

# Sunday Newsday

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Performing in a Spanish comedy, 'La Dama Duende,' are, from left, Jose Cheo Oliveras, Virginia Rambal and Axel Cintron.

## A SPANISH COMEDY ABOUT A PHANTOM LOVER

**WHAT:** "La Dama Duende," a Spanish theatrical whodunit — who sent the anonymous love letter to Don Manuel Enriguez, that is. As the don and his servant, Cosme, investigate whether the letter was left by a live woman or "dama duende" — ghost woman — comic confusion ensues.

The play, written by 17th-Century playwright Pedro Calderón de la Barca, is the third production of Teatro Circulo, a fresh face to the world of Spanish theater, but definitely not an ingenue.

"We are a group of ten actors who decided to create a company for classical and contemporary Latino theater," said Jose Cheo Oliveras, one of the actors. Most of the members are graduates of the University of Puerto Rico and have strong training in classical theater.

Barca's play centers on the femme phantom who pens an admission of love to the man who saved her from a stalker. Virginia Rambal, a recipient of the Asociacion de Cronistas de Espectaculos award, vivifies the starring role.

"Rambal played this role eighteen years ago and received her first award for it," said Oliveras. "And here she is, eighteen years later, returning to her award-winning character. It's funny, the turns life has."

The young company was surprised by its popularity. "When we opened 'Entremeses de Cervantes' [their first production], we were in limbo," said Oliveras. But because of that one performance at CUNY's graduate center, explained Oliveras, the group was approached by Sylvia Brito, artistic director of the Thalia Spanish Theatre. As a result, Miriam Colon Valle, the founder and director of the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, produced "Entremeses." Not only did the play enjoy a tremendous success at the Thalia Theatre, it went on to tour the metropolitan area, concluding its local run with a total of 42 performances.

The group has high hopes of contributing to Spanish theater in the future. "I feel comfortable that we will be able to keep our actors working year round and that we will continue to have a good response from our audience," said Oliveras.

**WHEN AND WHERE:** Performances are 8 p.m. on Saturdays and 4 p.m. on Sundays, through Feb. 25.

**HOW MUCH:** Tickets are \$13/adult, \$10/student or senior. Special rates available for groups of 10 or more. Reservations are suggested.

**GETTING THERE:** The theater is about two blocks south of Queens Boulevard on Greenpoint Avenue. It is accessible via the No. 7 train from the 40th Street/Lowery Station, or the Q32 or Q60 buses.

**MORE QUESTIONS?** (718) 729-3880.

— Tina Morales



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