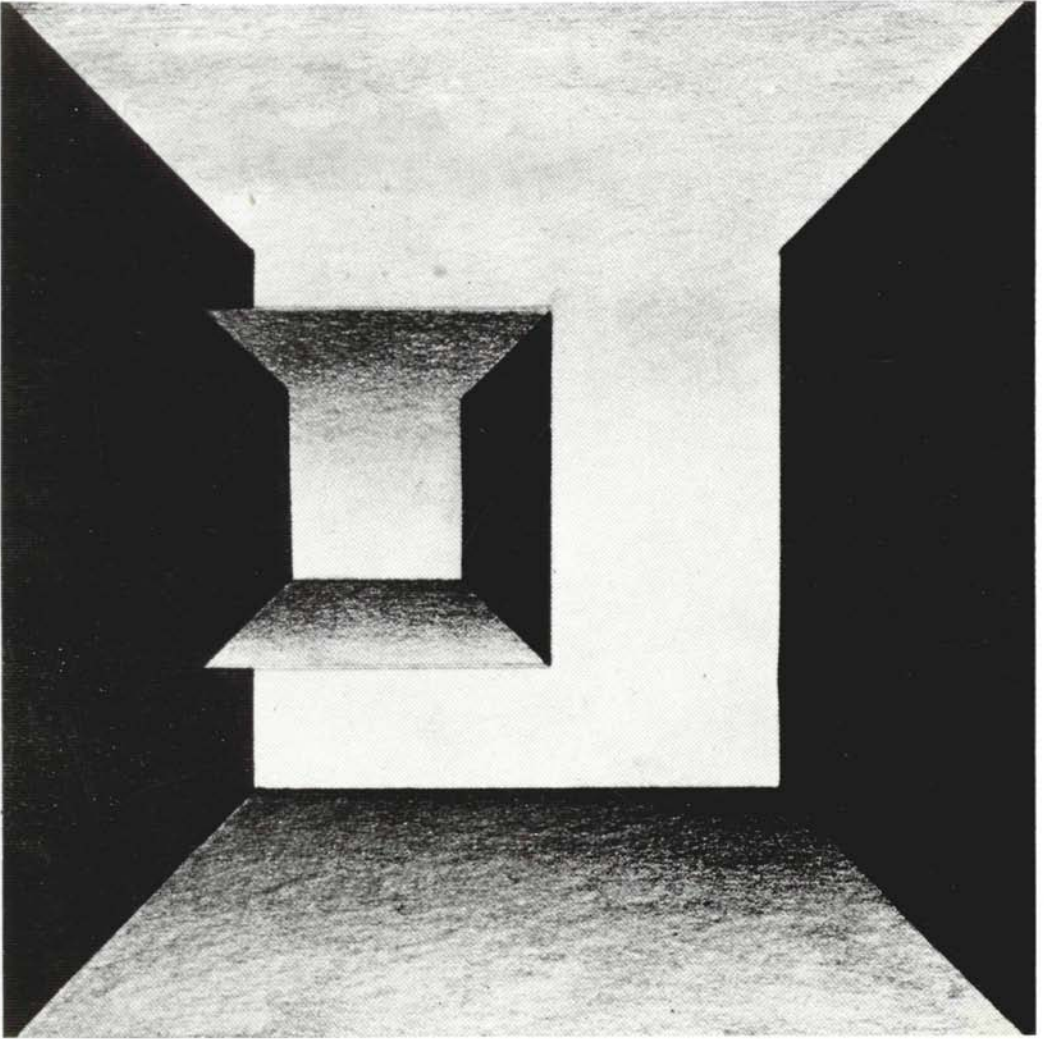


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NOTES TO CONTRIBUTORS

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Latin-American Issue

Guest Editor: Claudia Kaiser-Lenoir

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Contributors to this issue are members of the *Asociación de Trabajadores e Investigadores del Nuevo Teatro* or A.T.I.N.T. (Association of New Theater Workers and Researchers), a non-profit organization dedicated to the study and documentation of the New Theatre of Latin America. The work of A.T.I.N.T. includes the publication of a bi-monthly bulletin and of a critical yearbook, as well as its active participation in national and international theatre festivals and symposia. A research collective of A.T.I.N.T. is currently preparing a social history of Latin American popular theatre for publication in English.

Foreword

Political events shaping the history of Latin America in the last three decades point to the existence of new processes of social change which have subverted, for the first time, traditional structures of power. Since 1959 the continent has witnessed the institutionalization of two successful Revolutions (Cuba and Nicaragua), the overturn of a third one (Chile), and the consolidation of popular liberation movement in several other countries. If for the past 500 years, the history of Latin America has largely been shaped by the interplay of foreign hegemonic interests and those of the local ruling elites, the challenging presence of the popular movements in the last thirty years has altered for good the old balance of political power.

The New Theatre of Latin America is both, a response to, and a by-product of this reshaping of historical patterns. It defines itself, more than anything, by the need to reassess the function of theatre within the process of social and political transformation. The ideological implications of such reassessment give direction to the multiple projections of this movement: from the agricultural theatre collectives of Nicaragua and the new indigenous Theatre of Mexico, to the dissident theatre in the Argentina of the Generals, the professional collectives of Brazil and Colombia and the community-based popular theatre of Cuba. A multifaceted phenomenon rooted in a common search for new organic connections with society and, therefore, a more active articulation of socio-political action and cultural praxis.

The individual studies included in this issue attest to the diversity of ways through which the New Theatre has become a solid alternative to the cultural policies of the hegemonic sector (articles on Colombia, Brazil, Mexico and Argentina), has succeeded in innovatively adapting the practice of theatre to the demands of a new social order (articles on Cuba and Nicaragua), and has responded, as well, to the problems of Latin American exile. The studies discuss the dialectical relationships the New Theatre establishes not only with local popular culture, but also with the radical European aesthetics of Brecht and Grotowski, as a central element in the definition of a model which is nevertheless (and fortunately), constantly challenged by the dynamism and diversity of the phenomenon itself.

CLAUDIA KAISER-LENOIR