

# LA NUEVA OLA

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Rita Moreno HOLA Award for Excellence recipients **Esai Morales** and **Mercedes Ruehl** at the 2005 HOLA Awards. Photo by Vincent Villafaña.



## Report from the 2005 HOLA Awards

The best thing about this year's gala had to be **Mercedes Ruehl's** heart-warming acceptance speech... no, wait... it had to be **Esai Morales'** enthusiasm for Latinos producing works with Latino themes... no, it definitely had to be **Allen Davis III's** response to the video featuring his loyal playwriting students... no, no, no, it had to be the note on courage in journalism that **María Hinojosa** faxed to **Manny Alfaro**... **Raúl Esparza** winning an award given to him by José Ferrer himself, and now being awarded the HOLA José Ferrer Tesis Award... **Denise Quiñones**, the former Miss Universe, humbly and gracefully accepting the award for Outstanding Performance by a Featured Female Actor... HOLA Ilka Award recipients **Emilio Delgado** and **Sonia Manzano**, a.k.a. Luis and María from the TV program "Sesame Street" (PBS)... watching **A.B. Lugo**, channeling a borscht belt comedian, and deftly keep the presentations moving along... ahhhhh! I can't decide! With José

The 2005 HOLA Awards continued on page 2

## Uncensored and Unstoppable: Paul Christie, New York Screen Actors Guild President **EXCLUSIVE**

On November 7, 2005, I attended the SAG General Membership meeting, where Paul Christie spoke passionately about the outcome of the SAG National Plenary Session held in Los Angeles, and disagreed with SAG National President Alan Rosenberg on how the Plenary Session was conducted, among other things. Msrs. Christie and Rosenberg were both advised to stop discussing the Plenary Session because of the legal



implications. Christie is also the first SAG Branch President to be censored in the SAG newsletter, but here, in this interview, his first since the SAG General Membership meeting, he "let it rip."

**HOLA:** What can you tell the HOLA public about the Plenary Session?

**Paul Christie:** This was the first time that the elected officials of SAG were denied legal counsel regarding, and an opportunity to speak on, the decision affecting the future of [the] National Executive Director, Greg Hessinger. We, the New York Branch, and every other branch in the nation, including two Los Angeles Board members, cast our "no" votes, so the decision would not be recorded as unanimous, and walked out in protest. The vote (54 to 46) was cast and Mr. Hessinger was fired. Mr. Rosenberg also fired three more high ranking staff, one of whom had considerable experience with the SAG Commercials contract, which is up for renegotiation next year. We here in New York are waiting to see what Mr.

Paul Christie interview continued on page 3



NYC's LMEC Executive Director **Liz Caldas**, center, standing between masters of ceremonies **Odalys Molina**, left, and **Jorge Ramos**, right, addresses the crowd. Photo by VV.

**The 2005 HOLA Awards continued from front page**



HOLA José Ferrer Tespis Award recipient **Raúl Esparza**. Photo by VV.

Ferrer as *Cyrano de Bergerac* supervising me from his portrait near the lobby of The Players theatrical club overlooking Manhattan's Gramercy Park, I checked guests and awardees into the HOLA gala and I still can't decide what was the best part of the event...

**HOLA hits the big 3-0**—HOLA Executive Director **Manny Alfaro** received the first big cheer of the evening when he mentioned that HOLA had just turned 30 years old.

**A visit from the NYC Mayor's Office**—The honorable Mayor Bloomberg dispatched **Liz Caldas**, Executive Director of NYC's Latin Media &

Entertainment Commission, who read Hizzoner's letter commending HOLA's work. *The text of Mayor Bloomberg's letter can be found in a separate article.*

**Keeping it in the family**—*Las hermanas Ortiz de Mott Haven/The Ortiz Sisters of Mott Haven* (Outstanding Achievement by an Ensemble Cast) started out the award ceremony - the first time a mother/daughter duo (**Amneris Morales** and **Belange Rodríguez**) won an award together here at HOLA. The Featured Male Actor award brought out **Emyliano Santa Cruz** (*Madre (el drama padre)*), who was later acknowledged proudly when his mother **Liliana Bernard** won her award for Outstanding Achievement by a Female Actor (*Reflejos en el agua*).

**Hacemos teatro en inglés también**—For the first time, HOLA honored achievements in Latino theater in English. **Liche Ariza** (*Martínez*), **Sol Marina Crespo** (*The Missteps of a Salsa Dancer*) and **Rhina Valentín** (*Remembering Rei*) were some of the artists honored this year for their shows in English. In the past HOLA only honored shows in Spanish or shows that had both English and Spanish performances.

**Roasting and Toasting**—**Allen Davis III**, winner of the Lifetime Achievement Award, was lovingly roasted by his students in a short video homage directed by **A.B. Lugo** and **Alberto Bonilla**. This brief, but sufficiently embarrassing moment inspired Mr. Davis to remind the audience that we must continue to sup-

port the arts in times of crisis, and that most of all, the arts should be fun.

**Fun and Freewheeling Highlights**—Featured Female Actor **Rhina Valentín** definitely epitomized **Allen Davis III's** wish that the arts should be fun and took that to heart as she accepted her award. Fellow award winner **Sol Marina Crespo** took a moment to pose for a picture for her mother in the audience (who was not an award winner this year).

**Multiple winners**—**Ángel Gil Orrios** won a record four awards this year for *Thalía Spanish Theatre*, for directing, set designing and producing *Casi una diosa/Almost A Goddess*, as well as producing *Colombia: Fantasía Folclórica 3*. **Silvia Sierra** also won two awards for directing and producing the Grupo Artificio/La Tea production of Federico Garcia Lorca's first play, *El maleficio de la mariposa*.

**Luis and María, a.k.a. Emilio Delgado and Sonia Manzano**—Yes, the West Coast Chicano (Luis) met the East Coast *nuyoriqueña* (María), eventually married her on "Sesame Street," and they still had time to teach several generations to read in the process. Sonia eventually moved into writing and directing episodes. Nowadays, Emilio continues to donate his time and talent to causes that range from United Farm Workers to the 52nd Street project, and Sonia serves on several not-for profit boards including the March of Dimes, and Symphony Space.

**Designers**—This was also the first year that theater designers were honored. **Yanko Bakulic** was honored for his evocative set design for *El maleficio de la mariposa*, **Edison Carrera** for his sumptuous costume design for *El avaro*, **Ángel Gil Orrios** for his subtly surreal set design for *Casi una diosa/Almost A Goddess* and renowned puppeteer and designer **José López** for his exemplary set and costume design for *Ricitos y los 3 ositos*.

**Ricitos, Flamenco and Fantasía**—**Dr. Manuel Morán** of SEA accepted the award for Outstanding Achievement in a Musical Production for his latest theatrical adventure *Ricitos y los 3 ositos*. He acknowledged the entire cast, who were in the audience and who let out a resounding cheer.



HOLA Ilka Award recipients **Emilio Delgado** and **Sonia Manzano**. Photo by VV.

**Paul Christie interview continued from first page**

Rosenberg will do next towards healing the major rift between the majority of the Hollywood-elected board members, and the rest of the national board members, because these recent moves have caused greater division.

One of the things that contribute to this huge difference of opinion, is that many SAG members in L.A. work only in [the] TV/Theatrical Film Contract, or the Background Contract. Actors in New York spread their work out over the Commercials Contract as well as the TV/Theatrical Film and Background contracts. As a result, the L.A. Board tends to be more isolationist in their thinking. Do I wish it hadn't happened? Yes. But I have to accept it and move on.

**HOLA:** *I've heard rumors that New York and the other branches may split from the Hollywood branch. How true or likely is that?*

**PC** (shuddering): That's the last resort, kind of like the threat of the Cuban Missile Crisis during the Cold War. None of us want that. But if the alternative is to be shut out of the process, we may have to consider redefining the union in those terms. Ultimately, down the road, we have to do what's best for the New York Branch. I'll just say that within SAG, the various factions should not be afraid of the difficult disagreements we are having now. These are the discussions we need to have in order to find solutions, and get through to that "light at the end of the tunnel."

**HOLA:** *What can SAG do to resuscitate the Spanish-language market after it was decimated by the commercial contract strike of 2000?*

**PC:** I saw that coming about five months before the strike began, and I knew it would be hard to undo the damage. The Spanish-Language Task Force is an example of one of the good things that would have been financed by the Dues Referendum if it had been passed by the membership. [HOLA Advisory Board Member] **Francisco G. Rivela** was involved with that. The New York Branch also needs a Spanish-Language Contract Specialist here in New York, the branch where the Spanish-Language contract started. Miami has one, and Los Angeles has another one. But there was not enough money in the budget to get one here in New York— another thing that could have been financed by the dues referendum.

A "made in/played in" contract here in the New York Branch would help too, but it has to be approved by the National Board. This would help a lot of smaller production companies come under the SAG umbrella, and not just in Spanish. There are creative ways we can work with producers to bring them into a positive working relationship with SAG. Look at the Low Budget Film Agreement. It started with a few high profile members finding film projects they really believed in and wanted to do. But the film makers could not afford to become SAG signatories, so the union figured out a way to make a contract that paid actors out of any profits the film made later on. It created more opportunities for more actors. And it was a way for producers and directors to get used to working with SAG, in a way that made sense for the budgets they were dealing with.

SAG can also open its doors to make it easier to join the union, and essentially "corner the market" on talent. The reality of the situation is that the non-union talent pool has grown in proportion to SAG. There is much more non-union competition for roles. But many members, especially in L.A., are afraid to let others in because "they will take away our jobs." Well, I have news for them; their jobs are already being taken away by non-union actors. We may as well let them into the union, get their initiation fees, dues, and contributions towards the benefit plans. The other unions kind of laugh at SAG because of how hard we make it to join. We should be outside every drama school and studio in New York recruiting members. The union was started to protect actors, and it's these younger, inexperienced ones who get taken advantage of because they don't have quite the experience yet, and we should back them up on everything from safe working conditions to getting paid what they are promised. It's not until they get that "slap in the face", in the form of not getting paid, or worse, that they

realize a union is a good thing to have behind you.

**HOLA:** *What can the Latino actor get out of the union?*

**PC:** Any actor will get more out of the union if they participate in the committees, the meetings, and the structure of the union. The younger members are the future of the union, and they are missing from the union meetings and the whole process. I don't think they understand their own importance. It's weird because in one way we make it difficult to get into the union, but also, we have to fight that it's an "instant" generation— a lot of kids now if they want to find out something just look it up online. When I wanted to learn something, I had to go to the New York Public Library and research it. That makes it hard for people to understand the processes within the union, and the fact that change doesn't come instantly. If we can get them interested and involved, this would be the beginning of a positive turning point for SAG. It would be like the beginning of an avalanche that could turn this union around.

Some of the things SAG has collaborated on which benefit all members have to do with the incentives New York State and New York City have created to attract the film business back into the area. All of this is part of the political activity that SAG dues pay for. There is a "Made in New York" program, through the [NYC] Mayor's [Michael R. Bloomberg] Office, which offers discounts to all sorts of things— lumber, food, clothing, everything you can imagine you need to make a film, and it really works. Production has increased in New York City. [Background work alone is up 12%, according to the report given at the membership meeting on November 7, 2005]. I'd like to introduce Katharine Oliver, who runs the "Made in New York" program out of the Mayor's office, to the Spanish Language productions.

New York City and State also created tax incentives to encourage more production in this region. In New York State, we have a "Coogan" Law [named after child actor **Jackie Coogan**, *see separate article*], which protects the earnings of our members under 18, and we have a COBRA subsidy, that allows a person to continue paying for health insurance coverage to bridge those times when you don't qualify for your benefits. The New York Branch has also lobbied and helped defeat "Right to Work" legislation in New York State. In California it was narrowly defeated, by two votes I think. "Right to Work" legislation is part of the recent political efforts to neutralize the Labor Movement in this country, but that's a whole 'nother interview.

I think what we [SAG] have for sale, what we put out, is the absolute best. I would love to get a chance to speak in front of the HOLA membership, and talk about these issues, and others like agents, managers, how to use committees to make proposals for change within the union, and anything else that might be on their minds.

**HOLA:** *What do you foresee in the evolution of the Agent-Manager-Actor dynamic?*

**PC:** We're hoping to bring managers under the SAG banner, and we hope to get an agreement within the union on the ATA [Association of Talent Agents] deal. We want to get out of this situation where the actor has to pick between loyalty to their agent and to their union.

**HOLA:** *I hear the term "Fi-Core" tossed around a lot at meetings. What does it mean?*

**PC:** It means "Financial Core." This came out of a lawsuit, the Beck Decision, I think. The result is that a union member can make a "Fi-Core" declaration, and become a dues paying, non-member. You pay 98% of the dues, you get health and pension benefits, but you have no vote in the way the union is run, and do not support the union's political activity, which is considerable for the New York Branch. The legal decision is part of the concerted effort by the current Bush administration to weaken labor unions.



Manuel A. Morán points out the company of his award winning musical production of *Ricitos y los 3 ositos*. Photo by Julián Gerena Quiñones.

**The 2005 HOLA Awards continued from page 2**

Two company members from Colombia: *Fantasia Folclórica 3* accepted their award (one of Thalía's six awards, second only to Repertorio Español's ten). **Antonio "El Chupete" Rodríguez**, principal dancer with *Noche Flamenca*, accepted the award for **Martín Goldin Santangelo's** world renowned dance company.

**Directors**— Outstanding Achievement in Direction award winner **Arian Blanco** (*Dinosaurios*) not only acknowledged his fellow artists, noting that the HOLA awards were based on outstanding achievement and not competition, but he also put in a good word for using the HOLA website, as he has for many projects. The directing award this year encompassed both established directors **Ángel Gil Orrios** (*Casi una diosa/Almost A Goddess*) and **René Buch** (*Ana en el trópico*) and emerging directing talents such as Blanco and multiple winner **Silvia Sierra** (*El maleficio de la mariposa*).

**Raúl Esparza**— Esparza, now appearing on Broadway in *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, had an interesting turn of events. As a child, he won an acting award which was presented by José Ferrer himself, and now, through HOLA, he receives the José Ferrer Topsis Award. Esparza, who does most of his work in the English language, addressed the audience in Spanish, commented on the

stereotypical portrayals of Latinos in the film industry, which seemed to be changing slowly compared to the theatre scene in New York.

**A meeting of icons**— **Rafael Pineda**, Univisión's leading news anchor for over 30 years, and Gala co-host **Jorge Ramos** (Telemundo co-anchor of "Noticiero 47") put aside network competition for a moment of professional admiration as Mr. Pineda accepted his award for Excellence in Spanish Language Media.

**María Hinojosa**— **Manny Alfaro**, Executive Director of HOLA, took a moment to read a letter from Hinojosa, the recipient of the Excellence in English Media Award. *See the text of the letter in a separate article in this newsletter.*

**Mercedes and Esai**— And of course, the moment all the audience had been waiting for... what did **Mercedes Ruehl** and **Esai Morales** have to say about all of this, what words of inspiration would they impart to us? As if they hadn't already inspired us throughout the evening with their willingness to pose for pictures, sign autographs, and chat with any and every attendee.

**Mercedes Ruehl** made us all laugh when she mentioned that it wasn't until she went to a casting director for the first time that she discovered she was ethnic. She had always thought everyone was ethnic, that we all come



HOLA Excellence in Spanish Language Media recipient **Rafael Pineda** of Univisión, left, with master of ceremonies **Jorge Ramos**, of Telemundo. Photo by VV.

Paul Christie interview *continued from page 3*

**HOLA:** *Anything we haven't covered you'd like to talk to HOLA about?*

**PC:** Yeah, the SAG Board here in New York is cohesive, and decisive, and we pride ourselves on the lobbying work we do that benefits our members. New York is the only state with state, and city tax incentives, something like the "Made in New York" Program, a COBRA subsidy, and a Coogan law. California [has a Coogan law, but] does not have any of these tax incentives to lure back runaway production, does not have a COBRA subsidy to protect actors who have lost their health benefits.

But the New York Branch needs to attract our high profile members back. And I don't just mean "drive-bys." Whether we like it or not, celebrities are our "royalty," and getting them to show their support for SAG will get people to meetings, press conferences, whatever. We've also got to work on aggressively attracting younger members to join the union, and get involved in the functioning of our union.

In the next TV/Theatrical Film contract negotiations we want to bring up the "Second Look" clause-- getting writers, and casting directors to open up the field. Like, if the script calls for a "middle aged white couple," getting them to consider a middle aged Latino, Asian, or African American couple, or a couple who aren't the same race. It's almost embarrassing for me that we are not further along on this issue, that film and TV are still so predominantly white. This "Second Look" will also address ageism. Watch [NBC's] "ER" sometime. They do a great job with racial diversity, spreading it around, but everyone is in their early twenties. How cool would it be if you threw in a 45 year old intern? What kind of dynamic would that set up for the show? Imagine the storylines that could come out of that.

I'm doing that myself. I've been writing a children's book for my daughter, who's eight [years old]. I noticed that the main character was a boy. So I started changing all the "hes" to "shes." It made me realize how easy it is to stick to what's familiar. So I keep coming back to "what do you want to project?" Because whether you like it or not, it's going out there.

And that's all she wrote!

...**Noemí de la Puente**

#### **THE COOGAN LAW**

Jackie Coogan was born into a family of vaudevillians in 1914. He appeared in his first movie three years later. His most notable role at the time was opposite Charlie Chaplin in the classic film *The Kid* (1921). By 1923, he was one of the highest paid stars in Hollywood and the youngest self-made millionaire in history.

When he was in his 20s, his stepfather and mother refused his request for access to his money. Even though he made millions, the California law at the time stated that he had no access to the money and when Coogan sued, he only received a settlement in 1939 of \$126,000. The outrage that ensued led to the passing by the California legislature of The Child Actors Bill, also known as The Coogan Law. The Coogan Law which would set up a trust fund for any child actor and protect his/her earnings. California revamped the law in 1999, making it stronger, and a few years later, New York State passed their own version the law.

Jackie Coogan later went on to create one of television's kookiest and most notable characters, Uncle Fester on the TV series "The Addams Family." He continued to work as an actor until his death in 1984.

#### **2005 HOLA AWARD LIST OF AWARDEES** *continued from back page*

**Direction:** **Arián Blanco** (*Dinosaurios*) IATI; **René Buch** (*Ana en el trópico*) Rep. Español; **Ángel Gil Orrios** (*Casi una diosa/Almost A Goddess*) Thalía Spanish Theatre; **Silvia Sierra** (*El maleficio de la mariposa*) Grupo Artificio/La Tea

**Technical Production:** **Yanko Bakulic** (*El maleficio de la mariposa*) Grupo Artificio/La Tea; **Edison Carrera** (*El avaro*) Tocando Puertas; **Ángel Gil Orrios** (*Casi una diosa/Almost a Goddess*) Thalía Spanish Theatre; **José López** (*Ricitos y los 3 ositos*) SEA

**Musical:** **Colombia: Fantasía Folclórica 3** Thalía Spanish Theatre; **Noche Flamenca** Theater 80/Noche Flamenca; **Ricitos y los 3 ositos** SEA

**Drama:** **Ana en el trópico** Rep. Español; **Casi una diosa/Almost A Goddess** Thalía Spanish Theatre; **El maleficio de la mariposa** Grupo Artificio/La Tea.

#### **The Article Written by Paul Christie That Was Censored By The Screen Actors Guild (THE COMPLETE TEXT)**

New York Screen Actors Guild President **Paul Christie** (see article on the front page), as one of his duties writes a letter to the SAG membership, to be published in SAG's member magazine, *The Screen Actor*, which is published quarterly.

For the first time in the history of the Guild, his letter, which was critical of SAG leadership, was censored by SAG, who demanded numerous changes. Mr. Christie refused. Below is the Paul Christie letter, as submitted for publication in *Screen Actor* magazine.

*"When is it you?"*

*"That is the question I have been posing recently to members of our national board. When is it time to pull out the mirror and take a cold, hard look? In my opinion, in the past five years that I have been serving as a national board member of this union, I have seen a constant and distressing stream of criticism directed at our staff, particularly our senior staff, and it always seems to be coming from the same direction and the same people. They proclaim that staff is never good enough, and then make these dedicated, hard working men and women the target of their vitriol. These staffers— many of whom have been honorably serving this great institution for 30 and 40 years, have done nothing less than protect us to pursue our careers. They are the same staff who helped formulate things like Class A, and the residual system and negotiated all our contracts for almost half a century. Then out of nowhere, many of these same devoted people are described, unbelievably, as "incompetent" or worse, and then fired, or we are told, "choose to retire," or "move on." Along the way, though, they are too often subjected to unwarranted public criticism and humiliation— sometimes outright lies— by our national elected officials who seek their departures.*

*"The list of those who have been targeted for this kind of treatment includes many of our most valued current and former executives: former national executive director Ken Orsatti, former Hollywood executive director Len Chassman, former New York executive director John Sucke, former executive assistant Clint Dayton, former chief financial officer Gerald Wilson, former legal counsel Leo Geffner, former legal counsel David Alter, former national executive director Bob Pisano, former chief financial officer Francesca Hickson, former national executive director Greg Hessinger, and three former employees who never even got the chance to work a single day for us before being "fired", Rebecca Rhine, John Russum, and Joanne Kessler. Recently four more – Hollis Batchelor, Susan Rose, Anne Talltree, and Carolyn Winnor, who have each served us for decades – announced their intentions to retire at the end of the year. All together, this long list comprises over 450 years of experience, dedication, and most importantly "institutional memory"...gone...just in the past five years. Four who have managed to hang on, fortunately for us, in my opinion, are: Senior Advisor John McGuire, Deputy National Executive Director for Contracts Sally Weaver, New York Executive Assistant Ruth Baptiste, and present General Counsel David White. But they have also been repeated targets.*

*"So again, I ask....when is it you? We continue down this road at our own collective peril. The elected change every year, but our staff cannot or we will be perpetuating instability and chaos. This should be an honor roll listed above, and we should, all of us, be forever grateful.*

*"This of course is only my opinion – an opinion based on 27 years as a member, and first hand experience with each of them. I myself give thanks for all they have done.*

*"Think about it."*

...**Paul Christie**

from somewhere. She came to the awards using a crutch— apparently nothing stops this energetic performer! She also mentioned she will be performing with **Antonia Rey** (2003 HOLA Lifetime Achievement Awardee) in a play later this season, so we'll pass along any information we get on it.

**Esai Morales** began his acceptance speech by bowing before Ruehl, and thanking her for inspiring him. He brought up the importance of producers in the media, and that we need more Latino producers producing Latino works. Needless to say, he left the audience cheering.

In spite of the malfunctioning air conditioning system and the heat, few tore themselves away early from the exceptional parade of Latino talent that night. Many thanks to **Mike Smith Rivera, Mónica Delgado, Sandie Luna, Laura Patalano, Sam Hale, Inma Heredia, Ernesto De Villa Bejjani, Gilbert Cruz, Sandy Dorr, Richard Marino** and the audio swat team from SEA, and the others who helped to make this event possible by donating their time, talent, and patience to this Awards Gala.

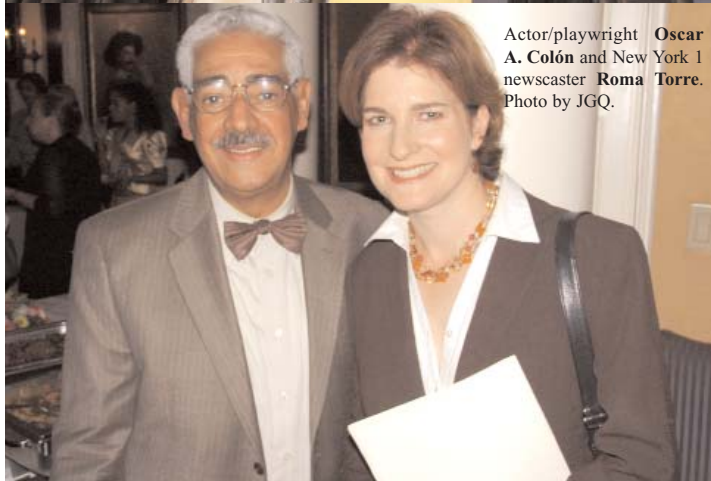
Wait a minute, maybe the most memorable thing was the promoter from the Broadway show *Latinologues* who stopped by and gave us free tickets to that funny show... no... it had to be when Manny did that thing with the... oops... never mind, I can't decide.

...Noemí de la Puente

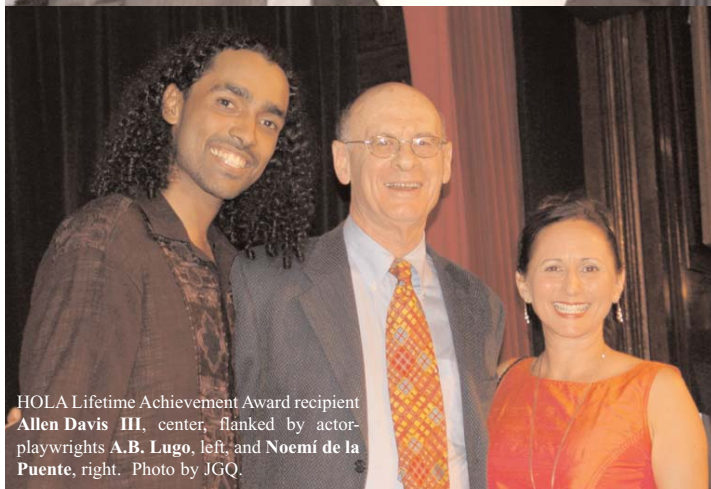
[Editor's Note: All photographs were taken by Julián Gerena Quiñones and Vincent Villafañe and are marked by the initials JGQ and VV, respectively. A complete list of awardees can be seen beginning on the back page of this newsletter. To see more photos of the HOLA Awards, log on to our website at [www.hellohola.org](http://www.hellohola.org).]



Four of the recipients of Outstanding Achievement by an Ensemble (left to right): **Marlyn Matías, Amneris Morales, Belange Rodríguez** and **Senta Pérez**. Photo by VV.



Actor/playwright **Oscar A. Colón** and New York 1 newscaster **Roma Torre**. Photo by JGQ.



HOLA Lifetime Achievement Award recipient **Allen Davis III**, center, flanked by actor-playwrights **A.B. Lugo**, left, and **Noemí de la Puente**, right. Photo by JGQ.

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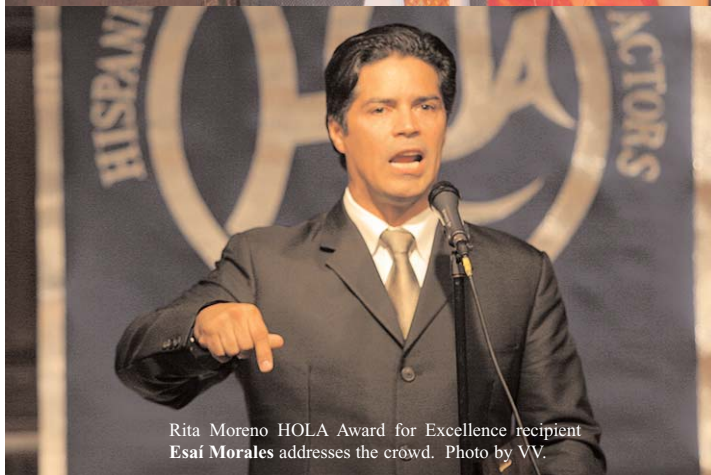
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Three of the recipients of the 2005 HOLA Award for Outstanding Achievement by a Featured Female Actor (left to right): **Rhina Valentín, Denise Quiñones** and **Gredivel Vásquez**. Photo by VV.



**Rita Moreno** HOLA Award for Excellence recipient **Esai Morales** addresses the crowd. Photo by VV.



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
NEW YORK, NY 10007

Dear Friends:

*It is a great pleasure to welcome you all to the Sixth Annual HOLA Awards and Benefit.*

*Assisting both emerging and established artists to achieve success in the entertainment industry, HOLA has been a tremendous source of support for Latino actors for nearly three decades. On behalf of the residents of New York City, I commend the men and women associated with HOLA for the lasting contributions made to the arts. You are helping to bring awareness to the amazing talents of the Latino acting community, and your efforts are creating an entertainment industry that better mirrors our society.*

*In addition, I am proud to congratulate the HOLA Awards recipients on being recognized here tonight. These phenomenal individuals have made groundbreaking contributions to the theater and arts community and have been a source of inspiration for their fellow artists. I wish tonight's honorees and everyone gathered here this evening the very best for an enjoyable evening and for continued excellence.*

Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor

#### Letter from María Hinojosa to HOLA Membership, September 19, 2005

My Dear Friends:

*What an honor to be recognized by my peers – especially because you may not know that all my life I actually dreamed of being an actor! I am sorry I am not able to be with you tonight but because I feel so strongly about mentorship and being “inside” my comunidad – I am in Oklahoma City giving my first ever speech in Spanish!!*



*Over the past two weeks, I have been touched yet again by another 9-11 anniversary and have been to a scene of another national tragedy– I was in Gulfport, Mississippi, witnessing the abandonment of our fellow American citizens– the poor. And just this Friday, I was in New Orleans with a broken heart.*

*This is an extraordinary difficult time in our country and one of the most challenging for American journalists. There is an assault on the freedom of the Press. One of the reasons why I chose to leave CNN earlier this summer after eight years there is because of the whittling down of strong critical journalism.*

*When immigration authorities arrested an undocumented immigrant who was a central character in my CNN documentary, I was devastated. But perhaps the greater blow was when CNN chose not to report this kind of harassment as news.*

*I am much happier as the first Latina primetime correspondent on Public Television as the senior correspondent for the new magazine show now on PBS. And I am thrilled to have been named the Managing Editor of my show on NPR, “Latino USA.” What your award means to me is fuel in my journalist’s belly.*

*There is a ceiling for women reporters– there is a ceiling for Latina reporters. But there is also a ceiling for reporters who consistently want to question authority and give voice to the voiceless.*

*When you recognize me for my work, you make me feel stronger than ever. You make me feel like not giving up the fight for the truth– por la verdad. And for this, les digo un millón de gracias.*

*I was not here with you tonight but next year I promise to thank you all in person– con muchos abrazos and one especially for my dear Manny – who has believed in me back when I as just a baby reporter. You are feeding my soul.*

¡Gracias!



**Bochinche...** Spanish for gossip. In this column– nice gossip, good gossip.

The Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre (PRTT), in conjunction with its Professional Playwrights Unit, presented Carlos J. Serrano’s *Las hermanas Ortiz de Mott Haven/The Ortiz Sisters of Mott Haven*. Directed by Alba Oms, the production featured **Rosie Berrido**, **Amneris Morales**, Marlyn Matias, **Senta Pérez** and **Belange Rodríguez** and took place at the PRTT in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.

**Jesús E. Martínez** appeared in the comedy murder mystery *Scotch & Poison*. Produced by 2 Cities Productions, the site-specific production took place on the Frying Pan, an actual lightship docked at Pier 62 in the Hudson River off Manhattan’s Chelsea neighborhood. He then followed this up with a role in Henry Guzmán’s play *Pilgrim*. Directed by **Mariana Carreño**, the production also featured David Anzuelo, James Martínez, Joseph W. Rodríguez, Debargo Sanyal and Kevin Wong and was presented by the Professional Playwrights Unit of the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre at its eponymous theater in the theater district of midtown Manhattan. He later appeared in the PRTT Summer Tour production *Don Quixote: su última aventura* and then acted in *Fata Morgana*. Also produced by 2 Cities Productions, the latter show, a theatrical cabaret, took place at the Triad Theater on the West Side of Manhattan.

The Hudson Exploited Theater Company (HEXTC) presented two one-act plays under the name *Living in Exile: An Evening of Contemporary Cuban Theater*. The two plays (Rogelio Martínez’s *Union City, NJ, Where are You?* and Leopoldo M. Hernández’s *Martínez*) were directed by Arián Blanco and presented at the 32 Street Playhouse in Union City, New Jersey. The cast included Liche Ariza, Gregg Bellón, **Ángel Fajardo**, **Sam Hale** and Lauren Jalazo. The second show, *Martínez*, then transferred to the 13th Street Rep in Manhattan’s West Village.

**Rodolfo Díaz** contacted us to let us know that he appeared as The Spanish Cardinal in a skit regarding the selection of a new pope on NBC’s “Late Night with Conan O’Brien.”

The Bronx is rapidly becoming a haven for the arts (and artists). The Bronx Council of the Arts honored this cultural renaissance with its first annual Bronx Artist Festival (or Bx1, for short). The festival, which covered the disciplines of film, theater, spoken word poetry, visual arts, music and dance. With regards to theater, Bx1 presented *Latina Theater Explosion*, excerpts of solo shows from Elizabeth Marrero, Desi Moreno-Penson, Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz and **Alba Sánchez**. The show took place at Pregones Theater in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx. [Editor’s note: For more information on the Bronx Council of the Arts, log on to [www.bronxarts.org](http://www.bronxarts.org).]

**Alba Sánchez** (see above) presented her solo show *The Bronx Witch Project* as part of the Downtown Urban Theater Festival (DUTF). The production took place at the Cherry Lane Theatre in the West Village.

**Wanda Arriaga**, José Cheo Olivares, **Juan Villarreal** and **Adriana Sananes** appeared in the revival of *Entremeses de Cervantes*. Produced by Teatro Círculo, the production took place at the Hostos Center for Arts and Culture in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx.

**Cynthia Benjamin** appeared in Josefina López’s *Real Women Have Curves*. Directed by Abel López (no relation), the play was produced by and at Gala Hispanic Theater in Washington, D.C.

**Alberto Bonilla** snagged the role of Ferdinand in Resonance Ensemble’s *La Tempestad*, based on Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* through an HOLA casting notice. The show took place at the Ohio Theatre in Soho.



**Rhina Valentín**, JoAnn Olivera, Eugene Rodríguez, José Sánchez and Tanio Ochoteco appeared in the Frank Pérez play *Apostles of the Apocalypse*. The play, directed by Pérez, took place at the Nuyorican Poets' Café in the East Village section of Manhattan.

**Blanca Camacho** took over the role of Hannah on the CBS daytime drama "As The World Turns." She replaced Sara Ramírez, who won the 2005 Tony for her role in the musical *Monty Python's Spamalot*.

Amazingly talented hyphenate **Jade Esteban Estrada** (actor-singer-composer-dancer-choreographer-playwright-director) is currently touring the country (to much acclaim) with his solo shows *Icons: The Lesbian and Gay History of the World, Volume 1*, where he interprets everyone from Sappho and Ellen DeGeneres to Michelangelo and Oscar Wilde. He has also just starting touring the second volume of the show, which includes portrayals of Alexander the Great, Susan B. Anthony, Harvey Milk and Billie Jean King. [Editor's note: What range!!] For more information on the comings and goings of Jade, check out his cleverly titled website at [www.getjaded.com](http://www.getjaded.com).

**George Bass** acted in Edgar Nkosi White's *Millennium 7*. Directed by Dana Manno, the production took place at the 78th Street Theater Lab in Manhattan's West Side.

**Ángel Feliciano** has been working a lot lately. The actor and tenor has been performing all over the New York metropolitan area. He was one of the cast members of the concerts *Melodia: Five Men and the Nights* (produced by and at La Tea at their eponymous theater in the Loisaida section of Manhattan); *Amigos de la Zarzuela* (produced in celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month by and at the New York Institute of Technology at Old Westbury); *Leaning on His Arms* (performed at Merkin Concert Hall in the West Side of Manhattan); and a recital at Christ and St. Stephen's Church (in the West Side of Manhattan).

**Damaris Cabrera** appeared in the Frank Adolfo's stage adaptation of *Llanto por Sánchez Mejía*. Directed by Juan Carlos Mañón, the production took place at the Casa del Comisionado (formerly known as La Casa de la Cultura Dominicana) in the Washington Heights section of Manhattan. She followed this up with a role in the Afrikan Women's Repertory production of *Murder Off-Broadway*. The murder mystery, directed by Bonnie Wright, took place at The Producers' Club in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.

**Kathy Tejada** and **Francisco Fuertes** starred in Rudolf Sierra's play *A Dangerous Theater Game (El veneno del teatro)*. Produced by Thalía Spanish Theatre and directed by **Ángel Gil Orrios** at Thalía's theater in Sunnyside, Queens.

**Douglas Taurel** and Foster Davis alternated playing the two lead roles in Sam Shepherd's classic play *True West*. The play was produced at Irish Arts Center at the West Side of Manhattan. The production is then scheduled to travel to Scotland for the Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

Teatro Tocando Puertas produced Molière's *El ávaro (The Miser)*. Directed by Cecill Villar and with a translation from Elías Balladares, the cast featured Villar, **Edison Carrera**, **Peter Dubó**, **Franco Galecio**, Mario Mattei, **Rita Ortiz** and Rafael Flores and took place at the Red Carpet Theater in Manhattan's El Barrio neighborhood. They have since had to revive the show due to popular demand. In addition, Tocando Puertas presented *Cuestión de vida o muerte*. Written by José Martínez Queirolo, the play also took place at the Red Carpet Theater and was directed by Iván L. Argudo and featured **Edison Carrera**, Fíor Marte, **Peter A. Dubó**, **Rita Ortiz** and Raúl Rivera in the cast.

La Tea and Grupo Artificio presented Federico García Lorca's first play, *El maleficio de la mariposa*, at La Tea Theater in the CSV Cultural Center

(home to HOLA) in the Loisaida section of Manhattan. Directed and choreographed by **Silvia Sierra** (with costume design by **Lina Sarrapochiello**), the cast included Sierra, **Inma Heredia**, **Mariana Buoninconti**, **Emyliano Santa Cruz** and **Johary Ramos**.

Liliana Benard, **Mariana Buoninconti**, **Emyliano Santa Cruz** and **Juan Villareal** starred in Alberto Borla's *Reflejos en el agua*. Directed by Santa Cruz, the production took place at Repertorio Español.

**Sandie Luna** e-mailed us to keep us abreast on her latest doings. She joined the cast of the long-running *Plátanos and Collard Greens* (as of press time playing at Florence Gould Hall in the East Side of Manhattan), performed in the role of Houlihan in Tanya Krohn's play *The Territory*. That production was at 78th Street Theatre Lab in the West Side of Manhattan. She was then cast in the T.E.S.T. Theater Company production of *The Last of Mrs. Lincoln*. Finally, she followed up all the above credits with a role in *Fallen Angel*. The play, directed by Pam White, occurred at the Producers' Club Theater in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.

**Franco Galecio**'s play *Mi otro yo* was produced at the Red Carpet Theater in Manhattan's El Barrio neighborhood and featured **Jeshua Vargas**, **Carlos Mantilla**, **Sofía Inés Vilella** and Raúl Rivera in the cast. The show, which deals with issues around AIDS and safer sex, has moved on to healthcare centers in the city and the Producers' Club Theaters in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.

Repertorio Español presented Franklin Tovar's *Historia bien conocida*. Adapted and directed by **Eduardo Navas**, the play featured Enrique Leal, **Mariana Buoninconti**, **Gredivel Vásquez** and **Emyliano Santa Cruz** and was produced at its eponymous theater in the Gramercy area of Manhattan.

**Noemí de la Puente**, **Rubén Luque** and **Carmen Mahiques** appeared in an episode of "One Life To Live" (ABC).

TEBA presented three plays as part of the fifth annual Candilejas Festival. They were *3x2+2*, Alejandro Casona's *La barca sin pescador* and *Expediente homosexual*. The first play was directed by Susana Crisán and Otto Montoya, while the latter two were directed by **Héctor Luis Rivera**. The cast of the three plays included **Ivanna Ivanna**, **Kathy Tejada**, **Héctor Luis Rivera**, **Carlos Rodríguez**, **Franco Galecio**, Cecill Villar and **Ernesto López**. The three shows, which were originally done at the Impact Theater in Brooklyn's Prospect Heights area, was presented at the Red Carpet Theater in Manhattan's El Barrio neighborhood for the Candilejas Festival. For more information on TEBA, log on to [www.teatroteba.com](http://www.teatroteba.com).



**Stalin Bocanegra** booked a role in *The Pharaoh's Daughter* at the Metropolitan Opera at Lincoln Center through an HOLA casting notice.

**Shawn Elliott** played Albert Einstein opposite Aasif Mandvi and Nilaja Sun in the U.S. premiere of Vern Thiessen's play *Einstein's Gift*. Directed by Ron Russell, the play was produced by the Epic Theatre Center and played at the Acorn Theatre at Theatre Row in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.

**Carolina Álvarez** was featured in a Wal-Mart print ad in the September issue of Vogue magazine. She also worked on the films *15 Days with Frida* and *Three Days Left*.

The LABYrith Theater presented José Rivera's play *Massacre (Sing to Your Children)*. Directed by Kate Whoriskey, and produced by Philip Seymour Hoffman and John Ortiz, the show was produced at the Public Theater/New York Shakespeare Festival's Shiva Theater in the Noho section of Manhattan and featured Elizabeth Canavan, Ron Cephas Jones, Florencia Lozano, Julián Acosta and **Adrián Martínez** in the cast.

La Tea presented a revival of César Sierra's *La lechuga*. Subtitled "a comedy of life and death," and directed by **Nelson Landriou**, the show took place in La Tea's eponymous theater in the CSV Cultural and Educational Center (home to HOLA) and featured Aminta de Lara, **Francisco Fuertes**, **Mateo Gómez**, Fabián González and **Ana Verónica Muñoz**. For more information on La Tea, log on to their new website at [www.teatrolatea.com](http://www.teatrolatea.com).

LaMicro Theater presented the Argentine comedy *MaTRIX, Inc.* Written by Diana Raznovich and directed by Martín Balmaceda, the show featured Roberto Cambeiro, **Pietro González** and Berioska Ipinza and took place at the Arthur Seelen Theater (at the Drama Bookshop) in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.

**Evelyn Fermín** e-mailed us to tell us that she booked roles in the plays *Yo Soy Latina!* and *La Luna Prometida* and an industrial through the HOLA Pages online directory.



The Barefoot Theatre Company presented *Kingdom Come*, as part of the Jean Cocteau Rep's first annual Off Off Bowery Festival. The play, written by Adam Rodríguez and directed by Francisco Solórzano, featured **Gil Ron**, Victoria Malvagno, Gabriel Buentello and Gabe Fazio in the cast. The production took place at Jean Cocteau Rep's home, the Bouwerie Lane Theater in the NoHo section of Manhattan. Barefoot later presented the 40th anniversary production of Lanford Wilson's *Balm in Gilead*. The production, directed by Eric Nightengale, featured Anna Chlumsky (star of the film *My Girl*), Francisco Solórzano, Louis Reyes Cárdenas, **Rubén Luque** and Victoria Malvagno and was produced at the American Theatre of Actors in the Hell's Kitchen/Clinton section of Manhattan.



**Ángel Premier Solís** nabbed a role in the episode of The History Channel program "Save Our History" entitled "FBI Stings: Recovering Stolen History" through an HOLA Pages referral.

**Gladys Pérez** gave me a note informing me of the flurry of recent activity that has been going her way. She booked a role on "Law & Order Special Victims Unit" (NBC) and finished up a four-year run as Julia de Burgos in the NY Artists Unlimited production of *Song of the Simple Truth*. In addition, she co-hosted with **Omar Pérez** (no relation) an open mic show at the Downeast Arts Center in the East Village on Fridays. For more information on everything Gladys, check out [www.gladysperez.com](http://www.gladysperez.com).

**Gilbert Cruz** has been working a lot lately. He is also diligent in contacting us to let us know what he is doing. Most recent projects include roles in the indie film *Guide to Recognize Your Saints* (starring Robert Downey, Jr.), *The Gardener of Eden* (starring Leonardo DiCaprio), and *Superheroes*; as well as roles on "Law & Order: Criminal Intent" (NBC), an industrial on sensitivity training in the workplace for Sloane-Kettering Hospital and a commercial for CVS. [Editor's note: Who is your agent?!]

**Cristina San Juan** appeared in Juan Riquelme's *Pier #13*. Directed by Yuji Takematsu, the play was produced by and at Theater for the New City in the East Village.

**Rubén Rabasa** produced the theatrical show *In Search of Me (70% Truth, 20% Historical Fiction and 10% Pure Bulls...t)* [sic]. Described as "Latino Stories Told with Warmth and Humor," it was directed by Julio Oscar Mechoso, the show took place at Noho Actors Studio at Noho, California. [Editor's note: That's North Hollywood, not north of Houston Street, as most savvy New Yorkers would assume.]

**Linda Nieves-Powell's** film short, *Mimi's Portrait*, was screened at the Staten Island Downtown Film Festival. Written and directed by Nieves-Powell, starred Liana Ortiz and **Lina Sarrapochiello**.

**Roy Arias** opened his new theater, the Ilka Tanya Payán Theater recently. Named after HOLA founding president and located in the Times Square Art Center in the theater district of midtown Manhattan, it is the home base for his theater company Teatro Estudio Internacional. The opening featured luminaries from show business (including mistress of ceremonies Celinés Toribio) and local politics as well as a special performance of **Cándido Tirado's** play *El sueño de Ilka*. Directed by Irma Bello, the play featured **Rosie Berrido**, Antonio Mar, Amarelys Pérez and **Iván Camilo** in the cast. The first official production is slated to be *Sex on The Beach*, Arias' self-penned solo show to be directed by Ramón Pareja. For more information, log on to [www.teatroestudiointernacional.com](http://www.teatroestudiointernacional.com).



**Débora Balardini** booked a role in the Discovery Channel series "A Haunting in Connecticut" when the show's casting director found her headshot and resume information on the HOLA website.

Actors of the World opened its fifth season with Jean Paul Sartre's masterpiece *A Huis Clos (No Exit)* to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Sartre's birth. Directed by Francisco Bustamante, the play took place at the 78th Street Theatre Lab in the West Side of Manhattan and featured **Marco Aponte**, **Marcela Bragagnolo**, **Ximena Miele** and Bustamante.

The Latin American Theatre Ensemble/El Portón del Barrio, also known as LATE, presented *La importancia de llamarse blanca* at the Julia de Burgos Cultural Center in Manhattan's El Barrio cultural corridor. Written and directed by Aminta de Lara, the play featured de Lara, Diana Chery, **Pedro de Llano** and Fernando Then.

La Tea presented *Fountain of Youth*, **Noemí de la Puente's** self-penned solo show. Directed by **Mateo Gómez**, the show took place at La Tea's namesake theater in the CSV Cultural and Educational Center (home to HOLA) and is slated to transfer to SEA @ Los Kabayitos Theater in early 2006.

**Bill Ramiro** e-mailed us to let us know that he booked voiceovers for two calling card commercials through HOLA referrals.



**Mike Smith Rivera** performed as Mr. Clown in *Isolation*. Described as "a mediation in solitude," the production was produced by Chashama at one of its spaces in the theater district of midtown Manhattan. For more information on this talented performer, log on to [www.mrc clown.biz](http://www.mrc clown.biz).

**Elizabeth Gerena** e-mailed us to let us know that an Optimum Online commercial in which she appears has begun airing.

HBO presented this year's New York International Latino Film Festival (NYILFF), and as usual, HOLA members could be seen all over the celluloid. **Aliana Galán** starred in *Lousy in Love*, directed by Roberto Klinger. **César De León** wrote, directed, produced and starred in the prize-nabbing short *Junito*. *Life's Decisions*, a film directed by Mark Anthony [Editor's note: no relation to the singer/actor], featured **Lisette**



**Espallat**, Brett Friedmann and **Gloria Irizarry**. **María Olivares**, left, appeared in the Hugo Pérez-directed short *Julieta y Ramón* (in a role she got through an HOLA referral). **Teresa Yenque** and **Manny Alfaro** appeared in the short *Stolen Lives*, where she played Iris Báez, a real-life mother who became an activist after her son died while under police custody. Finally, **José Yenque** appeared in a mind-boggling three films at the festival. They were *Between* (directed by David Ocañas and featuring Poppy Montgomery), *Puños rosas* (directed by Beto Gómez) and *Bad Dream* (directed by Eduardo Benchoam).

Danisarte presented the latest edition of *Los Nuevos Valores/The New Treasures*, its festival of new plays. Entitled *4 Caminos*, the festival con-

sisted of the plays *Passing Judgement* (written by **Jason Ramírez** and directed by Danisarte producer **Alicia Kaplan**), *The Hopefulness or La Esperanza* (written by **Raquel Almazán** and directed by Dora Arreola), *¿La guagua pasa por aquí?* (written by **Sonia Suárez Schwartz** and directed by **William Saquicela**) and *Insomne* (written by José M. de la Rosa and directed by **Luis Felipe Rodríguez**). In addition, the festival also included two children's plays: *La Cucarachita Martina and El Ratoncito Pérez*, adapted from Pura Belpré's fairytale *Pérez and Martínez* by **Alicia Kaplan** (who also directed) and *Faustoto*, written and directed by Juan Guzmán. Actors involved in the festival include **Claudia Capshaw**, **Jason Ramírez**, **Inma Heredia**, **Raquel Almazán** and **Cristina San Juan**. The festival took place at the Julia de Burgos Latino Cultural Center in Manhattan's El Barrio neighborhood.

In a recent episode of NBC's "Law & Order Special Victims Unit," a plethora of Latino actors (including HOLA members) were represented. They included Paula Garcés, **Elisa de la Roche**, **Oscar A. Colón**, Olivia Negrón, **Sandra Berrios**, Sara Contreras and **Edouard DeSoto**.

The Hispanic Organization of Latin Actors (HOLA), in association with International Theatre New York (ITNY) and 88 Performing Arts, presented *La fotografía/The Photograph*. Written and directed by **Ernesto De Villa Bejjani**, the play featured **Bill Blechingberg**, Gerardo Gudiño and Samuel Salazar and took place at the ITNY International Theatre New York in the West Village section of New York.

**Blanca N. Vásquez** booked a voiceover for an children's audiobook through an HOLA referral. She played four characters in the Spanish translation. [Editor's note: Thora Birch, of *American Beauty* fame, did the English version.] She followed this up with a role in Vivian Neuwirth's play *Fun on the Bayou*. The play, which was part of the Riant Theatre's Strawberry One-Act Festival, took place at the Producers' Club II Theater in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.



Also taking place at the Riant Theatre's Strawberry One-Act Festival was Frank Támez's play *Cause and Regret, Loss of Sanity*. The play, directed by Támez, featured **Senta Pérez**, right, and **Luis López** in the cast. [Editor's note: She received the role through an HOLA e-mail casting notice. In addition, Támez was nominated for a festival award for best direction of a play and Pérez was nominated for a festival award for best actress.]



**Mónica Delgado**, Edward Corcino and Heriberto Oquendo, Jr. appeared in the classic musical *Cabaret*. Directed and choreographed by Keith Lee Grant, the production took place for an extended run at Harlem's famed Aaron Davis Hall. She followed this up with a role in the musical *Once on This Island*, also at Aaron Davis Hall.



**Christopher James López**, left, e-mailed us to let us know that he booked a role in the Michael J. Narváez film *I Believe in America* (with Luis Guzmán, María Conchita Alonso and **José Yenque**) when the casting director called him in after seeing his headshot on the HOLA Pages online directory.

IATI presented two productions recently. The first was *Partidas/Separations*, written and directed by Diana Chery, and featured **Marcos Cohen**, **Francisco Díaz**, **Jessica Florí**, **Carla Nakatani** and Laura Spalding in the cast and took place at Choices Theater in the Manhattan's East Village. The second production was a co-production with Teatro Círculo, *Un Quijote en Nueva York*. Written and directed by Luis Caballero, the cast included **Juan Villarreal**, Eva Cristina Vásquez, **Emiliano Santa Cruz**, Jeanette González, **Mariana Buoninconti** and José Cheo Oliveras and took place at the Fourth Street Theater in Manhattan's East Village.

The Classical Theatre Lab presented Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*. The show, with a new translation by Tom Beyer, was directed by Tony Pasqualini, featured **Carlos Carrasco** and took place at Fiesta Hall in Plummer Park in West Hollywood, California.



**Ricardo Hinoa** booked an international commercial for Heineken through an HOLA casting notice.

Repertorio Español presented Federico García Lorca's *Doña Rosita la soltera*. The first time the play had been presented in New York in a quarter century, the production starred Denise Quiñones in the title role, and Frank Robles, Alejandra Orozco, **Ana Margarita Martínez-Casado**, Freddy Rivera, **Silvia Sierra**, **Gredivel Vásquez**, Sarah Jorge, **Emiliano Santa Cruz**, **Mónica Steuer**, **Ofelia Marín**, **Jessica Florí**, Feiga M. Martínez, Rebecca Brey, **Mariana Buoninconti**, **René Sánchez**, **Iván Camilo** and Fernando Then in the cast.

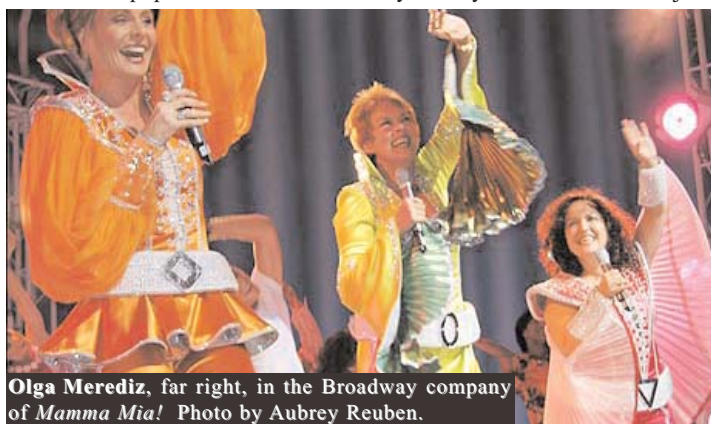
On September 11, 2005, HOLA member **Frank Craven**, hosted a multimedia event at The Cunneen-Hackett Arts Center in Poughkeepsie, New York, to remember the victims to the 9/11 U.S. tragedy. He also remembered Salvador Allende of Chile's regime, which was brought down by a coup d'état on September 11, 1973, as well as the fall of Barcelona and Catalunya on September 11, 1714, by showcasing parts of his play *The Party's Over. The Bonfire is Out!!*, which intertwines these three events that took place on the same day of the year.



**Gil Ron** starred opposite Karen García in Enrica Pérez's short film *La llamada de Lauren*. He received the role from an HOLA casting notice.

**Michele Carlo** is now a published author. Her short story "My Fundillo" is part of *Chicken Soup For The Latino Soul*, the Latin culture-based addition to the popular book series. In addition, she was also acted in the college tour of *Soul Latina*, Linda Nieves-Powell's popular Latina comedy show, and appeared in the Moral Values Festival in the Brick Theater in the Williamsburg section of Brooklyn. Finally, she debuted a new show called *It Came From New York*, which featured storytelling, music and burlesque (yes, burlesque) from an all native-New York cast. The show, which takes place every Thursday at Juvie Hall (at the Gene Frankel Theater) in the Noho section of Manhattan, was profiled by Time Out New York magazine this past May. As for her alter ego Carmen Mofongo, according to Carlo, "she is planning a comeback to happen real soon!"

**Olga Merediz** joined the cast of the Broadway production of *Mamma Mia!* The popular musical written by Benny Andersson and Björn



**Olga Merediz**, far right, in the Broadway company of *Mamma Mia!* Photo by Aubrey Reuben.

Ulvaeus (of ABBA fame), and Catherine Johnson, features the hit music of the famed Swedish pop group ABBA. Merediz steps into the role of Rosie, which was originated by Tony winner Judy Kaye.

**Manny Siverio** has been working a lot and he sent us this report: "I was the Second Unit Director on the Scott Rudin/Sydney Pollack film



Manny Siverio, right, with Academy Award winning actor Robin Williams on the set of *The Night Listener*.

Margaret. I was the Stunt Coordinator on the films *Where God Left His Shoes*, *The Skeptic* (with Anthony Michael Hall and Tony Danza), *Off The Black* (with Nick Nolte and Timothy Hutton), *The Crime* (with Harvey Keitel), *Griffin & Phoenix*, *Ghost Dance*, *It's Just My Friend*, *The Boy Who Cried Bitch*, *The House is Burning*, *Rocket Science*, *The Land*, *Kettle and Fish* (with Matthew Modine), *The Hoax* (with Richard Gere and Alfred Molina), *Diggers*, *All Fall Down*, *Brother's Shadow*, *Short Bus*, *The Treatment*, *One Last Thing*, *The Night Listener* (with Robin Williams), *Before It Had a Name* (with Willem Dafoe), *The Groomsmen* (with John Leguizamo). In addition, I was the Stunt Coordinator for a Franz Ferdinand music video, a commercial for The Travel Channel, two episodes of Comedy Central's 'Stella,' two Rock Star Games motion capture projects and the 2005 Tony Awards." [Editor's note: At the Tony Awards, he coordinated Christina Applegate's "fall" through a trap door on stage.] As a stuntman, he worked on the films *Thief*, *The Inside Man* (with Spike Lee and Denzel Washington; Siverio was also the assistant stunt coordinator); *School for Scoundrels* (with Billy Bob Thornton), *Invasion* (with Nicole Kidman) and *Freedomland* (with Morgan Freeman). As a director, producer and editor, he has completed production on two instructional DVDs on mambo dancing featuring Rodney López (of *Mad Hot Ballroom* fame) and Louis Tirado, respectively. If that were not enough, he is currently the stunt coordinator for the León Ichaso-helmed biopic of salsa singer Héctor Lavoe (starring Marc Anthony in the role and Jennifer López). For more information on this multitalented artist, log on to [www.mannysiverio.com](http://www.mannysiverio.com).

**Ricardo Pérez-González** acted in Dalton Trumbo's *Johnny Got His Gun*. Adapted for the stage by Bradley Rand Smith and directed by Gerritt Turner, the show was part of the 9th Annual New York International Fringe Festival and took place at Ace of Clubs in the NoHo section of Manhattan.

Also at this year's New York International Fringe Festival was *Crossing Currents*. Written and directed by Jorge c. Pérez, the play featured **Gil Ron**, **Raphael Barragán**, Tracy Pérez, **Aliana Galán**, **Sam Hale**, **Patricia Alemán**, Jorge Ríos, Rudy Váldez, Jason Flores, and **Gabe Hernández** in the cast and took place at the Mazer Theater in the Lower East Side of Manhattan.

Eddie Marrero, **Belange Rodríguez**, Omar Hernández and Joselyn Mirabal starred in Rob Santana's *Marido encadenado* (*Chained Dog*). The play, directed by Arián Blanco, was produced by and at Repertorio Español in the Gramercy Park section of Manhattan.

The Society of the Educational Arts, Inc./La Sociedad Educativa de las Artes, Inc., otherwise known as SEA, celebrated its 20th anniversary in 2005. The theater company, which has branches in New York, Puerto Rico and Florida, decided to commemorate this achievement with the *Borimix Puerto Rico Fest 2005*. The festival's program of events included an art exhibit featuring works by Miguel Trelles, Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz, Rafael Tufiño, Alfredo Hernández, Vagabond, Yasmín Hernández and others; three plays in the SEA repertoire (*La cucarachita Martina/Martina The Little Roach*, *El encuentro de Juan Bobo y Pedro Animal/The Encounter* and *La plenópera del empache/The Bellyache Opera*); a spoken word poet-

ry event entitled *Palabra: Spoken Word ricanfigured* [sic] curated by **A.B. Lugo** and featuring Lugo, Mariposa, MelleSol, Prisonera, Anthony Morales, Just A Poet and Wanda Raimundi-Ortiz; a concert by Tato Torres and Yerbabuena; and a panel discussion on the state of Puerto Rican theater in the United States featuring **Dr. Manuel A. Morán**, Dr. Eva Cristina Vásquez and **Rosalba Rolón**. For more information on SEA, log on to [www.sea-online.info](http://www.sea-online.info).

Pregones Theater presented their annual Asunción Playwrights Project of play readings and workshop productions. Directed by **Jorge B. Merced**, Asunción, which explores works that challenge assumptions about gender and sexuality, presented four play readings by Charles Rice-González (*I Just Love Andy Gibb*), Julia López (*Graciela*), **Chuy Sánchez** (*Mami's Feast*) and Elaine Romero (*Catalina de Erauso: The Man Inside of Me*) and a workshop production of Pablo García Gámez's *Blanco*. All of these were presented at La Casa Blanca in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx and featured the acting talents of **Carolina Álvarez**, **Lillian Aranda**, **Angélica Ayala**, **Sol Marina Crespo**, Camille Delgado, Félix Gardón, **Adriana Gaviria**, **A.B. Lugo**, **Jesús E. Martínez**, Samuel Muñiz, **Leah Keith Ochoa**, Aziza Omar, **Omar Pérez**, **Ricardo Pérez-González**, Thom Rivera, Jon Norman Schneider, Ed Trucco, Emanuel Loarca, **Johary Ramos** and Leonard Zelig.

Pregones Theater followed up their Asunción project (see above) with the 26th annual summer tour production of *Una gallina llamada Iris Chacón y otras maravillas de mi barrio/A Hen Called Iris Chacón and Other Marvels of My Neighborhood*. The bilingual production, written and directed by **Rosalba Rolón**, toured all over NYC as well as in Hoboken and Newark (both in New Jersey) and Rochester and Buffalo (both in New York). The play designed by Regina García and with original music by Desmar Guevara, featured Mariluz Acosta, **Angélica Ayala**, **Varín Ayala** and Ray Rodríguez-Rosa.

Pregones Theater opened their new 120-seat theater with *The Red Rose* (*La rosa roja*). The musical, written by **Rosalba Rolón** and Desmar Guevara about an encounter between Puerto Rican writer and activist Jesús Colón and undercover FBI agent Mildred Blauvelt in McCarthy era New York, was directed by Rolón and featured Danny Rivera, José Joaquín García, Elise Hernández, **Sol Marina Crespo**, **Omar Pérez**, Victoria Pérez and Ray Rodríguez Rosa. The new Pregones Theater is located next door to their intimate space La Casa Blanca in the Mott Haven section of the South Bronx. For more information, check out their dazzling new website at [www.pregones.org](http://www.pregones.org).

**Varín Ayala** followed up his role in the Pregones Theater summer tour production with his first national commercial for Burger King. He will be playing Friar Laurence in the Pennsylvania Shakespeare Festival touring production of *Romeo and Juliet* this autumn.

This year's *A Train Plays*, a celebration of New York, was created by six teams while traveling the entire route of New York's A train from 207th Street & Broadway to Far Rockaway. On one evening, six librettists hopped on the A train at 207th Street and began writing the books for six 15-minute musicals, all to be set on the A train. Before each of the teams began their journey, they picked a number between 3 and 5 to set the number of characters and chose that number of headshots through a blind draw to determine who would be in each piece. When the librettists reach the Far Rockaway stop, they randomly select, through another blind draw, their collaborative lyricists, composers and choreographers, who were awaiting their arrival at a nearby McDonalds! Six directors met the creators at 207th Street and they all proceeded to Columbus Circle (59th Street) where they met the pre-selected pool of actors, deciphered their scribbles, copied the scripts and began rehearsals for showtime the following day at the Neighborhood Playhouse in the East Side of Manhattan. **Mariana Carreño** was one of the directors in this wild, relentless genre, known as 24-Hour Plays. Wings Theatre in the West Village of Manhattan also had an evening of 24-

Hour Plays. Its first annual 24-Hour Plays event featured five playwrights, five directors and a pool of fourteen actors. The directors and the actors wrote three words and a place each and placed them in a basket. The playwrights then picked out a number from a basket (to represent the number of actors in the play), the place (to represent the setting), the three words (to be used somewhere in the play), and the director. The director then picked out the actors' names from a basket. This was all done on a Saturday night. The playwrights then had to write a 10-minute play with all those parameters. Every playwright had to also somehow whimsically squeeze in a reference to actor Danny Pintauro from TV's "Who's The Boss" and present the play by 9am the next day. At 10am, the actors and directors met to rehearse for an 8pm curtain. Some of the artists involved included **A.B. Lugo**, **Johary Ramos**, Rafael García, Stephen Cabral, Will Clark, Jeffery Corrick, Jules Ochoa, Ed Valentine, Kathleen Warnock, Karen Stanion, Roberto Cambeiro (who conceived and coordinated the event) and Carol Nelson.

The Latino Experimental Fantastic Theater, Inc. (LEFT) presented Cándido Tirado's *The Missteps of a Salsa Dancer*. Directed by **Gloria Zelaya** (with choreography by Adolfo Vásquez), the production featured **Sol Marina Crespo**, **Luis López**, **Omar Pérez**, Louis Tirado, Jeanette Plaza, Joana Vargas and Jaime Vélez in the cast and took place at La Tea Theater in the CSV Cultural Center (home to HOLA) in the Loisaída section of Manhattan.

**Gloria Zelaya** followed up her above success with helming the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre 2005 summer tour production of *Don Quixote: su última aventura*. The show toured all over the five boroughs of New York and Jersey City and Orange, New Jersey and featured Emmanuelle Bordas, **Iván Camilo**, **Jessica Flori**, **A.B. Lugo**, **Jesús E. Martínez**, Mario Mattei, Héctor Palacios and **Romina Polnoroff** in the cast. Ever the busy theater artist, her theater company, the Latino Experimental Fantastic Theater, produced *Cheeks*. Written and directed by Guillermo Gentile, the play featured Michael Camacho, Jesse Soursourain and Louis Vuolo and took place at the Milagro Theater in the CSV Cultural and Educational Center in the Loisaída area of Manhattan. Finally, she acted opposite Judy Marte, Paola Mendoza, Flaco Navaja, Rokafella, Danny Rivera and Dominic Colón in the independent film *On The Outs* (directed by Lori Silverbush and Michael Skolnik), which was released this summer.

**A.B. Lugo** (this writer) acted in the plays *Auto-Destruct: An Honest Gringo* (featuring Víctor M. Cotto and David Quiñones) and *Does A Tiger Wear a Necktie?* (featuring **Aliana Galán**, **Sam Hale**, Malachy Orozco, Cynthia Serrano and Nixzaliz Rojas), which were directed by Alexandra Gulino and Jonathan Butler, respectively. Both plays took place at the HEXTC's 32 Street Playhouse in Union City, New Jersey. He then nabbed a role in the film short *The Wannabe* (directed by Althea Wasow and featuring the talents of **Lisette Espaillat**, Tania Robles, Ramón Rodríguez, José Sánchez, **Mara Sánchez** and David Nathan Scott). In addition, he performed in the PRTT summer tour production *Don Quijote: su última aventura* and in the Pregones Theater Asunción series (see above). As a playwright, his plays *Geneva* and *Ramble* received workshop productions by the HEXTC's 32 Street Playhouse in Union City, New Jersey and Wings Theatre in the West Village of Manhattan (see above), respectively. Finally, he reprised his role in the NYC transfer of the HEXTC production of *Jane Ho*. Directed by Arián Blanco and featuring Liche Ariza, Daina Michelle Griffith, Mikaela Kafka and Heather Male, the play took place at the Lion Theater at Theater Row in the theater district of midtown Manhattan.

That's it for now.  
Keep your postcards, faxes and e-mails coming.  
When you're working, it means we're working.

...**A.B. Lugo**



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**Referral Activity 04/2005-12/2005**  
**Film & Television**  
Mali Finn Casting  
Grant Willey Casting  
Laura Rosenthal Casting  
Kim Coleman Casting  
Court TV  
Lynn Mason Casting  
New York University  
Columbia University  
New York Film Academy  
Grand Havana Films  
Pana-Pen Productions  
Tsu Tsu Unlimited  
U.V. Productions

**Commercials**  
Doris Silk  
Stark Naked Casting  
Paladino Casting  
Radio Dogs

**Theater**  
Liz Swados  
Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre  
Society of the Educational Arts  
Clear Channel Entertainment/Nickelodeon  
Stark Naked Casting  
Harbor Theater  
East Village Opera  
Flying Fig Theater  
Pacific Conservatory of the Performing Arts  
Present Tense Productions  
Jarvis Conservatory  
Perry Players, Inc.  
Frank Tamez  
Adrián Martínez

**Industrials/Print**  
Doris Silk  
Kim Weston

**Voicover**  
Wendy Curiel  
Tanden Hayes  
U Direct Productions  
Donald Case Casting  
Razorhead Music  
Audio-To-Go, Inc.  
Talking Book Productions  
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Raúl Juliá Founders: **Raúl Dávila**  
Excellence in English Language Media: **María Hinojosa**  
Excellence in Spanish Language Media: **Rafael Pineda**

**Male Actor:** **Liche Ariza** (*Martínez*) HEXTC/13th Street Rep.; **Raúl Durán** (*Ana en el trópico*) Rep. Español; **Francisco Fuertes** (*El veneno del teatro*) Thalía Spanish Theatre  
**Female Actor:** **Liliana Benard** (*Reflejos en el agua*) Rep. Español; **Beatriz Córdoba** (*Madre (el drama padre)*), Rep. Español; **Soledad López** (*Casi una diosa/Almost a Goddess*) Thalía Spanish Theatre  
**Featured Male Actor:** **Mario Mattei** (*El avaro*) Tocando Puertas; **Freddy Rivera** (*El maleficio de la mariposa*) Grupo Artificio/La Tea; **Gil Ron** (*Ana en el trópico*) Rep. Español; **Emiliano Santa Cruz** (*Madre (el drama padre)*) Rep. Español  
**Featured Female Actor:** **Sol Marina Crespo** (*The Missteps of a Salsa Dancer*) LEFT; **Denise Quiñones** (*Ana en el trópico*) Rep. Español; **Gredivel Vázquez** (*Historia bien conocida*) Rep. Español; **Rhina Valentín** (*Remembering Rei*) Latino College Expo/Caicedo Productions  
**Solo Performance:** **Susana Alexander** (*Las mujeres no tenemos llenadero*) Heckscher Theater @ El Museo del Barrio; **Andrés López** (*La pelota de letras*) Rep. Español  
**Ensemble:** **Rosie Berrido**, **Marlyn Matías**, **Amneris Morales**, **Senta Pérez**, **Belange Rodríguez** (*Las hermanas Ortiz de Mott Haven/The Ortiz Sisters of Mott Haven*) Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre

*continued on page 5*