

Lincoln Center Festival 2007

July 10–July 29

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THEATER FROM ARGENTINA, CHILE, MEXICO AND SPAIN SHOWCASED AT LINCOLN CENTER FESTIVAL, JULY 10-29

The rich diversity of the flourishing Latin American and Spanish theater scene will be showcased throughout the *Lincoln Center Festival* July 10-29 by four participating ensembles hailing from Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Spain. There will be three North American premieres. The productions reveal a wide variety of theatrical styles and thematic concerns.

Compañía Teatro Cinema from Santiago, Chile, opens the *Festival* on July 10 with *Gemelos*, a stylized, deeply moving piece based on *The Notebook*, the searing 1986 novel by contemporary Hungarian writer Agota Kristof. In the second week, Proyecto Chejov from Argentina brings its production of *Un Hombre que se Ahoga*, a freely interpreted version of *The Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov directed by Daniel Veronese. Also in week two, Mexico's Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes will perform Jorge Kuri and Claudio Valdéz Kuri's *De Monstruos y Prodigios: La Historia de los Castrati*, a surreal survey of the history of the castrati, their beginnings, their lives and loves, and their roles in high society—from the Baroque period to the early 20th century. In the last week of the Festival, Spain's Centro Dramático Nacional offers theater lovers a rare opportunity to see *Divinas Palabras* by pioneering Spanish playwright Ramón del Valle-Inclán (1866-1936), one of the seminal figures of modern drama whose work anticipated Beckett, Ionesco, Genet, and Arrabal. His scathingly grotesque tragic-comedy *Divinas Palabras* was written in 1920.

The series was organized by Olga Garay, a leader in cultural exchange programs between Latin America and the United States for over 20 years.

All of the plays will be performed in Spanish, with English supertitles

COMPAÑÍA TEATRO CINEMA (Chile)

Gemelos (North American Premiere)

A free adaptation of the novel by Agota Kristof

Written by Laura Pizarro, Juan Carlos Zagal and Jaime Lorca

Directed by Laura Pizarro, Juan Carlos Zagal and Jaime Lorca

Original music by Juan Carlos Zagal

Lighting by Juan Cristóbal Castillo

Scenery, Artifacts and Props by Rodrigo Bazaes, Eduardo Jiménez, Laura Pizarro, Jaime Lorca, and Juan Carlos Zagal

Costumes by Rodrigo Bazaes, Eduardo Jiménez, Laura Pizarro, Jaime Lorca, and Juan Carlos Zagal

With

Laura Pizarro, Diego Fontecilla, and Juan Carlos Zagal

5 performances:

Tuesday, July 10 at 8:30 p.m.; Wednesday, July 11 at 8:30 p.m.; Thursday, July 12 at 8:30 p.m.;

Friday, July 13 at 8:30 p.m.; Saturday, July 14 at 8:30 p.m.

Pope Auditorium, Fordham University, West 60th Street and Columbus Avenue

Tickets: \$50

Santiago's Compañía Teatro Cinema will perform *Gemelos*, a chilling play about twin brothers who grow up living with their grandmother while learning the harsh reality of a devastating war. *Gemelos* was created by performers Laura Pizarro, Juan Carlos Zagal and Jaime Lorca both former members of the well-known Chilean theater group La Troppa, along with Jaime Lorca, another La Troppa member. First performed in 1999, it is based on the novel *The Notebook*, published in 1986 as the first book in a trilogy by Hungarian writer Agota Kristof (b. 1935), a provocative exponent of European new-wave fiction. Her novel has been described as a blend of *Hansel and Gretel* and Jerzy N. Kosinski's *The Painted Bird*.

Using a device familiar to lovers of silent film, *Gemelos* begins with an iris eye that opens and closes on a series of vignettes. Wearing a variety of half-masks, the three renowned Chilean actors perform all the roles on a small-scale stage with a simulated Italian proscenium, creating a forced perspective that gives the illusion that they are the size of puppets. This visually stunning and dramatically powerful piece won all the major theater awards in Chile. The company has since toured it to Argentina, Portugal, France, Spain Mexico, Italy, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, Brazil and Korea.

This will be Compañía Teatro Cinema's *Lincoln Center Festival* debut.

Free symposium: Compañía Teatro Cinema - *Gemelos*

Friday, July 13, 2007 6:00 PM

Barnes & Noble, 3rd Floor Event Space
1972 Broadway, at 66th Street

Performers and co-creators Laura Pizarro and Juan Carlos Zagal and producer Dauno Totoro in conversation with Cristian Campos, Cultural Attache of the Chilean Embassy.

PROYECTO CHEJOV (Argentina)

Un Hombre que se Ahoga (North American Premiere)

A freely interpreted version of *The Three Sisters* by Anton Chekhov

Directed by Daniel Veronese

Scenery by Daniel Veronese

Lighting by Gonzalo Córdova

With

Claudio Da Passano, Adriana Ferrer, Gabriela Ferrero, Malena Figó, María Figueras, Fernando Llosa, Marta Lubos, Pablo Messiez, Elvira Onetto, Silvina Sabater, Luciano Suardi, and Claudio Tolcachir.

3 performances:

Tuesday, July 17, Wednesday, July 18, and Thursday, July 19 at 8 p.m.

Venue: Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 W. 65th Street

Tickets: \$50

Lincoln Center Festival will present *Un Hombre que se Ahoga* a new 90-minute adaptation of Chekhov's *The Three Sisters* performed by Proyecto Chejov. The director is Daniel Veronese, former Artistic Director of Argentina's celebrated theater company El Periférico de Objetos. El Periférico de Objetos, last seen in New York performing Heiner Muller's *Hamletmachine* (which played major arts festivals around the world) in 2000, was renowned for its political and confrontational productions, many of them combining puppets and life-size dolls with actors onstage. Veronese's own play, the visceral *Women Dreamt Horses*, was recently performed in New York as part of the "Buenos Aires in Translation" festival at PS 122 in November 2006.

The director has taken a bold approach to staging the iconic Chekhov play, *The Three Sisters*, by reversing the gender of the characters. He initially cast the best actors he could find for the production, but he soon realized that the gender of the actors he had so carefully recruited did not fit the characters in Chekhov's masterpiece. He also found that the play's language and action was not essentially rooted in gender. And so in Veronese's version, it is the women who make decisions and the men who wait. All of the characters, however, as in Chekhov's time, live within the confines of their own daily dissatisfaction.

Veronese's production has no music, no theatrical lighting, no costumes, and no makeup. The actors perform in street clothes. There are no entrances or exits. The twelve actors are on the stage during the entire piece. There is no attempt by the actors to assume gestures reflecting the

gender they are playing. Bereft of technical effects or scenery, the work is seen through words and actions that often seem on parallel tracts. One soon forgets that the sexes are inverted. But this imaginative adaptation captures the Chekhovian themes: the tedium of the provincial life, the frustration due to lack of opportunities, and the mind set of the middle class.

Post-performance discussion Proyecto Chejov – *Un Hombre que se Ahoga*

Wednesday, July 18, 2007

Mitzi E. Newhouse Theater, 150 West 65th Street

Actors Luciano Suardi and Pablo Messiez discuss this unique adaptation of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*. Moderated by Emily Mann, Artistic Director of the McCarter Theatre.

TEATRO DE CIERTOS HABITANTES (Mexico)

De Monstruos y Prodigios: La Historia de los Castrati

By Jorge Kuri and Claudio Valdés Kuri

Inspired by *The World of the Castrati: The History of an Extraordinary Operatic Phenomenon*

by Patrick Barbier

Directed by Claudio Valdés Kuri

With

Raúl Román, Gastón Yanes, Javier Medina, Kaveh Parmas, Edwin Calderón, Miguel Angel López,
and

Luis Fernando Villegas

3 performances:

Friday, July 20 at 8 p.m.; Saturday, July 21 at 8 p.m.; Sunday, July 22 at 3 p.m.

Gerald W. Lynch Theater, John Jay College, Amsterdam Avenue between West 58th and 59th Streets

Tickets: \$50

The Mexico City-based Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes will perform *De Monstruos y Prodigios: La Historia de los Castrati*, directed by Claudio Valdés Kuri. The play was written by Jorge Kuri and Claudio Valdés Kuri and based in part on Patrick Barbier's 1996 book *The History of the Castrati*.

At the dawn of the 18th century, a Neapolitan barber started the practice of castration to preserve the soprano *tessitura* in the voices of young boys. *De Monstruos y Prodigios* depicts how these male sopranos created a sensation in the Baroque world. The most successful became the darlings of high society; the failures, which were the majority of the castrati, were cast aside. The play, using extreme physical comedy coupled with live vocal, violin, and harpsichord performances, reveals the musical brilliance, gross decadence, and harsh violence surrounding three centuries of this bizarre practice.

Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes was founded in 1997, and has performed at many international venues and festivals, including at the Kennedy Center and Chicago's Goodman Theatre, and has made several national tours throughout Mexico. *De Monstruos y Prodigios* was given its premiere in 2000 in Spain, was performed for many months in a commercial run in Mexico City, and it has been performed in Caracas, Brussels, and Miami. This will be Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes' *Lincoln Center Festival* debut. The troupe previously performed an earlier version of *De Monstruos y Prodigios* in New York at the Duke on 42nd Street Theater.

Teatro de Ciertos Habitantes – *De Monstruos y Prodigios*

Saturday, July 21, 2007, post-performance discussion

Gerald W. Lynch Theater at John Jay College

A conversation with director Claudio Valdés Kuri and performer Javier Medina.

CENTRO DRÁMATICO NACIONAL (Spain)

Divinas Palabras (North American Premiere)

By Ramón del Valle-Inclán

adapted by Juan Mayorga

Directed by Gerardo Vera

Scenery by Ricardo Sánchez Cuerda and Gerardo Vera

Costumes by Alejandro Andújar

Lighting by Juan Gómez-Cornejo

Music by Luis Delgado

Video design by Alvaro Luna

With:

Fidel Almansa, Ester Bellver, Sonsoles Benedicto, Míriam Cano, Paco Dénize, Charo Gallego, Gabriel Garbisu, Carlota Gaviño, Emilio Gavira, Elisabet Gelabert, Elena González, Alicia Hermida, Daniel Holguín, Javier Lara, Jesús Noguero, Pietro Olivera, Idoia Ruiz de Lara, Sergio Sánchez, Fernando Sansegundo, Julieta Serrano, Julia Trujillo, Pablo Vásquez, and Abel Vitón

3 performances:

Thursday, July 26 , Friday, July 27 and Saturday, July 28 at 8 p.m.

Rose Theater, Frederick P. Rose Hall, 60th Street and Broadway

Tickets: \$20, 30, 40, 50

Written for 40 characters, Ramón del Valle-Inclán's *Divinas Palabras* is a breathtaking spectacle that reveals the difficulties of rural life among impoverished peasants whose struggles to survive are only soothed by religion and the hope for redemption after death. Twenty-three actors from Madrid's Centro Dramático Nacional, established in 1978 by the Spanish Ministry of Culture, create this extraordinary production on a grand scale. Under the direction of Gerardo Vera, former winner of Spain's National Theatre Prize, Centro Dramático Nacional is known for integrating

currents of contemporary Spanish dramatic art into its productions.

Novelist, poet, essayist, journalist, and playwright, the unclassifiable and politically subversive Ramón del Valle-Inclán was the most noteworthy and certainly the most radical dramatist working to subvert the traditionalism of the Spanish theatrical establishment in the early part of the 20th century. His work had a great influence on the later generations of Spanish playwrights. He was a member of the Generation of '98, a Spanish literary movement active at the time of the Spanish-American War in 1898 which proclaimed a moral and cultural rebirth for Spain. An eccentric who cultivated bizarre legends about himself, he loved the fabulous and the mysterious. "The Galician poet of the grotesque" (*The Guardian*), Valle-Inclán bitterly satirized Spanish society in the early 20th century, especially its restrained sexual mores as dictated by the Catholic Church. His source material was often risqué fables and his characters were mostly drawn from the peasant class of Galicia, the northwestern province of Spain where he was born. He created a genre he called "esperpento", which broadly means grotesque tragic-comedy, reminiscent of the nightmare etchings of Goya.

From its founding in 1978, the Centro Dramático Nacional's (CDN) primary mission has been to disseminate and consolidate the various schools and trends in contemporary dramaturgy, with a special focus on the work of current Spanish playwrights. Since its creation, CDN has offered more than three hundred theatrical productions. Outstanding among these are plays representing a complete panorama of 20th century Spanish dramatic art, including works by: Valle-Inclán, García Lorca, Jardiel Poncela, Max Aub, Buero Vellejo, Alfonso Sastre, Francisco Nieva, Fernando Arrabal, and Juan Mayorga. During the nearly three decades of the CDN's history, its productions have benefited from the participation of the most prominent directors, set designers, actors and actresses, costume designers, and professionals from Spain, as well as distinguished figures of the international stage.

The performances of the Centro Dramático Nacional are made possible with the generous help of the Ministerio de Cultura, Instituto Nacional de las Artes Escenicas y de la Musica.