By JUAN M. MENDEZ

Tonight, the play "Los Titingos de Juan Bobo" premieres at La Tea Theater in Loisaída. The Teatro Circulo production goes on stage as part of the Puerto Rican Heritage Month celebration.

The musical comedy written by the Argentinian playwright who resides in Puerto Rico, Carlos Ferrari, adapts for the theater the well known stories of Juan Bobo, the simpleton, but not too much, peasant who is a central character in Puerto Rican folklore. The simple wisdom of Juan Bobo is highlighted by the songs, the music and the sayings of the Puerto Rican countryside.

In Puerto Rico, "Los Titingos de Juan Bobo" premiered 10 years ago, produced by the company, Teatro del 60, at the now defunct Sylvia Rexach Theater in Puerta de Tierra. According to Wanda Arriaga, spokesperson for Teatro Circulo, "This is the last time the play is staged in the U.S. and the first that Ferrari ceded the production rights to another company."

As matter of fact, because of this production the author of "Los Titingos" will be present at the opening.

Teatro Circulo won an ACE Prize for its production of "Entremeses de Cervantes", last year, which was then invited to participate in the XX Golden Age Festival of El Paso, Texas, and went on tour with the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater.

"After 'Entremeses...', Teatro Circulo has decided to return to the roots of Puerto Rican theater," said Arriaga. "Each culture has a character like Juan Bobo... ours is more than 100 years old, and is part of the Puerto Rican oral tradition," said Arriaga. "We want the new generations... to be in contact with the people's oral tradition and that it is passed on from generation to generation."

The production at La Tea is directed and choreographed by Axel Cintrón, assisted by Tata Canuelas. Musical arrangements are by José Moreno and Alfil Ideas, the stage and costume design are by Harry Nadal. The cast is made up by Roberto Rodríguez, Anabel López, Eva Cristina Vásquez, José Chéo Oliveras, Wanda Arriaga, Ricardo Rodríguez Puente, Yoidy Rivero and Luis Felipe Meléndez.

The "Titingós de Juan Bobo" at La Tea, from November 10 to 21 (212-329-1948) and at Citicorp Center from the 14th to the 16th (212-254-2494).