

critics of contemporary Latin American art. In general, Traba's text is engaging and the color plates are excellent. Regrettably, however, the plates do not relate directly to the text. The book also has no bibliography; only scant notes.

Traba also made use of a chronological-thematic approach to her material, beginning with a solid introduction to the complexities of modern art in Latin America. It is the diversity of the material that accounts for the lack of texts on the region's art as a whole, Traba believes. In chapters 2 and 3 she covers the period from around 1920 to 1950. Chapter 2 is dedicated to Mexican muralism and its followers throughout Latin America, chapter 3 to the first vanguards in Latin American art.

Traba divides the artistic production of this period into realistic and abstract tendencies, the former associated with socially oriented art and the latter with art for art's sake. The problem with this method is that in Latin America the line between figurative and abstract, socially and artistically conscious art is often blurry. Some of the artists in the second chapter, such as Emiliano di Cavalcanti and Víctor Manuel, could just as easily be included in the third. The strongest section in her book is the fourth chapter, dedicated to the various forms of abstraction and figuration in the 1950s and 1960s. The final chapter concentrates on the pluralistic 1970s, including an extended section on graphic art and brief segments on the diverse art scene of that decade. Traba's text offers a solid presentation of twentieth-century art in most of Latin America and its inextricable connections to the sociohistorical context out of which it arose.

In spite of their weakness in one or another content area, these texts are welcome additions to the scant art historical literature in English on the twentieth-century art of Latin America.

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Latin American Popular Theatre: The First Five Centuries. By JUDITH A. WEISS, with LESLIE DAMASCENO. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1993. Photographs. Notes. Bibliography. Index. ix, 269 pp. Cloth, \$42.00. Paper, \$22.50.

This important volume is "the first full-length cooperative study published by the ATINT Research Collective." Joining Judith Weiss and Leslie Damasceno in this effort are Donald Frischman, Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir, Marina Pianca, and Beatriz Rizk, all members of the Executive Committee of La Asociación de Trabajadores e Investigadores del Nuevo Teatro. These scholars have provided a very valuable introduction to the evolution of Latin American theater and particularly the development and dissemination of El Nuevo Teatro Popular. El Nuevo Teatro had its greatest activity during "the past three to four decades," and the authors argue that this movement cannot be separated from the rich diversity of Latin American theater.

The authors are well aware of the pitfalls of covering so vast a topic. They attempt to be specific wherever possible in reference to the country under consideration.

Rather than discuss their topic in strict chronological terms, they weave an interesting tapestry that focuses on the major theatrical movements from country to country, from pre-Columbian times through the conquest and up to the present. They introduce the reader to early chronicles of theatrical events in countries as diverse and distant as Peru and Mexico, sometimes giving the impression that they were singular. A close reading, however, will ultimately liberate the reader from making gross generalizations about the theaters of Latin America.

The premise of this study is that El Nuevo Teatro was not born in a vacuum. Therefore the first half of the book analyzes the distinct kinds of theater that have been chronicled over the centuries, beginning with pre-Columbian religious ritual, dance, and other forms of entertainment. The book's synthesis of colonial theatrical activity is very useful, as is its discussion of liturgical, missionary, and secular drama, although in some cases the reader is left without sufficient footnotes to seek further information. The bibliography is very thorough, and it will be extremely useful to any student of Latin American theater. This is an overview that effectively opens up many new areas of discussion.

The information about El Nuevo Teatro is most valuable, particularly because each of the authors has had personal interaction with the playwrights, groups, and directors under consideration, and their expertise is most welcome. However brief, the final discussions of exemplary groups are lucid, and will be inspirational to other groups intent on producing theater for social change. Most important, this volume will enhance the analysis and discussion of Latin American theater in English-speaking circles, exposing a "new world" of theater unknown to most North American theater scholars and practitioners.

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Latin American Writers on Gay and Lesbian Themes: A Bio-Critical Sourcebook. Edited by DAVID WILLIAM FOSTER. Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994. Bibliography. Index. xxxvi, 495 pp. Cloth. \$85.00.

The timely publication of this volume attests to the increased interest among U.S. Latin Americanists in the study of gay and lesbian themes in works by Latin American writers. The first and only sourcebook of its kind, it constitutes a valuable research tool for anyone working on issues of gender and sexuality in Latin American cultural production. Hundreds of texts by more than 130 Latin American authors are presented, along with biographical information and a complete bibliography on each author, including all pertinent criticism. The large number of U.S. Latino authors (more than 10 percent) also makes the book an important resource for students of ethnic literature. With entries prepared by more than 60 scholars, employing a range of methodological approaches, and an excellent introductory essay by Lillian Manzor-Coats, this volume will be useful to all scholars interested in the developing fields of gender studies and "queer theory."