

explain the specificities of rural violence and often worked from a critique of literature. Dabove continues along these lines. He follows his objects of study in not seeing literature as a tool for discernment of the popular subject, but Dabove shows that literature still has great deal to offer students of Latin American society. Moreover, his focus on failed political mediation has renewed relevance as world leaders again declare themselves to be conduits of the popular will. By engaging eloquently with these major topics, Dabove positions himself among the most significant commentators of Hispanic narrative.

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STUART DAY. *Outside Theater: Alliances That Shape Mexico*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2017. 223 pp.

In his simultaneously wide-ranging and focused survey of theatre in Mexico and its borderlands, Stuart Day offers an array of ruminations on activism, political and social change, and the work of “allies.” For Day, allies are people who may come from vastly different places and disagree on methods and outcomes, but whose shared goals can ultimately allow transformative projects to flourish. Day chooses drastically distinct theatrical and filmic case studies to illustrate his arguments, including Flavio González Mello’s *1822: El año que fuimos imperio* (first staged in 2002); Federico Gamboa’s *La venganza de la gleba* (premiered 1905); Luís Valdéz’s *Zoot Suit* (premiered 1978, and given a special staging in Mexico by Alma Martínez in 2010); Luis Mario Moncada’s *9 días de guerra en Facebook* (staged in 2010); Sabina Berman’s 2005 film *Backyard/Traspatio*; Víctor Hugo Rascón Banda’s *La mujer que cayó del cielo* (performed at the University of Kansas in 2003); and Alejandro Ricaño’s *Más pequeños que el Guggenheim* (published in 2012). These productions, spanning over a century, illuminate the ways that theatre artists have formed alliances with politicians, activists, students, teachers, and audiences. As Day notes, explaining the book’s title, these alliances exist both onstage and “outside theater” because “they always connect explicitly to a reality beyond the stage, often through a person or group of people who serve in one way or another as political allies” (13). Moreover, these performances enable audiences to observe themselves and their peers critically, “as referents in a moment of change,” through techniques like Brechtian denaturalization, documentary theatre, and intertextuality (13).

Day's goals in writing this book are to assess how "acting, writing, drama classes, and theater productions impact civic engagement" (167). He asks: "What does theater offer beyond a reflection of the chaos that surrounds us?", and "What are the lessons to be learned from politically committed performances, and how do these lessons (re)affirm a blueprint for social engagement?" (167). Each case study demonstrates alliances that enable connections "between life and art," and the production of "fruitful dialogue and a certain optimism amid the ruins of recent decades" (16). These projects propose the possibility of change, Day asserts, even as they acknowledge Mexico's intensifying narco-wars, feminicides, and other crises of violence that have intimidated and killed politicians, activists, and journalists.

González Mello's play, for example, revisits the first Mexican Empire (1821-22, ruled by Agustín de Iturbide) as a commentary on the country's contemporary political landscape and its two dueling parties (the Partido Acción Nacional and the Partido Revolucionario Institucional). The play asks how national independence can also be a form of colonialism, and how and why politicians have deployed the Virgen de Guadalupe (Mexico's patron saint) in their campaigns. Turning to Gamboa, Day examines how the author negotiated with the Porfiriato, three decades of autocratic rule by Porfirio Díaz. Noting Gamboa's theatrical depiction of the Mexican peasantry and the play's direct address to an implicitly bourgeois audience, Day examines Gamboa's use of a Zola-inspired naturalism to stage techniques whereby actors playing peasants negotiate with their performing overseers, in a tactical dance of power that Day interprets through James C. Scott's analysis of subaltern nonviolent resistance. This diplomatic, dialogic approach also echoes Gamboa's own relationship to the Porfiriato, whose head of state was the playwright's patron.

Transnational alliances and ruptures emerge in the later sections: Alma Martínez's Mexico City staging of *Zoot Suit* provides insight into how Mexicans are interpreting the racial politics of their US-bound diaspora from the Chicano movement (spanning the 1960s to the 1980s) to the present; and Day's incisive production history investigates the alliances formed between white activists and "outsiders" (notably Alice McGrath) and the falsely imprisoned *pachucos* and *pachucas*. Moncada's play explores links between theatre and the Internet, both denaturalizing and humanizing social media chaos in its staging of online debates about the Israel/Palestine conflict. Day ponders the stakes of Internet *efectismo*, or sensationalism, in which provocative posts generate controversial comment threads with potentially catastrophic real-world ramifications.

The final chapter examines film and documentary theatre treating respective current events: Berman's film on the feminicides in Ciudad

Juárez, and Rascón Banda's play about Rita Patino Quintero, a Rarámuri woman who walked from Mexico to the United States and was wrongfully incarcerated in a Kansas mental institution for over a decade. These productions avoid catharsis and showcase not the "desert of the real," but the "reality of the desert," where women are trafficked and punished due in part to their vulnerability under neoliberalism (138, 147). It was a student who ultimately helped free Quintero (albeit under complex circumstances), and Day's conclusion takes up the work of student and faculty allies in academia, whose well-intentioned efforts and privilege often come into conflict with the communities that they seek to serve. Despite the ideological fissures that sometimes arise between student activists and community members, Day sees the benefits of getting students involved in activism, and he highlights the work of performance scholar-activists Debra Castillo and Ricardo Domínguez as examples of how theatre-making can change lives. Castillo's community-engaged Latina/o repertory theatre and Domínguez's virtual sit-ins and other digital activism form nodes of contact among diverse groups of allies, within and beyond academia. Throughout this fascinating book, Day weaves into his textual and production analyses copious references to works of Mexican art, scholarship, and popular culture – from the writings of Octavio Paz to Rodolfo Usigli's famous play *El gesticulador* (1938), to "Brozo el Payaso Tenebroso" and Sabina Berman's television show *Shalalá* and the #yosoy132 movement. These intertexts form a tapestry of Mexican cultural and social life, providing insights into the ways that everyday people make meaning and cope in a fractured public sphere. All told, *Outside Theater* provides rich and humane reflections on how theatre and performance can inculcate links among the arts, academia, and activism, both within and "outside" Mexico.

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HÉCTOR D. FERNÁNDEZ L'HOESTE. *Lalo Alcaraz: Political Cartooning in the Latino Community*. Jackson: University of Mississippi Press, 2017. 192 pp.

Comics scholarship has become well-established as a field of academic inquiry. Scholarship focused on Latino comic art in the U.S. is an area of this broader field of inquiry that is currently under construction. Héctor Fernández L'Hoeste's *Lalo Alcaraz: Political Cartooning in the Latino Community* represents a new addition, joining Frederick Louis Aldama's *Your Brain on Latino Comics: From Gus Arriola to Los Bros Hernandez*