

## **FOURTH FESTIVAL OF HISPANIC THEATER BEGINS FRIDAY - Miami Herald, The (FL) - May 7, 1989 - page 7K**

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The Festival of Hispanic Theater begins its fourth season Friday with a broader-than-ever program that includes 12 productions -- including two in English -- by national and international troupes.

"It's important that Miami's audiences be exposed to the work being done in Hispanic countries that are developing their indigenous cultures," said Alberto Sarrain, one of the festival's coordinators. "That is something that we (Hispanics), as a minority, are lacking. We are growing here within a realm that is not ours. This festival will allow us to grow as people of the theater."

During the next four weeks, the festival, presented by Miami's Teatro Avante, will bring 11 plays and one dance program to the Minorca Playhouse in Coral Gables. The fact that it has found a home in a theater that doesn't usually stage Spanish-language plays underscores the festival's bicultural thrust.

"We want to promote Hispanic culture through American theater companies," said festival director Mario Ernesto Sanchez, who also directs Avante.

Participation in the festival is by invitation and is limited to not-for-profit organizations presenting plays -- in English or Spanish -- by Hispanic playwrights.

"Companies can't come to the festival simply because they want to," Sanchez said. "We keep a list of theater companies and we invite them -- including professional English-language companies -- to submit proposals. We look not only to the artistic quality of the group; we seek to create a balanced program."

Two of this year's productions will be in English. One, *Lovers and Keepers*, is by Cuban-born playwright Maria Irene Fornes, a winner of several Obie awards. The second is *Paper Flowers*, by the Chilean playwright Egon Wolff, presented by the Bridge Theater, a local group directed by Eileen Engel and J.D. Steel.

"For us, it's kind of business as usual, because the Bridge Theater was founded to present Spanish playwrights in English," Engel said. "For us, it's always a Hispanic theater festival."

Several of the playwrights are coming to Miami for the festival, so in addition to the performances, a "Meet the

Playwrights and Critics" series has been scheduled for May 15, 22, 29 and June 4.

"The panels will include critics, playwrights, actors, directors," Sanchez said. "We want to have panels with a popular flavor, instead of an academic and boring affair."

Jose Triana, a highly regarded Cuban playwright living in Paris, will be on hand when his play, *La noche de los asesinos* (The Night of the Assassins), opens the festival Friday. *La noche*, presented by Avante, will be repeated Saturday. After the festival, it will return to the Minorca as part of Avante's summer season.

Also on the program:

May 14: *Los Gemelos* (The Twins), by the Costa Rican dance company *Diquis Tiquis*. The performance is an interpretation of pre-Columbian iconography in Costa Rica.

May 16-17: *El Tango*, by Paco Sagarzazu, presented by Teatro Estudio, from San Sebastian, Spain.

May 18-19: *Miss Panama, Inc.*, written by Panamanian Rosa Maria Crespo and directed by Cuban-born Miami actress Zuly Montero. *Miss Panama* is being presented by *Andromaca Players*, a local troupe dedicated to highlighting the creative contributions of women in theater. "The play is a social satire of Latin American countries," said *Andromaca* founder Glenda Diaz Rigau. "It shows how beauty pageants denigrate women."

May 20-21: *O.K.*, by Venezuelan Isaac Chocron, presented by the Colombian troupe *La Baranda*.

May 23: *Egon Wolff's Paper Flowers*, presented by the Bridge Theater.

May 24: Maria Elena Fornes' *Lovers and Keepers*, a dramatic comedy with songs, presented by Chicago's *Blind Parrot Productions*.

May 25-26: *El gran circo eucraniano* (The Great Ukrainian Circus), by playwright Myrna Casas, presented by Puerto Rico's *Producciones Cisne*.

May 27-28: *Legionaria* (Legionnaire), by Fernando Quinones, presented by Teatro de Mentideros, from Spain.

May 30-31: Miami-Dade Community College's *Promethean Players*, under the direction of Dume, present ***El Chino*** (The Chinaman), by Cuban playwright Carlos Felipe.

June 1-2: *El arquitecto y el emperador de Asiria* (The Architect and the Emperor of Assyria), by Spanish playwright Fernando Arrabal, presented by Taller de Artes, from Medellin, Colombia.

June 3-4: The Florida Shakespeare Festival, the Minorca's resident company, is sponsoring *Acto cultural* (Cultural Act), by Venezuelan playwright Jose Ignacio Cabrujas; the play is a production of the Peruvian troupe *Ensayo*.

Tickets for individual performances are \$13; for subscription or any other information, call 858-4155. The Minorca Playhouse is located at 232 Minorca Ave. in Coral Gables."