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POCKET THEATRE, OR SLOW NEWS FROM OLD WARS

Language games

theatres, audiences, and the elusive promise of revenue



CARIDAD SVICH

JUL 25, 2025



If you are a Latinx playwright in the US taking a meeting with an Anglophone company, likely one of the questions you will be asked is whether your plays are in Spanish or bilingual. It is somehow assumed that any US Latinx writer making work for theatre is fluent in Spanish and not only fluent but skilled enough to craft a full-length work in the language. It is an intriguing assumption/expectation to level at writers whose ethnicity is of Latine and/or Hispanic origin. Not everyone that is first or second generation or fifth may be fluent in Spanish. Some people may not have grown up speaking, writing and reading Spanish at home. Others may not have continued studying Spanish in high school and college. Others still may have grown up with socially enforced (in the case of laws) stigmatization in relationship to the speaking of Spanish in public. Others may also have been castigated for speaking “pocho” or “gringo-sounding” Spanish by their elders or their neighbors, thus inducing shame and resentment in their attempt or desire to express themselves in the language.





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