to mute their voices.

This is quite apparent in the intimate scenes in which Don Quijote and Sancho Panza have their dialogues with one another. Since the orchestra serves the melodic lines, these two characters can face each other and naturally deliver their melodic lines without sacrificing audibility or having to sing over the orchestra. These moments of dialogue between arias, also known as recitatives, are very natural thus giving the dialogue a more real, more genuine, more human quality. This is also very modern in comparison to other operas, despite having been written in the early 20th century. In this sense, the opera in its entirety, from the arias to the recitatives, manages to keep the audience's attention in a very flowing, melodic and natural way.



The opera starts out with a very lively orchestra depicting the sounds of flamenco music accompanying beautiful flamenco dancing. The chorus rouses with the word “¡Alza!” Due to the orchestra having full strings and triple winds, this allows for production of many full, exotic sounds. Notable additions are the castanets and Spanish guitars that create such a full Spanish flavor. The orchestra is always full sounding but not dark. One exception may be during the bandit scene in Act III while Don Quijote is tied to a tree: we see his body tied in such a manner as Christ was to the cross. To make the notion of this Christ figure more apparent, we hear somber organ music flowing from the orchestra pit. Besides this sad, dark moment, the music is both bright and full.

When discussing the *dramatis personae* and voice types in opera, the assumption is that the heroine is always depicted as a soprano and the hero a tenor, and this opera throws these assumptions out the window. In the case of the protagonist, Don Quijote, a deep bass, delivers his lines in a very rich, mellow tone and in some cases the tempo actually slows down. This adds to the idea of a dreamy state, reflecting the thoughtful, long manner of the “countenance” of the protagonist. Sancho, in turn, a bass-baritone, sings some high notes as if to simulate Dulcinea’s voice in a very comical falsetto that made the entire audience laugh. Shortly afterwards, Sancho sings a notable aria in which he

complains about women who are minx and gossips, and who can't be trusted. He talks about women with a *mantilla* who act like saints but who, in reality, are up to no good. As for Dulcinea, we see her shine in both Acts I and IV where her smoldering and powerful mezzo-soprano voice mixes elements of flamenco music. This is most notable during the aria of Dulcinea in Act IV along with the full chorus and the Spanish guitar and castanets. Just as Sancho Panza described Dulcinea in the novel, an outspoken "moza de chapa, hecha y derecha y de pelo en pecho" (I, 25), the operatic Dulcinea played by Denyce Graves, offered the audience a singer with a grand presence on stage with a tremendous voice in both high and low ranges. The voice of this Dulcinea is similar to the protagonist in Bizet's *Carmen*, the eponymous role of a gypsy girl that Denyce Graves has performed many a time. Dulcinea's flamenco feel is conveyed via the various cadenzas, voice modals, and the infamous flamenco riffs typical of the folk singers in Spain; all of which result in the improvisation and spontaneity needed for the role of Dulcinea.

In effect, this opera, although only loosely based on Cervantes' novel, is both theatrically and musically very powerful. Despite the opera's deviance from the 17th-century text, the fact that it was an adaptation from a previous theatrical version of the novel allows it to focus on the realm of performance rather than the purely literary. Albeit anti-

thetic to Cervantes's wish that this seminal text be read and interpreted on an individual basis by each "desocupado lector" (I, Prólogo), it's clear that Massenet's preference to base the opera on Le Lorraine's theatrical version allows for the use of theatrical devices such as asides, that naturally fit well within the opera and assist in keeping the audience entertained. The insistence on the significance of the spectator's involvement found in the performance text of both the libretto and score, helps make Massenet's *Don Quichotte* the operatic success that it is today, a full century later.

¿De cuándo acá nos vino? De Lope de Vega. Dir. Rafael Rodríguez. Teatro Hospital de San Juan, Almagro, España. (3 al 12 de julio, 2009).

DAVID MARTEL CEDRÉS
Escuela de Arte Dramático de Valladolid

Éste es sin duda un ejemplo sencillo de creación teatral aparentemente fácil, por decirlo de alguna forma. Hoy he visto a una verdadera empresa teatral. Porque La Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico desde hace unos años hacia acá, menos una compañía, podría ser cualquier otra cosa. Cualquier cosa dentro de un respeto crítico. La facilidad con que cada año nos muestran diferentes obras clásicas es asombrosa. Y también por supuesto, es asombrosa su manera de hacer caja.

Para esta nueva temporada, si no cuento mal, habrán estrenado unas cuantas producciones. Esto conlleva que detrás del telón, y más atrás de la caja negra, hay un gran equipo humano que pueda ayudar en los montajes, pues no todo esto sale exclusivamente de las musas del propio director de la compañía, aunque eso es de agradecer. El tener un equipo potente en cada una de las áreas, ya sea artísticas y técnicas, te da una facilidad amplia para

crear. Y además nos encontramos con que ya no es sólo Eduardo Vasco (director de la compañía) el que dirige los montajes, ya que últimamente acude, no sé si en plan de apoyo o como una forma de dar unos aires nuevos a la compañía, a directores curtidos en el verso y con ganas de aportar nuevos bríos a la escena y sobre todo una visión diferente del teatro clásico, una versión propia de la obra a versionar. Aparentemente se empieza a delegar. Este es el caso que ha ocurrido en la puesta en escena de la versión de la obra de Lope de Vega, *¿De cuándo acá nos vino?*, que ha sido realizada por el director canario Rafael Rodríguez, cuyo bagaje teatral es muy amplio. Rodríguez nos plantea una propuesta en donde se ha revisado el texto y se ha recortado todo el planteamiento historicista inicial de la obra para basarse únicamente en la trama de enredo que envuelve la comedia y a sus personajes, dándole un ápice de calidad al montaje, ya que resulta una obra muy fresca y apetecible de ser vista.

Vuelvo a reincidir en el apartado anterior. El tener un fuerte equipo detrás, te facilita las cosas y las formas de crear en esta compañía-empresa, y que aparentemente ya están medio esquematizadas (según palabras del propio Eduardo Vasco). Por lo tanto no es de extrañar que dispongan de ese gran elenco de actores, el cual tienen cogido el verso de una forma muy natural. Y si no, para eso están los propios asesores de verso, que ayudarán en todo lo que puedan. Además no son malos precisamente

estos actores, ya que muchos de ellos compaginan las tablas con los platos televisivos o en algunos casos de cine. Es posible que algunos estén encasillados en una forma de representar y casi siempre con personajes parecidos, pero al final responden a las necesidades de la representación.

En todo lo que concierne a la puesta en escena seguimos con las mismas pautas ya dichas. El disponer de un buen escenógrafo y de un gran diseñador de luces te hace las cosas más sencillas. Y es que la combinación de estos dos elementos marcó fuertemente el potencial a esta producción. La escenografía era una propuesta modular, con un espacio central dónde se desarrollaba la acción y unos paneles pintados y móviles, y todo dentro de un habitáculo cerrado donde la convención es utilizada acertadamente para crear los ambientes diferentes, y todo ello sin menospreciar la verosimilitud. Ideal para cambios de espacios de una forma fácil y rápida. Este diseño parece una idea muy valiosa, daba un aporte creador a los actores y sobre todo para las acciones que ellos realizaban, pues podían moverse por los espacios recreando muchos juegos teatrales interesantes para la puesta en escena. Pero todo ello no podía funcionar sólo. Necesitaba una mano muy valiosa. Y el aporte lumínico fue muy generoso en ello. Contribuyó a desarrollar atmósferas bastantes agradables y algunas hasta de bella ejecución. Algunos recortes de luz fueron bastante buenos en su dirección, sobre todo aquellos provenientes detrás

de los paneles laterales, aprovechando unas pequeñas ventanas por donde se colaba la luz.

Del vestuario mejor no voy a decir nada, pues yo he tenido la suerte de ver y de tocar algunos trajes de esta compañía en otras representaciones. Para esta producción se ciñeron a un toque clásico, creando para todo el elenco un cómodo vestido (aparentemente), muy en la línea de los vestuarios costumbristas del siglo XVII pero con toques sutiles modernistas. Muchos de estos parecen fuera del alcance de cualquier otra compañía española estable. Algunos son impresionantes. Con lo único que no estoy de acuerdo es que después de cada montaje, estos vayan a parar a un almacén y no sean aprovechados por otra gente.

Simplemente con unos cuantos detalles de ingenio se daba la calidad necesaria a esta propuesta. Estos simples detalles introducían al espectador dentro del mundo imaginado por Lope de Vega, ayudado también por un verso no difícil de entender, ni siquiera cuando uno no está habituado a ver y sobre todo a no oír este género dramático.

El que va a ver una representación de La Compañía Nacional de Teatro Clásico, sabe que ésta no es una versión dramatúrgicamente renovada de una obra. Suele mantenerse frecuentemente tal cual fue creada por su autor. Por lo tanto solamente nos encontramos con obras a las que le han dado pinceladas nuevas en la puesta en escena, pero nada desde un punto de vista espectacular, aunque yo

tampoco es que haya visto todas las representaciones que realiza la compañía en cada año. Simplemente me remito a hacer una comparativa con las que sí he visto, creyendo que ésta es la línea de trabajo por la que últimamente se encuentra más cómoda esta compañía. Una línea que suele ser habitual y primordial. Este debe ser el deber de ésta compañía-empresa. Darnos a ver lo que el autor escribió en su momento. Sin cambio. Tal cual. Y que el espectador disfrute con ellas.

Life Is a Dream. Donmar Warehouse, London. October 8–November 28, 2009.

MARYRICA ORTIZ LOTTMAN
University of North Carolina Charlotte

Playwright Helen Edmundson and director Jonathan Munby have brought to the Donmar Warehouse a stirring new production of *La vida es sueño*. Edmundson has successfully adapted other classic works and recently published her verse adaptation of Calderón's masterpiece (Nick Hern Books, 2009). *Life Is a Dream* is Munby's third production of a Spanish *comedia*. He has directed two plays by Lope, *The Gentleman from Olmedo* at Britain's Newbury Theatre (2004) and the marvelous production of *The Dog in the Manger* at Washington D. C.'s Shakespeare Theater (2009). The Donmar Warehouse is currently one of the most innovative and acclaimed theaters in London. It has famously featured gifted Hollywood stars in its offerings, for example, Nicole Kidman in David Hare's *The Blue Room* (1998). In late 2009 the Donmar's *Hamlet*, with Jude Law in the lead, moved to Broadway. So it is only fitting that Spain's prince, Segismundo, be portrayed by an-

other seasoned celebrity, Dominic West from HBO's *The Wire*, a widely respected TV series.

West has performed major roles in Chekov, Shakespeare, and Tom Stoppard, but during an interview in the London *Telegraph* he called Segismundo one of the most difficult parts he had ever attempted. Inside the theater, his efforts convince you that the character is no dream. West successfully incarnates multiple aspects of the prince's personality, demonstrating anguish, anger, animal violence and even flashes of a blunt and clownish sense of humor. At the same time he subtracts nothing from Calderón's gravity and makes entirely real Segismundo's conversion to moderation and reason.



The actor's voice is equally full of exciting nuance whether he is coursing through the play's fragrant poetry or offering it as truncated prose. His height, strength, and physicality let him appropriately dominate the other characters in key scenes, though all give fine performances. Confined to his tower cell, Segismundo flings himself on the floor and his whole body yanks at the chain. Inside his father's royal court, he runs off stage shouldering the servant that he will toss into the sea. On his return he vaingloriously congratulates himself for having thrown the man off the balcony since "he wouldn't fit through the window" (a comic detail added by Edmundson). The first time Segismundo takes the throne he overpowers it by perching on its arm and resting his boots on the seat as if his prison cell had given him no prior experience of chairs.

Director Jonathan Munby has invented any number of telling gestures and poses for all the characters, and he has added several brief scenes to Helen Edmundson's script and Calderón's original. When Rosaura tells Clotaldo that her trousers are a disguise she boldly places his hand on her breast. The dialogues between Segismundo and Clotaldo are blocked in such a way as to bring out Segismundo's conflicted attitude toward his jailor, the only father he has ever known. When Segismundo first sees Clotaldo at court he is so frightened that he flees running backwards, though a few moments later he kneels before the man and embraces his

legs, seeking comfort. A similar demonstration of Segismundo's Stockholm syndrome occurs when Clotaldo returns him to his jail cell. Clotaldo sets on the floor a metal dish of water, where Segismundo both drinks and washes his face. Segismundo shouts wild defiance, but when Clotaldo clicks his fingers the prince automatically hands him the still half-full bowl--a meek example of learned behaviors.



In an invented scene the lights are lowered while two servants carry diagonally across the stage the limp, silent, drugged Segismundo. Another invented scene occurs after the intermission and identifies Clarion (Clarín) with Segismundo. As the audience exits, Segismundo sleeps in the center of the darkened stage, having just delivered his best known soliloquy. When we return he lies there still. Two figures in long black robes and pointed hoods,

like *penitentes* from a Semana Santa procession, preside over the mimed torture of an unknown prisoner who is chained to a wall. While the Segismundo figure writhes on the floor we hear shouts of “I know nothing” as if we were witnessing the Inquisition’s torments. Suddenly we discover that it is Clarion (in clothes identical to Segismundo’s) who has been lying on the floor and who has just awakened from a nightmare in his cell.

At first glance, the set of the Donmar’s *Life Is a Dream* seems stripped bare, but the longer we examine it the more we recognize its subtle ability to universalize the actions on stage. In the entire production the only piece of furniture is King Basilio’s throne, and the only other object set on the floor is Segismundo’s water bowl. The rough brick wall at the back of the stage wears a thin, irregular layer of copper and bronze, which late in the play we recognize as a map of the world. Bare yet decorative light bulbs hang down at intervals, suggesting the starry firmament and reminding us of the names Estrella and Astrea. A chandelier hangs high above the actors’ heads and seemingly beyond the ken of the characters they portray; it consists of a gold ring, and at its center hangs an oil lamp made of ornately perforated gold. Late in the play we see that the gold ring has slowly released its interior rings, which now tilt at angles and together resemble an astrolabe and/ or the orbiting of planets around the sun-lamp.

A final mention should be made of this production's intelligent use of color and costumes. The characters dress as if from the Napoleonic era, yet their anachronistic armor seems entirely right, just as does the mix of classically Spanish elements—*penitentes*, flamenco stomping and *palmeo*—in the royal court of Poland. The costumes are almost entirely limited to white, black, red, and blue, and these colors signal inner transformations and at times create parallels between characters, as when Segismundo is visually compared to Basilio and later to Clarion. In the battle scenes Segismundo wears not only a royal sash across his chest but on top of it the pelt of a freshly skinned wolf, and he smears his face with its blood. As a result we are all the more surprised when the prince overcomes his animalistic tendencies and chooses reason. Color coding sometimes adds dimension to minor characters. Basilio wears a long black coat in Act 1, but later, when Estrella accuses him of abdicating responsibility, it is she who wears such a coat while he stands around in shirt sleeves. In the closing scenes both Estrella and Rosaura wear breast plates over their costly gowns, and the effect increases our estimation of Estrella's courage, making her a more worthy bride for Segismundo.

Book Reviews

Bayliss, Robert. *The Discourse of Courtly Love in Seventeenth-Century Spanish Theater*. Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 2008. 204 pp.

RUTH SÁNCHEZ IMIZCOZ
The University of the South

En la introducción a su libro, Robert Bayliss establece como la influencia del discurso del amor cortés llega hasta la comedia en la España del siglo XVII. De forma general plantea los orígenes y formulas del amor cortés y como este discurso, como medio lingüístico, funciona en la representación del deseo a la hora de la representación. Bayliss también indica que uno de los puntos centrales de este libro es que las representaciones del amor cortés escritas por mujeres pueden arrojar nueva luz sobre las tradiciones patriarcales a las que responden con sus escritos (18). Para demostrar las diferencias a la hora de usar este discurso, en cada capítulo analiza una obra escrita por un hombre y otra escrita por una mujer,

En el primer capítulo, titulado “The Legacy of the Troubador Self-Absorption,” intenta crear la cadena de influencia entre la poesía trovadoresca medieval provenzal y el drama aurisecular a través

el análisis del discurso del amor cortés. Las dos obras teatrales que analiza en este capítulo son *La dama boba* de Lope de Vega y *La traición en la amistad* de María de Zayas. Antes del estudio de estas dos obras, Bayliss presenta la dicotomía existente entre la producción del trovador (con los ejemplos de Bernart de Ventadorn y Jaufre Rudel) y de la trovadora, y la noción de “uno mismo” (*the self*), con la idea de establecer un contexto diacrónico y amplio desde el cual poder estudiar como los dos géneros (masculino y femenino) dentro del discurso afectan el discurso de la comedia

El segundo capítulo, “Duty and Desire: The Discourses of Courtly love, Chivalry, and Honor,” explora los problemas que surgen al cambiar el medio de expresión de la poesía a la representación teatral. Vemos como el discurso del amor cortés entra a formar parte las comedias de capa y espada y es usado para expresar el deseo carnal, cuando las convenciones sociales lo reprimen. Así presenta el sentido caballeresco medieval como contrapartida del honor aurisecular, ya que ambos favorecen a la comunidad sobre el individuo (68). A lo largo de este capítulo estudia los *lais* de Marie de France y *Erec et Enide* de Chrétien de Troyes como base referencial a las dos obras españolas que analizará posteriormente, *La dama duende* de Calderón y *La firmeza en la ausencia* de Leonor de la Cueva y Silva. A través de este capítulo se ve la dualidad de-

seo-obligación y como es tratada a lo largo de los siglos.

En el último capítulo analiza no sólo el teatro sino que presenta también los cambios sufridos por este discurso amoroso a través de la narrativa del *Decamerón* de Boccaccio y del *Quijote* de Cervantes. “Discursive Interplay: The Ethics of Courtly Love, Decorum, and Interpretation” es el título de este capítulo que va presentar el conflicto de discursos (104). Puesto que a la larga de lo que habla es del amor en sus dos vertientes: *caritas* y *cupiditas*, las dos obras que Bayliss analiza son *Los empeños de un casa* de Sor Juana y *El caballero de Olmedo* de Lope de Vega. Y el estudio de esta comedia por supuesto trae a colación un análisis del discurso de *La Celestina*.

En la conclusión Bayliss remarca la importancia de leer las comedias como una conversación entre los autores masculinos y femeninos.

Cartagena Calderón, José R. *Masculinidades en obras: El drama de la hombría en la España imperial*. Juan de la Cuesta—Hispanic Monographs. Newark, Delaware: Juan de la Cuesta, 2008. 382pp . Paper \$26.95.

RUTH SÁNCHEZ IMIZCOZ
The University of the South

El presente libro es un estudio de los problemas con los que se confrontaba la sociedad, sobre todo la sección masculina, de la España aurisecular y como a través de diversas obras de diferentes autores, éstos presentan o un ideal a seguir, o en otros casos una burla a una situación que se daba en la España de los siglos XVI y XVII.

En su introducción “masculinidades en crisis y bajo escrutinio”, Cartagena, a través de una serie importante de autores y trabajos, presenta la situación política, social y económica de España y lo que parece ser la causa de la crisis de la hombría de los varones españoles. A través de este capítulo introductorio se van a presentar las dos caras de la moneda, por un lado la crisis y cómo la veían los críticos contemporáneos de la época y por otro lado la

abundante literatura que trataba de (re)construir o dar dirección a esa masculinidad.

Los dos primeros capítulos siguen básicamente el mismo formato. A través del análisis de dos obras de Lope de Vegas, se construye el caballero ideal, el noble heroico. Sin embargo este noble ha de tener un opuesto y esto se va a ver reflejado en la alteridad masculina musulmana (26) en el primer capítulo y en la otredad masculina americana (27) en el segundo capítulo. El capítulo 3 analiza un episodio en particular del *Quijote* y la representación del entremés, también de Cervantes, de *El retablo de las maravillas*. El cuarto capítulo trata tanto la representación en las tablas como en la prosa y la vida real de los cortesanos, los lindos y los sodomitas. El último capítulo a forma de epílogo está dedicado a la monja alférez.

El primer capítulo titulado: “Moros y cristianos: la comedia lopesca y la reconquista de la masculinidad,” analiza en detalle dos obras de Lope de Vega, una temprana y otra tardía. *Los hechos de Garcilaso de la Vega y moro Tarfe* que Lope compuso cuando adolescente (72) y *La envidia en la nobleza* que compuso más tarde cuando ya sabía muy bien lo que hacía a la hora de escribir comedias. La primera tiene que ver con la pérdida / conquista de Granada y la huida de Boabdil, la segunda con caída en desgracia de los Abencerrajes. En ambas obras los personajes cristianos demuestran una superioridad no sólo física sino moral ante sus equi-

valentes masculinos musulmanes y ésta es a la larga la lección de masculinidad y españolidad que se intenta enseñar a los nobles domesticados de la corte.

En el segundo capítulo titulado “¡Oh cobarde afeminado!”: la masculinidad de la Conquista y la conquista de la masculinidad en la comedia indiana lopesca,” también a través de dos obras de Lope, analiza la construcción de un héroe y de como debería ser el comportamiento del noble aurisecular. Esta vez, el enemigo es ese ser diferente que se encontró en las Indias, “esa otredad racial y étnica” (119) a la que había que conquistar y convertir como ya se había hecho con los moros. Para el análisis de este capítulo Cartagena presenta las obras de *El Nuevo Mundo descubierto por Cristóbal Colón* y *el Arauco domado*. Si en el capítulo anterior los moros eran seres “desmasculinizado[s] y vencido[s] por su entrega a la pasión amorosa y el apetito carnal” (128), los indios no llevan mejor camino, ya que Lope volverá a conectar todas estas ideas con ésta nueva etnia.

En el tercer capítulo Cartagena cambia el ritmo del libro y abandona a Lope de Vega por Cervantes. El título del capítulo: “Los avatares de la hombría en el *Quijote* y *El retablo de las maravillas*” nos presenta la idea del cambio, la posibilidad de que esté surgiendo una nueva masculinidad enlazada ahora con la cultura urbana y cortesana y que no tiene nada que ver con el guerrero medieval, de la reconquista o de la conquista de ultramar. Este

capítulo además nos presenta con una lectura distinta a los dos anteriores. A través del episodio del soldado paje (capítulo 24) del *Quijote*, “Cervantes nos invita a explorar el tema de la masculinidad en relación a la sexualidad y, más específicamente, en conexión con el deseo homoerótico” (212), tema que enlazará con las “masculinidades vueltas al revés” en su análisis de los personajes y de los nombres de éstos en *El retablo de las maravillas*.

El capítulo cuatro se titula “Él es tan rara persona”: sobre cortesanos, lindos y sodomitas en la España aurisecular.” Este capítulo enlaza perfectamente con las ideas presentadas en el anterior y va más allá, ya que empieza con un análisis de *El toreador* de Calderón y de la figura de Juan Rana, de ahí pasa al estudio de *El vergonzoso en palacio* y la pérdida de masculinidad, para terminar hablando *El lindo don Diego* que representa “la deformación caricaturesca del noble afeminado tildado de sodomita” (309).

El Epílogo subtulado: “las paradojas del cuerpo, sexo y género en una travestí transatlántica” trata del la monja alférez, ya que ésta encierra en sí misma, hasta cierto punto, todos los elementos que según Lope debe tener un hombre masculino, y más aún, al defender su virginidad, prueba tener todos los elementos de la mujer perfecta (334) creando de esta forma un rompecabezas.

Es imposible hacerle justicia a este libro en sólo mil palabras, ya que no sólo cubre los textos

arriba mencionados sino que da una visión de la España aurisecular a través toda una serie de documentos tanto de la época estudiada como de los investigadores posteriores. Altamente recomendado.

Vélez de Guevara. Luis. *Reinar después de morir*.
Ed. William R. Manson and C. George Peale. *Ediciones críticas* N^o 47. Newark, DE: Juan de la Cuesta, 2008. 178pp.

DAWN L. SMITH
Trent University, Canada

With this latest edition in the Juan de la Cuesta series of critical studies of the *comedias* of Luis Vélez de Guevara, William R. Manson and C. George Peale turn their attention to his best-known play, *Reinar después de morir*. Although generally regarded as a lyrical masterpiece, a model of dramatic structure and one of the great tragedies of Spanish Golden Age theater, today it still lacks the recognition accorded to plays by Lope, Tirso or Calderón.

In the introduction to this new edition, Donald R. Larson looks closely at the different definitions of tragedy that critics have applied to the play and concludes that none of them is fully adequate: one invokes the neo-Aristotelian theory of *hamartia* (Weber), another approaches it as the conflict between the two imperatives of love and duty (Whit-

by), a third cites the principle of diffused responsibility (Sullivan).

Larson believes that Inés is “el centro emocional de la obra” (22) and he rejects the conventional view that an innocent victim cannot be a tragic figure. He buttresses his argument with examples from literature ranging from Euripides to Lorca and Arthur Miller, and including Lope’s *El caballero de Olmedo*. In particular, he cites Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*, in which, like *Reinar después de morir*, the tragedy falls on innocent victims (although arguably, neither Romeo nor Pedro is entirely innocent of responsibility). As well, in both plays the protagonists attempt to ignore the political reality of their respective situations and pay a terrible price.

Unlike earlier critics, today’s audiences have little difficulty recognizing the sacrifice of innocents as tragic. Although we still refer to ‘*hubris*’ or ‘*hamartia*’ (or even ‘tragic flaw’), the concept of what we consider heroic has also changed and more usually refers to acts of physical bravery than to outcomes of individual behavior.

Larson suggests that for Vélez the dominant theme in the play was “la naturaleza del amor y su destrucción inevitable en un mundo dominado por fuerzas basadas en otros esquemas muy distintos, pero también legítimos” (24). This is also a familiar theme in today’s world, where individuals are often divided by civil war, factional conflict or oth-

er wrenching choices (witness the tragic example of Aung San Suu Kyi). If *Romeo and Juliet* finds a modern counterpart in *West Side Story*, it is not difficult to imagine a contemporary version of *Reinar* to fit our troubled times. This concept of tragedy pits the protagonist/s against an immovable force that comes close to the Greek view of a world ruled by pitiless gods and blind fate.

Larson opts for a more nuanced definition, in which (citing the critic Max Scheler) the conflicting forces offer values that are equally positive, with one ultimately prevailing over the other (38). According to this view, the two assassins are the villains of the tragedy, while the King and D^a Blanca are seen with some sympathy as further victims of the events set in motion by the demands of their political duty. Certainly, such a reading gives these characters greater psychological weight.

Quoting British critic Terry Eagleton's assertion that "[tragedy] reminds us of what we cherish in the act of seeing it destroyed" (39), Larson suggests that, while we are saddened by the tragic story of D^a Inés, it also brings us a certain satisfaction: "nos permite vislumbrar su inestimable riqueza humana".

This is a useful redefinition of catharsis, more attuned to the present time than the traditional neo-Aristotelian concept of the purgative effect of pity and horror. It is a fitting conclusion to Larson's stimulating introduction, which also discusses

Vélez's use of metaphor to represent the encroachment of the *corte* on the idyllic space inhabited by Inés. A careful analysis of structure and language shows how Vélez skilfully creates an organic unity and builds the play to its dramatic conclusion. It is a pity that the translation of Larson's original English text is often clumsy and uneven, obscuring the sharpness of his perceptive arguments.

George Peale's detailed account of the play's textual transmission (the edition includes variants from eleven versions in footnotes to the text) attests to its popularity from the first known printings in the 1640s. Presumably it was also successful in the theater although, apart from a footnote documenting a palace performance in the 1680s, there is no mention of any other performances, either in its own time, or in the following centuries. In recent times, this may also reflect a general reluctance to venture beyond a limited number of plays by the three principal Golden Age playwrights.

As Peale points out, critics have tended to emphasize the play's lyricism and use of metaphor. He himself suggests that Suzanne Langer's concept of "significant form" may be usefully applied to *Reinar* "[para] denotar la expresión concertada de las formas verbalmente inefables de lo percibido, de *sentience*"(48).

Although studies of the play have been predominantly philological and literary, an attentive

reader of the text soon becomes aware of its performative power, precisely because of its poetic language and structure. These offer unusual psychological and dramatic depth and demand to be developed in the physical dimension of the theater. Ideally, the play requires a director with the courage and imagination to allow the text to speak for itself, without resorting to distracting gimmicks.

This new edition offers refreshing ways of looking at the play in a modern context. It also offers a clear version of the text with adequate endnotes, as well as an ample and useful bibliography of the critical literature (mainly in English and Spanish). It is to be hoped that it will also help to rekindle interest in *Reinar después de morir* and to bring the play back to the stage where it belongs.

Andrés de Claramonte. *El valiente negro en Flandes*. Edición para actores y directores de Nelson López. Kassel: Edition Reichenberger, 2007. 276 páginas.

BALTASAR FRA-MOLINERO
Bates College

Si hay una obra que en su tiempo tuvo una popularidad solo equiparable a su interesado olvido en el siglo XIX es *El valiente negro en Flandes* de Andrés de Claramonte. Esta comedia es una fuente enorme de datos sobre la diferencia racial, el significado del color de la piel y la marginación de los negros en el mundo de la Monarquía hispánica de los primeros tiempos modernos. Esta obra, además, fue muy representada, tanto en España como en la América española y portuguesa. Hay noticias de su representación en Brasil incluso en 1803. Hay razones fundadas para suponer que ésta comedia fue una de las favoritas de las cofradías religiosas de negros, mulatos y pardos del continente Americano, lo que le conferiría un especial valor político. Por si fuera poco, el crítico Alfredo Rodríguez López Vázquez, especialista en la obra de Andrés de Claramonte, descubrió que *El valiente negro en Flandes* es una

obra de dos finales. La edición más usada, la de la Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, sigue una impresión de 1638, considerada la princeps, había sufrido la mutilación de dos escenas fundamentales al final de la obra que cambiaban radicalmente su significado. Las diferencias textuales en las distintas reimpressiones de los siglos XVII y XVIII obligan a Nelson López, autor de esta nueva edición, a no llamarla crítica sino síntesis de las ediciones anteriores. El propósito de Nelson López, crítico académico a la vez que hombre de teatro, ha sido elaborar un instrumento de uso para la posible escenificación de esta obra en el siglo XXI.

La introducción está dividida en tres partes, a las que precede la declaración del objetivo del libro, que es elaborar un texto canónico de *El valiente negro en Flandes* como “playscript” para uso en los ensayos de una representación. Nelson López es un seguidor de las teorías de representación de Constantin Stanislavski, que insistió en que el actor se preparase e investigase las circunstancias de su personaje. De ahí que López haga un resumen para actores y director del ambiente histórico y social de la presencia española en Flandes entre 1567 y 1572. De menos interés para actores y director es la segunda parte de la introducción, en que se establecen los criterios que se siguieron para establecer el texto canónico a partir de las varias ediciones antiguas. Esta sección tiene el valor de aclarar la cuestión de los dos finales de la obra, el que contempla la boda

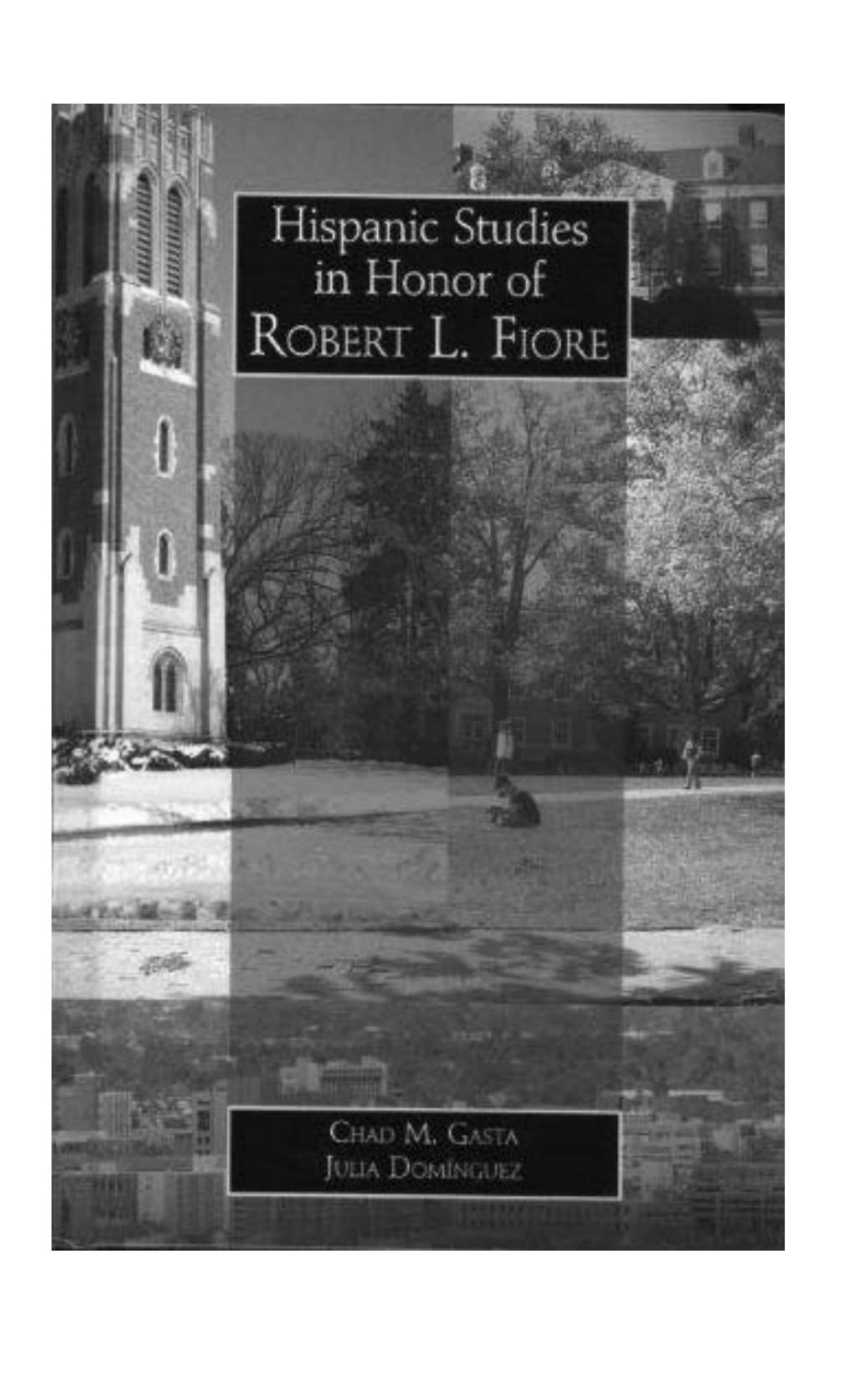
del protagonista con una mujer blanca y de la aristocracia frente a la versión truncada en que el protagonista no se casa ni obtiene la cruz de la Orden de Santiago. La tercera parte consiste en una detallada instrucción para la puesta en escena de *El valiente negro en Flandes* como si se fuera a hacer en un corral de comedias, o en un escenario que imite el espacio escénico del corral. Esta propuesta escénica tiene pleno sentido, más allá de dar placer a los puristas del teatro clásico español. La limitación del corral, vista desde la perspectiva de las técnicas escénicas actuales, le da al actor la oportunidad de meterse en la realidad de los personajes de una comedia del siglo XVII. A diferencia del teatro de corrales en el siglo XVII, las técnicas de iluminación modernas se usan en este “playscript” para dividir cada jornada en cuadros que representan momentos del día o estaciones del año diferentes, especialmente la diferenciación entre los ambientes de España en verano y Flandes en diciembre, con toda la carga simbólica que tiene en el texto de la obra de Claromonte. Los decorados quedan reducidos a elementos muy esquemáticos que apenas requieren interrupción en la acción. López desea que la producción sea “visualmente rica” y para ello insiste en la necesidad de una buena elección de vestuario que se aproxime a los trajes de los retratos de la época y sobre todo en el uso adecuado de la iluminación.

El tratamiento del texto de *El valiente negro en Flandes* es lo más sobresaliente de esta edición.

El texto de la obra va en las páginas impares y en las pares se desarrolla el comentario de las escenas y el movimiento de actores, con diagramas y tablas que guían al director en los aspectos del sonido, la luz, el movimiento de los actores en el escenario y comentarios de la acción interna de cada escena, con indicación de los versos correspondientes cuando es necesario. El texto de la comedia propiamente dicho se rige por criterios de edición escolar, con abundantes explicaciones culturales, históricas o de aclaración del significado de ciertas expresiones y acciones. Se trata de una presentación limpia y muy pedagógica. El autor de esta reseña ha usado este texto con gran éxito entre estudiantes universitarios estadounidenses a nivel subgraduado. La edición se completa con un glosario de términos teatrales usados en los comentarios de acción y movimientos y con ejemplos de plantillas para los actores y para el director en que se acotan y resumen las instrucciones que se hacen en los comentarios.

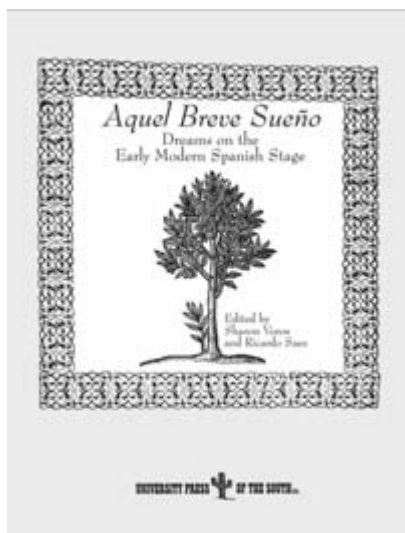
Durante el siglo XX hubo ya representaciones de *El valiente negro en Flandes*, una en La Habana en 1938 y otra en Alcalá de Henares en 1997. Llevar a escena esta obra planteó entonces y sigue planteando hoy varios problemas estéticos de alcance político. En la representación de La Habana hubo un actor negro en el papel protagonista, no así en el caso de Alcalá de hace poco más de una década, en que el actor que hacía de Juan de Mérida llevaba la cara pintada. El director Luis Dorrego, en la

España de 1997, no encontraba entre los estudiantes de Alcalá de Henares un actor negro que pudiera encarar el papel protagonista. Nelson López no dedica espacio en su edición a la elección del elenco de actores y especialmente del personaje de Juan de Mérida y la figura del otro personaje negro, el gracioso Antón. Una representación de esta obra en Estados Unidos o en casi cualquier país de habla española hoy en día, no debería, ya sea a nivel universitario o comercial, descuidar el aspecto de la elección de estos actores. La presencia de actores negros en la escena de una comedia del teatro áureo es una propuesta tan atractiva en los tiempos presentes como lo fue en el siglo XVII.



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Contributing to Part II, dedicated exclusively to Calderón's *La vida es sueño*, are Nelson López, Christian Andrès, Ricardo Sáez, and Christine Aguilar-Adan. Topics include staging and directing *La vida es sueño*, a comparative study on Pierre Boasituau's *Theatrum Mundi* and Calderón's *La vida es sueño* and *El gran teatro del mundo*, poetic structure and style in the *redondillas* of *La vida es sueño*, and *La vida es sueño* and the political institution of the prince.

Teresa de Ávila

LETTERED WOMAN



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