



VISIONS OF LATIN AMERICA

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HIGHLIGHTS FROM THIS VOLUME

Dr. Paul Nelson

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Two themes preoccupy the articles of this *Visions*: the interweaving of old and new in Latin American cultures, and critical choices now confronting the region in its social, economic and human development. Together, these *Visions* are just what the title promises: a series of brief and engaging looks at the tensions and dynamism found in the interaction of tradition and rapid change, of the local and the cosmopolitan, and of radical demands for social change and pragmatic proposals.

Jessica Rathbone traces the history and durability of textile weaving among the Quechua people of Peru, through the lens of a local cultural museum in Ollantaytambo. Now, some of the area's weavers confront a new challenge and opportunity: to sustain the integrity and meaning of their tradition in their culture, while profiting from a burgeoning tourism-driven market for "authentic" wares. In **Jorge Enrique Delgado's** essay, traditional Colombian music, modern pop and classical genres are flourishing together in Colombia, and shaping the hemisphere's tastes by not only exporting talent but also developing a music culture and industry that trains, records and markets musical talent.

The politics of Argentine playwright Osvaldo Dragún, and his play "Historias para ser contadas", are the subject of **Stefano Muneroni's** essay. Dragún was an important creative force in the cultural resistance during his country's "dirty war," and although the playwright died in 1999, readers in Pittsburgh can see the play (as "A Toothache, a Plague and a Dog") for themselves in the Pitt Repertory Theatre production during November of 2006.

The four remaining essays tackle challenges and accomplishments in economic and human development. **Ruben Zamora** argues that Colombia should be known for "more than coffee and coca," in his essay on the health care, research and outreach programs offered by the nonprofit Fundación Cardiovascular, a specialist clinic and hospital in Northeast Colombia. Reviewing the dispute between the United States and Brazil over intellectual property rights and Brazil's production of generic anti-retroviral medications for HIV patients, **Christina Pierhoples** calls for a collective effort by poor country governments to mobilize funds and finance research into neglected and tropical diseases.

Willys Santos' survey of the politics of land reform efforts in Brazil leads him to conclude that land redistribution is still needed in this highly unequal rural economy. But in the context of Brazil's now "highly industrialized" agriculture, he argues that agrarian reform should be undertaken only in the context of a set of policies to insure that this concentrated and productive agricultural economy does not take a "step backward."

Carolina Gainza appreciates the potential benefits of information and communication technology (ICT) in the region. But without steps to adapt the applications of new technologies to the region's needs, and to address specific and deep economic and social inequalities, she argues, e-commerce and other ICT applications will be just another form of the misapplication of external concepts and models to Latin America, bending the region's realities to conform to external theories, rather than the reverse.

BRAZIL, THE U.S., AND DRUGS: AN ISSUE OF GOOD VS. EVIL?

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Brazil is not only host to one of the most advanced HIV prevention and control programs worldwide, it is also currently the only middle income country to provide free, universal access to anti-retroviral drugs (ARVs), the drugs used to fight HIV. A key to the success of Brazil's ARV distribution program is its ability to produce generic medicines locally. Due to this local production (and simply the threat of local production), the price of ARVs in Brazil decreased by 82% in only five years, helping to make AIDS-related mortality fall by over 50%.

In 2001, however, the United States filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization stating that Brazil had violated the 1994 Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights by producing patented ARV drugs. All members of the United Nations' Human Rights Commission (except for the US) voted on Brazil's side, asking that there be equal access for all persons to preventive, curative, or palliative drugs and technologies used to treat pandemics such as HIV/AIDS. To the outrage of the International community, the US blocked this resolution.

In 2001, however, the United States filed a complaint with the World Trade Organization stating that Brazil had violated the 1994 Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights by producing patented ARV drugs.

But does this mean that the US simply does not care about the people dying of HIV/AIDS in Brazil? Maybe not, but intellectual property rights have two competing aspects. On the one side, pharmaceutical companies need an incentive to do research – they need to be able to recoup the research and development costs associated with creating a new drug. On the other side, poor people need to be able to

afford these drugs in order for them to have an effect. Without intellectual property rights there would be no drugs in the first place, and with them, the people who really need the drugs do not have access.

Because of these competing issues, another solution must be found. There are currently 40.3 million HIV positive people in the world, only about 10% of whom have access to treatment. Unlike other pandemics such as the plague, HIV attacks the most economically active sector of society, leaving behind children and the elderly with no one to care for them. Brazil has attacked this problem, but other poorer countries do not have the capacity to do so with the drugs available.

The little money that third world countries can provide for ARVs is not enough of an incentive for pharmaceutical companies to produce them; therefore, little research is conducted on HIV or other diseases that affect developing countries. For example, of the 1,233 drugs licensed between 1975 and 1997, only four were developed by commercial pharmaceutical firms, specifically for tropical diseases in humans. Moreover, the research that is conducted on HIV is for sophisticated drugs that are useful in developed countries, but are too expensive and difficult to deliver to the majority of the population in the poorest countries.

Due to the fact that many countries, including Brazil, would gain from drugs for tropical diseases, there is no incentive for one single country to invest in this research alone. These countries, as well as international organizations, must pool their money together to invest in research. After this pool of money is collected, there are two options: it can be used as a pull mechanism for research, or as a push mechanism. As a pull mechanism, the money would be provided to a pharmaceutical company after it has created a vaccine, cure, or other type of HIV medicine for the developing world. As a push mechanism, the money would subsidize HIV research as it is being done. Due to the fact that there is a threat of moral hazard in the push scenario, of researchers not spending the money appropriately, as well as the adverse selection in that the donors are the ones deciding how to spend the money when they are not the experts, a pull scenario is a better choice. Although in the pull scenario there is decreased sharing of research advances because of competition, there is a greater likelihood that a cure or more appropriate medicine will be found.

Therefore, since intellectual property rights are needed to ensure that research is done and to recoup research and development costs, and because these intellectual property rights make HIV drugs inaccessible to the poor, an international pool of money must be gathered to create a prize for the creation of an HIV cure, or improved medicine. Brazil is doing an excellent job of procuring and distributing HIV drugs within its borders, and exporting these to some other countries as well. However, without investment in further research, a cure or more useful drugs may never be found to reach all of those in need. If the United States really does care about the well-being of those around the world, including those dying of AIDS in Brazil, they must ban together with other organizations and countries to find an alternative incentive for research, in order to stop the spread and effect of HIV/AIDS.



<http://serginhopower.blogspot.pt/arquivo/Sida.jpg>

TEXTILES, TRADITION, AND TOURISM: WEAVING IN A COMMUNITY MUSEUM IN THE SACRED VALLEY OF THE INCAS

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Photos by Jessica M. Rathbone

The attractive town of Ollantaytambo, Peru is situated along arguably the most touristed route in South America, between the Inca capital city of Cuzco and the famed archaeological site of Machu Picchu. Here you will find a small community museum, El Centro Andino de Tecnología Tradicional y Cultural de Las Comunidades de Ollantaytambo (CATTCO, or the Andean Center of Traditional Technology and Culture of the Communities of Ollantaytambo), serving both the people of Ollantaytambo as well as tourists and visitors. The community museum actively pursues multiple outreach projects, which are intended to support community development, and includes a permanent exhibition of Ollantaytambo's history and people. The museum's youth group fosters participatory citizenship among young people in Ollantaytambo, while the museum's ceramics workshop supports the efforts of local expert and novice ceramicists. Additionally, a communications project is geared towards teaching children in Ollantaytambo's public schools how to use multimedia resources.

The younger generations of weavers in Ollantaytambo are living in a time when globalization and Western notions of modernization are mounting pressures.

On most days you will find local weavers from two indigenous communities further removed from Ollantaytambo in the museum, where they come to weave traditional textiles made from natural fibers and dyes. Their weaving, which is done on back strap looms, is a kind of exposition within the museum space, meant to attract more visitors and generate revenues through the sale of the intricate and carefully-woven textiles. While weaving in the museum can serve as economic incentive to a weaver, it is even more so a most intrinsic part of Andean life among indigenous Quechua communities throughout the Andes mountains spanning South America. Since times of their pre-Inca ancestors, the weaving of textiles comes only second in importance to agriculture among the activities of daily life. If examined closely enough, you may begin to glimpse into the Andean worldview, as typical hand-woven textile may include symbolic shapes and iconic images of water, Andean flowers and plants, animals, and people.

It is remarkable how the textile weaving tradition has survived among Quechua peoples throughout time, and, in particular, has endured the period of contact with the Spanish conquistadors. Today, traditional textiles continue to be utilized by people of indigenous descent. At birth, newborns may be received in hand-woven textiles, while adults utilize the same kinds of textiles to transport foodstuffs and other items, and also in important rituals and life events. Indigenous identity markers are powerfully asserted through dressing in traditionally woven garments. Thus, indigenous people throughout the Andes continue to employ hand-woven textiles as an important component of their material culture.

In places like Ollantaytambo, the tourism market is growing at a rapid rate. There is a profit to be made amid outsiders who wish to visit the town's looming Inca ruins, pursue the numerous treks into the surrounding mountains and river valleys, and those who wish to find more "authentic" objects for purchase. The weavers of Ollantaytambo appeal to these types of visitors, and the weavers themselves have encountered a niche in the industry of tourism, as they are able to produce objects of importance to indigenous life, yet market the same kinds of material things to outsiders. But how will tourism come to affect the transmission of indigenous culture among the younger generations of indigenous people like those of Ollantaytambo? I think it to be logical that an entrepreneur caters to the likes of the consumer if profit is to be made in an industry such as tourism. But, while tourism may generate capital for many poor, indigenous people, how will the tastes of tourists influence the objects that are marketed?

The younger generations of weavers in Ollantaytambo are living in a time when globalization and Western notions of modernization are mounting pressures. It is a struggle to negotiate an identity that is, at the same time, modern and traditional. Will the younger generations of weavers, in fact, weave objects for the preferences of the tourist market? Or will they be able to profit from textiles with traditional designs and iconography that date back through generations? Tourism brings economic incentive to people who may not have other ways of seeing profits in the form of currency, yet through this interface, tourism is capable of influencing the continuity of material culture of indigenous people and their ancestry. In the case of Andean textiles today, the relationship between tradition and tourism is delicate.



Photos by Jessica M. Rathbone

LAND REFORM IN BRAZIL

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In Over 500 years Brazil has never divided its land; as a result, land is highly concentrated in Brazil. According to Rodolfo Hoffman, who does research on land distribution, the land Gini coefficient (0 corresponds to perfect equality, and 1 corresponds to perfect inequality) is 0.843. What factors explain this, and why has it been so difficult for the Brazilian government to pursue policies encouraging land reform in order to promote sustainable development and more equitable land distribution? The main policy issue is to enable the rural population with basic needs such as employment, schooling, and medical assistance. To reach such Objectives, land reform is just one of the tools available, and should be utilized before it is too late.

During colonization, the Portuguese needed to develop and populate the colony. In order to so, they passed a law that already existed in Portugal—the Law of Sesmarias. The government would hand out land to whoever wanted to develop it under the condition that the new land owners would be kept accountable. The mistake was to transfer a law that worked well in a small strip of land, known as Portugal, to a continental colony, Brazil, without the necessary infrastructure to manage it. The result was total failure. The division of the land was highly imprecise and there was no control over whether the economic activities were profitable. Moreover, the law did not specify a maximum number of people in a single family that would be beneficiaries, which resulted in the appropriation of a piece of land by each member of the same family.

By looking back in history, it is possible to see that Brazil missed out on great opportunities to implement land reform.

It was only after independence that the Brazilian Law of Sesmarias was revoked; however, no other law replaced it. It is important to note that neither independence nor the abolition of slavery changed the land structure in Brazil. In fact, after the abolition of slavery, the price of land was raised so that former slaves would not be able to afford it. This was a way to guarantee cheap labor.

In the last century a few social movements attempted to change the structure. Runaway slaves got into the back lands of the country and founded several free communities. Also in the backlands, a messianic movement led by Antonio Conselheiro claimed land as a divine right. All of these attempts were fought and exterminated, and land was still highly concentrated. Recently, a well organized and well articulated movement, the Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST), has little by little forced the government to implement land reform on a small scale. As in other movements, their actions have resulted in clashes between their members and land owners. This has resulted in violence and death in the country.

Whereas land reform in the past was opposed by the rigid structure of extensive property ownership, currently other points of view support such opposition. Perhaps the strongest of those arguments is the success of Brazilian agribusinesses, which are characterized by mechanized and technologically high modes of production applied to huge extensions of land. The economies of scale transferred to agriculture are partly responsible for the increasing competitiveness of Brazilian production in the international market, making it one of the highest grain exporters in the world. Such achievement would not be feasible in a system of small farming. Another argument against land reform is the lack of infrastructure and technical assistance the government can provide to new settlers. According to the Institute for Colonization and Land Reform (INCRA), between 1995 and 2002, 500,000 families were “settled”, however, 90% do not have running water, 80% do not have access to electricity or road systems, and 57% do not have credit available for housing and production.

What is currently happening to the agricultural sector has happened to the manufacturing sectors in the past – that is, the industrialization of production and its transformation to economies of scale where small producers can only produce for subsistence. As Brazil is highly dependent on its agricultural products for balance of payment surplus, the issue of land reform has to be carefully considered in terms of competitive advantages. By looking back in history, it is possible to see that Brazil missed out on great opportunities to implement land reform. But doing that today might cause an already highly industrialized sector to take a step backward. On the other hand, the high concentration of land and the social movements for land reform are issues to be addressed. Land reform has to be thought of as only one more policy that could alleviate poverty. In order to be successful, the government needs to focus its efforts on providing infrastructure and assistance to settlers so that they could become autonomous and make a living out of their land.

THE INTERNATIONAL BOOM OF COLOMBIAN MUSIC

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In the last fifteen years, Colombian music and artists have exploded onto the international panorama. Artists such as **Shakira, Juanes, Carlos Vives, Bacilos, Estéfano, Aterciopelados, Kike Santander, Cabas, Superlitio, Soraya**, and many others, are shining and winning important awards around the world. This boom is rooted in Colombia's long-established musical traditions, and new artists are building from these roots to form a new base for modern styles and sounds.

Colombia is a country rich in cultural expression. This is the fruit of its mixture of European, Indigenous and African traditions, as well as its geographical and climatic diversity. Colombia has five regions: the Pacific coast, the Atlantic coast, the Andean region, the Western plains and the Amazonian region - each with great musical variety. Some of its rhythms are indigenous to Colombia, and some are shared with other nations like Venezuela and the Andean and Caribbean countries.

Folk music from the coasts has a strong African influence and is basically played with percussion and woodwind instruments. Some of the most popular rhythms from the Pacific region are *currulao* and *contradanza*, while *cumbia*, *porro* and *mapalé* come from the Atlantic. *Cumbia* has had noteworthy influence in countries like Mexico and Argentina, where each have their own versions of the rhythm. The *vallenato* also comes from the Atlantic region. *Vallenato*, popular in the Americas, is played in ensembles with the accordion, bass guitar and percussion (*caja* and *guacharaca*), and it involves various rhythms such as *paseo*, *son* and *puya*. Two examples of artists from these regions are **Totó La Momposina**, who has performed Colombian coastal music around the world for more than three decades, and **Esthercita Forero**, whose compositions have been hits for groups like **Los Vecinos** from the Dominican Republic.

Many Colombian orchestras have also been famous, playing *salsa*, *merengue*, Colombian coastal music and *vallenato*. Notable here are the **Niche, Joe Arroyo, Fruko & sus Tesos, Tupamaros, Guayacán, Lucho Bermúdez** and **Pacho Galán** orchestras, as well as *vallenato* groups such as **Diomedes Díaz, Binomio de Oro**, and **Jorge Oñate**.

In contrast, Colombian folk Andean and Western Plains music have a *mestizo* character that comes from European and indigenous influences. Andean music is played in ensembles with variety of stringed instruments like guitar, *bandola* (a variation of the mandolin), and *tiple* (a kind of

guitar with four groups of three strings each). *Bambuco*, *pasillo* and *bunde* are some of the most recognized among its rhythms. Colombia shares its Western Plains music, *llanera*, with Venezuela. This genre is played with harp, *cuatro* (a small guitar with four strings), *capachos* (a kind of maracas) and bass guitar. The rhythms include *loropo*, *pasaje* and *galerón*.

The music from the Amazonian region is much less known. Its character is mostly indigenous, and it may have some influence from Brazilian music in the south.

Recently, new Colombian sounds have appeared. Certain kinds of fusions of traditional folk with pop/rock music and instruments have emerged. One of the pioneers of this trend is **Carlos Vives**, who started fusion with *vallenato*. Others with different styles and backgrounds have followed his path, such as **Cabas, Superlitio** and even **Juanes**, who plays a fusion of rock and Colombian "*paisa*" *trova*.



Musical Band Bésame performing Colombian music at WRCT Radio 88.3 FM

In the past, having a musical career in Colombia was unthinkable. It had low social approval, and moreover, national music companies did not take the risk of recording local artists. Because of this, anyone who wanted to be a professional musician/singer/composer had to travel abroad. Entrepreneurs in the US music industry recognized the potential of these Colombian talents and launched them. **Emilio Estefan**, for instance, worked with **Shakira** - the most important Latina artist of this moment - as well as with **Kike Santander, Estéfano** and **Nicolás Tovar**, all three of whom are renowned composers and producers.

These days, however, Colombia not only exports talent, but has also come a long way in the development of its local music industry. There are now a significant number of studios and music companies recording new national and international artists who take advantage of low cost, high quality production.

In the field of classical music, **Ana Milena de Gaviria**, first lady and wife of the former president **Cesar Gaviria** (1990-1994), created the "Batuta Foundation" to develop music education through symphonic orchestras nationwide. In addition, growing universities have opened new music schools and programs in many different styles, ranging from classical to traditional to modern, and even sound engineering.

Innovative music trends, the interest of international producers, the development of the national music industry, governmental support, and the multiplication of music institutions - all of these have contributed to the flourishing industry of Colombian music. It's no longer just some songs we sing, but a way to reach global markets and spread Colombian culture around the world.

THE ETERNAL SEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT: THE INFORMATION SOCIETY AND THE TECHNOLOGICAL FALLACY IN LATIN AMERICA

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Photos by Facing the Screen

brings the promise of a new future to Latin America, due to the opportunities that the introduction of ICT offers to the region in terms of improvements in the levels of education, health, employment, and poverty, among others.

It is evident that, by themselves, these new technologies produce neither positive nor negative effects when introduced to society. The benefits that ICT can bring to society are derived from the utilization of such technologies. Accordingly, the form in which the region is being inserted in the Society of Information should be evaluated. First of all, a model from the hegemonic powers should be considered, as Armand Mattelart proposed in his "History of the Society of Information." This model is based on the foundation of a market society that is aligned with current neoliberal ideals, which are not questioned and/or critiqued. Secondly, it is imperative that the society define itself solely by its instruments (in this case the technologies) before adopting ICT. Although the idea of introducing these new technologies within Latin America does not represent a magical twig that will automatically foster development, it will allow Latin American countries to construct society if proper precautions are taken from the onset.

On the other hand, concrete characteristics of the Latin American countries are clearly very different from those of the developed countries, signifying that other factors need to be addressed in the ICT realm. Economic conditions of the region constitute the first obstacle in the construction of a Society of Information. In a recent report, Cepal points out that economic growth and Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) constitute the greatest constraints for development. The decrease in FDI is problematic because these flows foster the construction, maintenance and expansion of telecommunications infrastructure in many countries. Additionally, the imbalances in the main variables of Latin American economies have generated uncertainty in industrialists, who have diminished their investments. The historical indifference of national economic agents when it comes to investing in technology is also problematic.

Other problems that need to be addressed regarding ICT include the development of effective legislation and regulatory systems pertaining to digital activity and

technological advances. Although several initiatives have been made to stimulate the use and development of new technologies, per capita income in the region reaches, on average, a fourth of that of the developed countries. Moreover, wealth is usually unfairly distributed, causing only a select minority of the population to benefit from ICT. As a result of these problems, paving the path toward a Society of Information will clearly be very different from that followed by the developed countries.

A final important issue to consider deals with the paradoxes of the modernization process. Particularly, even if technologies penetrate Latin American society, who knows what will happen when they are used? What is the added value of having computers in schools if Latin American teachers do not have the skills to utilize them? How will motivating e-commerce initiatives work if people are not educated to take advantage of its features? In Chile, the "Enlaces" initiative had the goal of providing infrastructure and digital resources to all schools in the country, but this idea crashed due to the lack of ICT skills and resources. A prime example of such a problem is an emblematic case of a Chilean student who writes a thank you letter to the Minister of Education for providing computers to his school; however, at the end of the letter, he requests that they supply electricity so that the students are able to use them!

There are many problems that need to be addressed in the ICT realm before these technologies can effectively benefit Latin American societies. But the underlying problem is related to the type of society that is being constructed, the role of the social actors, the subjects, and society projects. If Latin Americanists do not begin to think about society before making rash decisions, they fall into the trap of adapting reality to theoretical concepts and models imposed from the outside, a very frequent error in the recent past of the region. As Martí stated almost two centuries ago, "*insert the world in our republics, but the trunk has to be the one of our republics*". Based on this idea, the Society of Information does not have a place in our region. Without generating a discussion about the type of society we want to construct, the Society of Information may become a process of technological modernization that lacks a proper identity.



Photos by Facing the Screen

THE POLITICS AND THEATRE OF OSVALDO DRAGUN ON STAGE AT PITT

Stefano Muneroni

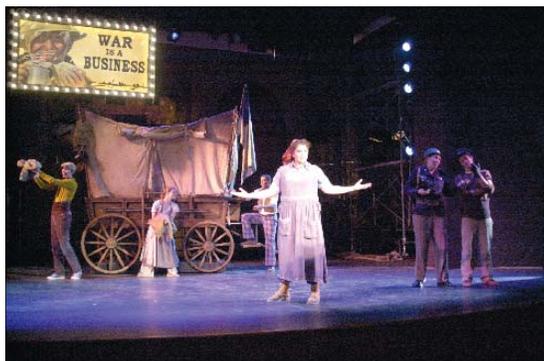
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Theatre is often a tool of political opposition and public denunciation in countries that experience stringent socio-economical problems or dictatorial regimes. Augusto Boal in Brazil, Václav Havel in the Czech Republic, Félix Morisseau-Leroy in Haiti are only a few of the artists who wrote for the theatre with a political agenda on their minds.

Oswaldo Dragún (1929-1999), whose *Historias para ser contadas* will be staged at the University of Pittsburgh in the Fall semester, was also an artist who viewed theatre as a viable tool for social awareness and change. He worked in Buenos Aires with Teatro del Pueblo, helped organize the Teatro Abierto during the difficult years of the Dirty War, and became artistic director of the Teatro Nacional Cervantes in the 1990s. Besides supporting theatre institutions, Dragún had a prolific career as a playwright and his plays show a high degree of political commitment as they address the condition of subaltern classes in Argentina, and denounce societal problems such as poverty, unemployment, and alienation caused by oppressive regimes and capitalistic modes of production. *Historias para ser contadas* is one of his best-known plays, and is an example of how the playwright explores the intersections between theatrical and political discourses.

In this play, Dragún weaves together three stories that show what happens when a man loses his job and is unable to work (*Story of a Gum Abscess*), when he has to decide whether to sacrifice his moral principles or starve to death (*Panchito's Problem*), and, finally, how easily he can be dehumanized in a society that is totally unresponsive to his needs (*The Man Who Turned Himself Into a Dog*). The play starts with four actors who break the conventions of realistic theatre by addressing the audience directly and introducing the topic of the evening in a short prologue. This strategy, which Dragún borrows from German playwright Bertolt Brecht, aims at enhancing in the spectators a rational and active response to the problems represented on stage. By emphasizing the fictional nature of the theatre experience, Dragún discourages emotional investment and calls attention to the message of the story. Thinking is, to Dragún, more important than feeling. As many critics have noticed, his trademark is the *desdramatización*, which relies on the dissolution of the fourth wall separating the audience from the actors, the rejection of any emotional catharsis and climax, the choice of socially conscious topics, and the use of dialogue as an active experience.

The Pitt Repertory Theatre production of *Historias para ser contadas* has been titled *A Toothache, A Plague, and A Dog*, and will be staged in the Studio Theatre, in the basement of the Cathedral of Learning, from November 9 through November 19, under the direction of Pitt professor Melanie Dreyer. Dreyer, who directed Brecht's *Mother Courage and Her Children* in the 2004 Pitt production, was drawn to Dragún's conception of the artist as a vehicle of social change and to his understanding of the theatre as both an entertaining and educative medium. She will use 10-12 actors and employ puppets in a production that promises to be funny as well as controversial.



Photos by Christian Schoening

THE CARDIOVASCULAR FOUNDATION OF COLOMBIA: PROVING COLOMBIA IS MORE THAN COCA AND COFFEE

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Picture taken at the Satellite Symposium "Adventures of Science in Latin America" held on February 2, 2006 at the Cardiovascular Foundation of Colombia (FCV), Bucaramanda, Colombia

When I told some relatives, friends and colleagues that I was heading to Colombia, their first words were either "Ten cuidado" (Be careful!) or "¿Estás loco?" (Are you crazy?). Maybe I was crazy, but I went to Colombia, came back safely, and had a productive and wonderful time there. It is true that Colombia is still suffering from a 40-year conflict between government forces, the guerillas, and illegal paramilitary groups, and a complex war obscured by the involvement of the drug trade. But it is also

true that Colombia, one of the three countries that emerged from the collapse of the Great Colombia in 1830, is a beautiful country with over 42 million inhabitants, and rich in natural resources (petroleum, natural gas, coal, iron, nickel, gold, copper, emeralds, hydropower). Most importantly, Colombia is rich in human resources. Why don't we get more of that from the mass media? Decreasing the fear and emphasizing the achievements is a necessary step to get the developed countries more involved in the progress of the poorer nations. This is precisely the objective of this article, to show how a dream of a few people has changed the life of many in this South American nation.

Until the mid 1980's in Santander, a northeastern province of Colombia, those who suffered from cardiovascular diseases had limited options; they would have to either travel in search of an alternative or die due to the lack of resources to pay for specialized care. This situation started to change when, in 1985, a group of doctors, headed by Drs. Franklin Quirós and Víctor Castillo, decided to create an institution dedicated to the diagnosis and treatment of those conditions. The idea gave birth to the Cardiovascular Foundation of Colombia (FCV), a private non-profit organization that, as of today, has made it possible for more than 3,500 children of limited resources to receive free access to surgery. But the FCV is not only a clinic, it is an institution with several strategic business units that produce specialized software, biomedical equipment, clothing, and surgical sutures. The FCV offers important social programs of great impact to the community. I was very impressed to learn about the successful work of the FCV's Research Institute headed by Dr. Patricio López-Jaramillo. This unit is a pioneer in biomedical research, having several NIH-like funded projects and ten different contracts with pharmaceutical laboratories. Moreover, research at FCV has been expanded to subjects like diabetes, metabolic syndrome, Chagas disease and the cardiovascular risk associated with menopause and preeclampsia, which has allowed the institution to make important contributions reflected in the high number of publications in national and international journals of relevance.

Currently, the FCV is the only institution specializing in the heart in Northeastern Colombia and it has received multiple recognitions and prizes like the Colombian Prize for the Quality of Management from the Presidency of the Republic in 2003, and the First Accreditation in Health granted by the Ministry of Labor and Social Security.

Let's then spread the word that **COLOMBIA is more than coca and coffee**, and praise institutions like the FCV, which continues the efforts to keep its place among the best hospitals in the country providing services and products of the highest quality in the health sector. (For additional information on the FCV visit www.fcv.org)



UPCOMING EVENTS

Undergraduate Internship Opportunity

The College of Arts and Sciences (University of Pittsburgh) has approved internship opportunities for undergraduate students interested in Latin American Studies. The interns will work with the Center's outreach coordinator conducting research and developing lessons on Latin America for presentation in kindergarten through high school (K-12) classrooms as part of the Center's School Visit Program. They will be accompanied on all school visits. Interns will be supervised during all stages of the program and required to work an average of 10 hours per week. Interns may earn from 1 to 3 credits depending on the project. The internship also counts toward the certificate in Latin American Studies. See College of Arts and Science webpage at: <http://www.pitt.edu/~intern>, search using the keyword "Latin America". Scroll down to **OEL: Academic Internships**, then click on **foreign language**.

If you are interested in applying, contact: Rosalind Eannarino, Center for Latin American Studies, Outreach Program, University Center for International Studies, 4205 Posvar Hall, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA 15260; Phone: 412 648 7397; Email: alinda@ucis.pitt.

Photography Exhibit by Jerome Crowder

Urban Dreams: The Search for a Better Life in Bolivia

This photo exhibit explores the process of migration and urbanization in Bolivia by following one family as they leave their rural community for the city of La Paz.

Dates: January 10 - June 18, 2006

Location: Carnegie Museum of Natural History

Museum Hours: Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 am - 5:00 pm, Sunday 12:00 - 5:00 pm, Closed Mondays

For more information: Visit the photographer's Web site: <http://www.jeromecrowder.com/index.htm>

Intensive Quechua Summer Course

Location: Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Dates: June 12 - August 2, 2006

For more information: Clodoaldo Soto (s-soto3@uiuc.edu) or Angelina Cotler (cotler@uiuc.edu), or visit <http://www.clacs.uiuc.edu/academics/summerlanguagecourses.html>

WRCT 88.3 FM - Revista Radial Latinoamericana/Latin American Radio Magazine

News, sports, politics, local, social, cultural, recreational events, and the best Latin American music

Dates: Every Thursday

Time: 6:05 - 7:00 pm

Send any special announcements that you would like aired to:

Miguel Rojas Sotelo: rojaszotelo@hotmail.com, or Martha Mantilla: martham@pitt.edu, or call 412 521 8651

Latin Jazz with Puro Queso Jazz Quintet: Victor Ruiz

Dates: Every Thursday

Time: 8:00 - 11:00 pm

Location: Bossa Nova, 123 Seventh Street, Downtown

Contact: 412 232 3030, www.bossanovapgh.com

Weekly Language Classes/Practice Sessions

Spanish Practice (for non-native speakers) Spanish instruction for beginners, first level, Spanish conversation, games and other learning activities (Intermediate level)

English Practice (for non-native speakers)

For information on dates and times call: 412 421 1390, www.TangoCafePgh.com

Dance Lessons (Salsa, Cha Cha, Merengue, Bachata, Line Dancing)

Location: The Dance Café, 120 Sixth Street, Downtown

Contact: 412 261 0441, www.thedancecafe.com

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**SPECIAL THANKS TO THE CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
FOR THEIR SUPPORT!**

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VISIONS of Latin America

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