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# The Association for Hispanic Classical Theater, Inc.

Newsletter: January 2014

Happy 2014 and cordial greetings from the President and Board of Directors of the Association for Hispanic Classical Theater! This issue of the newsletter contains the schedule of the Chamizal National Memorial's 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Siglo de Oro Golden Age Play Festival, information on the AHCT 2014 Annual Symposium, and news on recent and upcoming happenings of interest to Hispanic classical theater enthusiasts.

The AHCT Board of Directors re-elected Isaac Benabu, Gwyn Campbell, David Hildner, Bárbara Mujica, Amy Williamsen, and Jason Yancey to three-year terms. The Board would like to welcome its newest members, Robert Bayliss of the University of Kansas and Harley Erdman of the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The Board also expresses sincerest gratitude for the many years of dedicated service it has received from retiring member Donald Larson.

## Chamizal 2014 Siglo de Oro Drama Festival

The Chamizal National Memorial Theater has selected the following plays for performance at this year's Siglo de Oro Festival:

Wed., Feb. 26, 7pm: **"La escuela de los vicios,"** by Francisco de Quevedo, Morfeo Teatro, Spain;  
Thurs., Feb. 27, 7pm: **La Lozana andaluza**, by Francisco Delicado, Morfeo Teatro; Fri., Feb. 28, 7pm: **De fuera vendrá... quien de casa nos echará**, by Agustín Moreto, Cambalache Teatro y Escuela Superior de Arte Dramático (ESAD) de Murcia; Sat., Mar. 1, 7pm: **El secreto a voces**, by

Calderón de la Barca, Cambalache Teatro y ESAD de Murcia; Sun., Mar. 2, 5pm: **"Puro Lope"** (compilation of memorable scenes from Lope), Cambalache Teatro y ESAD de Murcia.

Based on Quevedo's sonnets, satires, and political discourses, "La escuela de los vicios" presents a critique of ministers, magistrates, bankers, and merchants, as the devil educates a pair of fools on the subtleties of corruption in his school of vice. Director and actor Francisco Negro describes Morfeo Teatro's dramatization of Quevedo's ideas as "una ácida comedia con tintes sardónicos." *La Lozana andaluza* is Morfeo's theatrical adaptation of Francisco Delgado's 16<sup>th</sup> century *novela dialogada*.

"La escuela de los vicios" poster, courtesy of Morfeo Teatro.



2014 Festival poster, courtesy of Victor A. Mireles.



Scene from Morfeo Teatro's *La Lozana andaluza*. Photo courtesy of Morfeo Teatro.

Negro describes the work as “una comedia descarada y algo picante sobre la vida de la famosa cortesana andaluza que sirvió al autor de inspiración para escribir este clásico, que junto con *La Celestina*, se ha convertido en referencia de los inicios de la literatura del renacimiento y en precursora del género de la picaresca.”

In Cambalache Teatro and ESAD de Murcia's production of Moreto's *comedia de enredos*, *De fuera vendrá... quien de casa nos echará*, two soldiers pursue

the women they love against the backdrop of post civil war Madrid. Director Francisco García Vicente comments on this innovative setting: “De esta manera, todo queda impregnado del ambiente represivo de posguerra que invade a los personajes y que se hace efectivo en su forma de actuar, sentir y hablar; represión ésta ya manifiesta en el texto original y que agudizará el ingenio de sus protagonistas para acabar consiguiendo sus propósitos.” The company uses another interesting setting for its staging of Calderón's *El secreto a voces*, that of 1960s Italy, the era of “la dolce vita.” The music and spirit of the period color this romantic comedy, in which a duchess attempts to seduce her secretary and discover the identity of his beloved. The festival concludes with “Puro Lope,” a compilation of some of Lope's most dramatic scenes from *El perro del hortelano*, *El castigo sin venganza*, *El caballero de Olmedo*, *La dama boba*, *Fuenteovejuna*, and other masterpieces.

## Happenings

The conference “**The Comedia: Translation and Performance,**” held at the Ustinov Studio of the Theatre Royal in Bath, England, November 25-28, 2013, was by consensus of those who attended a resounding success. Co-sponsored by the AHCT and Out of the Wings, the conference centered on evening performances of three seventeenth-century plays: Lope's “A Lady of Little Sense,” his “Punishment without Revenge,” and Tirso's “Don Gil of the Green Breeches.” The three plays made up a special season of Golden Age works curated by Laurence Boswell, the Artistic Director of the Studio, and all were presented in a newly-commissioned English translation, the distinguished authors of which were, respectively, David Johnston, Meredith Oakes, and Sean O'Brien. For the season Boswell had gathered together a company of ten actors, each of whom had extensive credits in both regional and national theaters, and all of whom proved to be highly talented. Equally laudable was the imaginative stage direction of the three works, done by Boswell himself in the instance of Lope's two plays and by Mehmet Ergen in that of Tirso. Daytime hours during the conference were given over to roundtables and panels. Many of the latter focused on the three plays being performed. The roundtables dealt both with specific plays and with a number of larger issues. Built into the format of the conference was a considerable amount of time for general discussion, which often turned out to be very lively indeed. The symposium was organized by Susan Paun de García (Denison University), David Johnston (Queen's University Belfast), Jonathan Thacker (Merton College, Oxford), and Donald R. Larson (The Ohio State University), and drew some fifty-five official participants, representing a number of different countries. By the end, it seemed to virtually everyone present that a real spirit of community had developed over the course of four days. Some of this was clearly due to the many social events sprinkled throughout those days, but much of it was also owing to the warmth and generosity of the local people. Three cheers for Bath!

Laurence Boswell welcomes attendees in his opening remarks at the Ustinov Studio, Bath. Photo by Laura Vidler.



Cast of Cambalache Teatro y ESAD de Murcia's *De fuera vendrá... quien de casa nos echará*. Photo by Javier Galindo.

Cast of Cambalache Teatro y ESAD de Murcia's *El secreto a voces*. Photo by Javier Galindo.



### **The first known performance of Leonor de la Cueva's *La firmeza en la ausencia*.**

Leonor de la Cueva y Silva's only extant play, *La firmeza en la ausencia*, now has a stage history. Director David Pasto staged Sharon D. Voros's English translation of the

play, *Tried and True*, at Oklahoma City University last fall. Although winter weather prompted the cancellation of two of the shows, the play opened November 21<sup>st</sup> and was performed again on November 23<sup>rd</sup> at Oklahoma City University Stage II, a black-box theater with "minimal design and technical elements," as the playbill describes. The actors' lively, engaging performance was the first-known for Doña Leonor in any language. The entire cast was indeed "tried and true" in this play, whose comic overtones mingle with serious drama. Above all, the audience enjoyed the production. This performance, with video-taped scenes, will be the topic of a discussion panel at the upcoming AHCT Symposium in February.



Theater with a Mission's *Auto de los Reyes Magos*. Photo courtesy of Ben Gunter.

### Theater with a Mission

presented a new translation and reconstruction of the *Auto de los Reyes Magos* for a community "Pig Out" at the De Soto site in Tallahassee, Florida – the place where, according to historians, the first Christmas in North America was celebrated during the winter of 1539-40. Peppered with phrases from the original

Spanish, dressed in De Soto-era costumes, and equipped with a finale in which the three kings present their gifts to the Madonna and child in time to Spanish music from the early 1500s, the production charmed an audience of expert anthropologists and everyday citizens, as Spain's first Christmas play encountered Florida's First Christmas.

**God's Gypsy**, a stage adaptation by Coco Blignaut of Barbara Mujica's novel, *Sister Teresa*, opened on November 29, 2013, at the Lillian Theatre in Los Angeles to rave reviews. Based on the life of Saint Teresa de Avila, the play was developed at The Actors' Studio, the foremost institution in the U.S. for the creation of new plays. The show ran through mid January.

**Lost Lope play discovered.** Alejandro García-Reidy of Syracuse University recently discovered a manuscript of *Mujeres y criados*, written by Lope de Vega in 1614, in a document dating from 1631 in the Biblioteca Nacional in Madrid. He details the discovery in an upcoming article in *Revista de Literatura*. The Madrid theater company Rakatá-Fundación Siglo de Oro is considering premiering the play in the near future.



AHCT member Alejandro García-Reidy at the 2013 AHCT banquet. Photo by C. Gascón

**MLA 2014 Chicago.** Barbara Simerka, 2014 Chair of the Division on Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Spanish Drama, reports: After one postponement due to the lingering impact of the polar vortex on flight



## Reminders

**Comedia Performance**, AHCT's annual journal, publishes articles on topics related to the performance of the Spanish *comedia*. The subscription price is included in the annual AHCT membership dues. A three-year library subscription is \$75; individual copies are \$20 each. Checks should be made out to AHCT and sent to Managing Editor Dr. Gwyn E. Campbell, Dept. of Romance Languages, 406A Tucker Hall, Washington and Lee University, Lexington VA 24450. Direct e-mail inquiries may be sent to [campbellg@wlu.edu](mailto:campbellg@wlu.edu). Submissions are due by September 30. Please follow the guidelines at the front of the journal, submit articles to the editor and book reviews, theater reviews, and interviews to the editors of each of those sections (see [www.comediaperformance.org](http://www.comediaperformance.org)). *Comedia Performance* also advertises books published within the last five years, performances, study-abroad programs, and conferences. Ads are \$100 for a full page; send camera-ready ads to Bárbara Mujica at [mujica@georgetown.edu](mailto:mujica@georgetown.edu).

**Benefits of AHCT membership.** You can renew your membership easily at <http://www.comedias.org/AHCT/AHCT/Membership.html>. Members of AHCT whose dues are up-to-date may borrow videos from the archive of performances of Golden Age plays, receive the Association's annual journal, *Comedia Performance*, and access the AHCT Newsletter twice yearly.

**Update your member profile.** If your contact information or professional profile has changed recently, please access your file via your username and password, and update your record at <http://ahct.echapters.com/>. If your email address has changed, you may re-subscribe to the listserv at: [http://mail.comedias.org/mailman/listinfo/comedias\\_comedias.org](http://mail.comedias.org/mailman/listinfo/comedias_comedias.org).



schedules and traffic, the executive committee met on Friday, January 10th. We welcomed the announcement that Amy Williamsen is newly elected to the committee, and extended heartfelt thanks to Baltasar Fra Molinero, who has completed his five years of service. The committee also recognized Bruce Burningham for his three years of service as our delegate to the MLA Assembly, and is pleased to announce that Charles Ganelin has agreed to represent us to the Assembly for the next three years.

This year's sessions were very well attended. José R. Cartagena-Calderón (Pomona College) presided over the session "Domesticity and the Comedia." The papers presented were: "Women's Domestic Space: The *Estrado* in Early Modern Spain," by Antonio Guijarro-Donadiós (University of Connecticut); "'Nada me digas': Silencing and Silence in Comedia Domestic Relationships," by Susan L. Fischer (Bucknell University); and "Incubi and Succubi Trasegados: Demoniality in *El viejo celoso*," by Jorge Abril-Sánchez (University of New Hampshire, Durham). Barbara Simerka (Queens College) presided over the session "Lope de Vega and Peasant Drama: Four Hundred Years Later." The papers presented were: "The Dynamics of Power: The Peasant as a Model of a Good Ruler," by Alejandro Garcia-Reidy, Syracuse University; "El 'payo' en la corte: Lope combina el drama rústico con el de privanza," by David J. Hildner, University of Wisconsin, Madison; and "Ruptured Succession: Family and Nation in Guevara's *La serrana de la Vera*," by Bryan Betancur, Brown University. In the ensuing discussion, attendees addressed the paradox of the academic study of class discourse in an age where literary and humanistic study is disdained in mainstream media as "elitist." Barbara Simerka (Queens College) also collaborated with GEMELA to create the special session: "The Vulnerable Female Body in Early Modern Spanish Literature." She presided over the round table session, which included presentations by Stacey L. Parker Aronson (University of Minnesota, Morris); María M. Carrión (Emory University); Thomas Patrick Finn (Ohio Northern University); and Bonnie Gasior (California State University, Long Beach). This interdisciplinary panel featured a paper by political scientist Alyson Cole (Queens College and Graduate Center, CUNY), who analyzed the gender dynamics of discourses of victim and survivor.

María Mercedes Carrión organized the Comediantes Banquet, held Friday, January 10, at Emilio's Tapas Sol y Nieve. Diners enjoyed lively conversation and a variety of hot and cold tapas, paella, desserts, and drinks.

**MLA 2015 Vancouver.** The presidential theme of the 2015 MLA convention, to be held in Vancouver, is "Negotiating Sites of Memory." MLA president Margaret Ferguson explains: "Contested, negotiated sites of memory can be found in many landscapes and throughout history; they are capable of migration and occur in many media, genres, and forms: artwork, maps, computers, Web sites, manuscripts, and printed books, among other examples." Topics for two sessions sponsored by the Division for Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century Spanish Drama at the 2015 MLA convention in Vancouver are: A) Reading the Spanish Comedia Queerly. Papers exploring representations of same-sex desire, as well as other queer affections, sensibilities, interpretations, and realities in early modern Spanish theater. B) Female Masculinities: Revisiting the *Mujer Varonil* in the Comedia. New Approaches to the motif of the *mujer varonil* in early modern Spanish theater. For both sessions, send 400-word abstracts by 15 March 2014 to José Cartagena-Calderón ([jose.cartagena@pomona.edu](mailto:jose.cartagena@pomona.edu)). The division is also working with the Cervantes Society of America to create a special joint session proposal on the topic "Cervantes *dramaturgo*." An update on this session will be forthcoming.

**"Trazando caminos: jornadas, encrucidajas y direcciones."** GEMELA (Grupo de Estudios sobre la Mujer en España y las Américas, pre-1800) convoca su congreso biannual, que se celebrará en Lisboa, Portugal, en la Universidad de Lisboa, los días 8-10 de septiembre del 2014. El tema eje del congreso será la producción cultural de las mujeres en la Península Ibérica y en la América Latina Colonial durante la Edad Media y el Período Moderno (con anterioridad a 1800). Son especialmente bienvenidas las comunicaciones que versen específicamente sobre el tema "Trazando Caminos," ya sea abordado en sentido literal (caminos en espacios geográficos o sociales) o en sentido metafórico (caminos espirituales, poéticos, didácticos, literarios, científicos, filosóficos, etc.). Se ruega enviar las propuestas a: [gemela.lisbon.2014@gmail.com](mailto:gemela.lisbon.2014@gmail.com). Fecha límite: 1 de marzo de 2014. Los estudiantes aún no doctorados deberán enviar junto con el resumen un texto de su trabajo (7-10 páginas) y un e-mail de presentación de su supervisor/a académico/a. <http://www.gemela.org/Convocatoria-GEMELA-2014.pdf>.

## AHCT Annual Spanish Golden Age Theater Symposium, February 27 – March 1, 2014, El Paso.

The 2014 AHCT Spanish Golden Age Theater Symposium, featuring special events to commemorate AHCT's 30<sup>th</sup> year, will take place February 27-March 1 in El Paso, Texas. These dates coincide with the 2014 Golden Age Spanish Theater Festival at the Chamizal National Memorial, February 26 - March 2, 2014. Sessions will begin Thursday morning, February 27, and end Saturday afternoon, March 1. The meeting of the officers of the AHCT will take place Wednesday, February 26, from 9:00 a.m.-12 noon, and the meeting of the Board of Directors will take place that same day from 1:30-5:00 p.m.

**Plenary Speakers.** The Donald T. Dietz Plenary Lecture on Thursday will feature the members of Morfeo Teatro: artistic director Francisco Negro, actress and manager Mayte Bona, and actor Felipe Santiago. For over ten years, the company, based in Burgos, has specialized in staging classics of Golden Age Spain, with a particular strength in adapting masterpieces of prose and poetry for the stage. There will also be a special Founders' Plenary round table on Friday, featuring two of the founding members of the AHCT in person, Donald Dietz and Matthew Stroud, and a video montage representing founder Vern Williamsen.

**AHCT's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary** will be commemorated at events throughout the conference, including a birthday party with cava toast and cake on Friday night after the performance in the hospitality suite, and a special Saturday banquet off-site. More details are forthcoming!

**Hotel Reservations.** Note that the Symposium will take place at a new location this year, the **Hilton Garden Inn El Paso/University**, 111 West University Avenue, El Paso, 79902, 1-915-315-2121. A special conference rate is available to AHCT symposium participants; the rate of \$85 applies to single/double/triple/quad rooms, or participants may select the \$95 single/double/triple/quad rate and receive a hot buffet breakfast for up to two people in the room. All rates are subject to a 17.5% tax. Parking is complimentary. The group rate applies Tuesday, February 25 to Saturday, March 1, 2014. Reservations may be made online at [www.elpaso.stayhgi.com](http://www.elpaso.stayhgi.com) or by calling the Hilton's toll-free number 1-877-STAY-HGI (1-877-782-9444). Use the group rate codes: AHCT: \$95, includes breakfast; AHCT2: \$85, without breakfast.

**AHCT Conference Registration.** You must be a member of the AHCT to register for the conference. Current membership dues are \$50 (or \$90 for two years) for faculty and \$40 (or \$70 for two years) for retired members and students. The registration fee for the conference for all faculty attendees, as well as for graduate students who are reading papers or participating in a special session, is \$125. A late fee of \$25 is assessed if registration is paid after January 30; a late fee of \$50 applies for registrations after February 13, 2014. Registration includes conference attendance, the annual banquet of the AHCT, transportation to and from the Chamizal National Memorial every evening for the Siglo de Oro Spanish Drama Festival, and refreshments in the hospitality room after the theater performances. (Note: a special registration rate of \$40 applies to students who do not present papers or attend the banquet. An additional \$25 payable at the time of registration purchases tickets for the banquet. The aforementioned late fees also apply to auditor registration.) Dues and registration fees can be paid on the comedias.org website by way of PayPal from the 2014 AHCT Symposium page: [http://www.comedias.org/AHCT/AHCT/2014\\_Conference\\_2.html](http://www.comedias.org/AHCT/AHCT/2014_Conference_2.html).

**Conference Updates.** Further details regarding the symposium, 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary events, and the conference program will appear on the AHCT webpages as they become available. For special inquiries, please contact the AHCT Conference Director, Darci Strother, [strother@csusm.edu](mailto:strother@csusm.edu).

With best wishes for the new year,

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