

# Spanish Rep Theater Ready

An abandoned A&P supermarket in Little Havana kept catching the eye of **Mario Arellano**. The interior designer was intrigued by its ample size, its possibilities, and its location — because he dreamed of a theater.

Many months and nearly \$60,000 in renovations later, the Spanish Theater Repertory Company of Miami is about to open its doors at 2173 SW 8th St. The social comedy "O.K." by Venezuelan playwright **Isaac Chocron** begins Friday, Feb. 13. Future plays include "L. Valija" by **Julio Mauricio** of Argentina and the Spanish classic "Don Juan Tenorio" by **Jose Zorrilla**.

To present plays any time, anywhere is a chancy business. To create a theater from the ground floor is almost foolhardy. But Arellano has the help of **Gilberto Zaldivar** as his co-producer. Zaldivar founded the Arlequin Theater in Cuba, then joined forces with **Rene Buch** (the Miami company's artistic director) to form the Spanish Repertory Theater Company of New York.

**SUCCESSFUL FOR** the past six years, the New York company has presented 48 plays, with the stress on Spanish classics and contemporary Spanish and Latin American plays. The thrust will be the same here, Zaldivar said, because "this work isn't being produced."

"Our theater's unique in two respects," Arellano said. "It has 280 seats — (making it in size) in between the smaller houses (where other Spanish-language theater is presented) and the large Gusman Hall. Second, it has modern facilities for the actors."



**THEATER  
SCENE**  
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A **TIE-IN** with the Board of Education is one of the group's goals. "Our goal is to have teachers include the text for one of our plays in the curriculum of Spanish," Zaldivar said. "Students would read the play for class, then see it on our stage, followed by a discussion with the actors."

On a higher education level, students at the downtown campus of Miami-Dade Community College's bilingual program may receive drama training in workshops at the theater. College credits will be given for the courses.

**ANOTHER** plan involves touring the company throughout the state. Zaldivar envisions bringing the New York company here and sending the Miami company north.

He also hopes to introduce the finest Central American and Latin American theatrical troupes — such as the Marionette Theater Company of Bogota — to Miami audiences.

The Spanish Theater Repertory Company of Miami joins a number of other Spanish-language theater groups here, such as Las Mascaras, La Comedia, Teatro Lecuona and the student group, the Prometeo Players. Camaraderie exists be-

tween them as they exchange talent. Look for Velia Martinez, Mario Ernesto Sanchez, Rosa Felipe, Griselda Nogueras, Marta Casanas, and Ana Marguerita Martinez Casado to perform soon with the new company.

**THOUGH THE** nonprofit, tax-exempt organization must rely upon contributions to supplement its income from the box office, the producers plan to make free tickets available to senior citizens and underprivileged youths. Students will get discount tickets.

For a \$10 subscription, the patron gets tickets to any three shows for the price of two. Single tickets are \$5 and \$4. Showtimes: Thursday at 1 p.m., Friday and Sunday at 8:30 p.m., and Sunday 4:30 p.m.

And if you can't come to the theater, located between 21st and 22nd Avenues, it may come to you. The company plans five free or low-cost performances in various Miami-Dade County neighborhoods as the company progresses.