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# Gender-Bending in El Teatro Campesino (1968–1980): A *Mestiza* Epistemology of Performance

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El Teatro Campesino began with a small leaflet distributed to grape pickers in Delano, California. Neat rows of typewriter print announced the inception of a 'bi-lingual community farm workers' theatre project' and directed those interested to gather at 8.30 pm on 2 November 1965 to contribute talents such as 'simple narrative', singing and instrument playing.<sup>1</sup> What was printed at the bottom of the flier would become Teatro Campesino's enduring and unifying message: 'If you can sing, dance, walk, march, hold a picket sign, play a guitar or harmonica or any other instrument, you can participate! No acting experience required'.<sup>2</sup> From 1965 to 1967, El Teatro Campesino (the farm workers' theatre) performed their political skits on stages made from flatbed trucks, on street corners, at the edges of vegetable fields and in union halls.<sup>3</sup> Growing quickly from this grassroots start, Teatro Campesino became one of the most visible artistic forums in the 1970s for promoting El Movimiento (the Chicano civil rights movement) and expressing cultural pride. Incorporating Chicano and Mexican *carpa* (tent show) performance traditions, historical iconography and Mayan, Aztec and Catholic spirituality, Teatro Campesino confronted the dominant American structure of power by privileging Spanish language, Chicano culture and *indigenismo*.<sup>4</sup>

In academia, Teatro Campesino has become the model for a theatre project that can both reflect social injustice and also effect social change. Likewise, Teatro Campesino figurehead Luis Valdez has been positioned within a 'great-man conceptual framework' as the father of Chicano theatre in the United States. Teatro Campesino and Luis Valdez have also been criticised in academic circles, albeit much less frequently, for replicating and perpetuating gender and sexual oppressions. Like other political rights organisations in the 1960s and the 1970s, Teatro Campesino maintained unity by promulgating their shared identity of difference. Yet Diana Taylor and Margaret Rose assert that a prevailing emphasis on cultural, ethnic or class solidarity within contemporary civil rights movements can deprioritise internal inequalities that lead to gender or sexual discrimination.<sup>5</sup> The type of organisational framework that prioritises these overriding imperatives makes it 'much easier for the community to recognise the racism directed at them than the sexism that exists both outside and within its boundaries'.<sup>6</sup> Taylor suggests that subsuming individuals' diverse identities into a

singular, united front will eventually lead to internal stratification and oppression. Some feminist scholars believe that the predominant historical account of Teatro Campesino and Luis Valdez likewise replicates this matrix by making the work of its Chicana performers peripheral, marginal or invisible.<sup>7</sup>

In the 1980s, Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano and Yolanda Broyles-González offered alternate historiographic accounts of several Chicano Teatro Nacional de Aztlán (TENAZ) troupes.<sup>8</sup> By integrating oral testimony ethnographies into their interdisciplinary studies, these scholars hoped to avoid the canonical 'chronological and text centered' analysis they felt had marginalised or downplayed Chicanas.<sup>9</sup> During an eighteen month research residency with El Teatro Campesino in the early 1980s, Broyles-González was allowed unrestricted access to rehearsals, performances, archives and troupe members. Through a laborious collection of personal interviews and unpublished archival material, Broyles-González crafted a 'whole new history' of Teatro Campesino, one that highlighted the *teatristas*' experiences, documented instances of their exclusion and revealed areas of their occlusion.<sup>10</sup> Broyles-González promoted her new historiography at the 1982 University of Arizona's Renato Rosaldo lecture series and the National Association for Chicano Studies conference in 1984. She asserts that both lecture papers were prevented from publication by powerful male academic opponents of her 're-vision'. She says that Luis Valdez 'went as far as to contact my publishers and threaten them' if he was not allowed editorial control over her work.<sup>11</sup> But it was not just her use of unconventional ethnographic methods that triggered this professional hostility; Broyles-González used oral testimony to reveal *teatristas*' contributions and also to support her own scathing analysis of misogyny woven into the history and historiography of Teatro Campesino. She believed these women were relegated to marginal positions within the troupe because of 'well-worn stereotypes of gender roles' functioning simultaneously with race and class assumptions about the Chicana woman as primarily a 'wife/mother/lover'.<sup>12</sup> By mapping her argument over the words of Teatro Campesino's *teatristas*, Broyles-González not only credited their unwritten history but also irrefutably justified her own critical stance that an oppressive matrix of race, ethnicity, class and gender was imposed on the bodies and identities of Chicana women. The *teatristas*' stories became the academic means to define their subjectivity, a subjectivity that was wholly shaped by racist and misogynistic cultural practices.

This article explores what I term '*mestiza* performance practices': choices and techniques that allowed *teatristas* to embody their intersecting identities of sex, gender and ethnicity and also navigate away from pejorative positions of singularity, separatism and oppression. Teatro Campesino *teatrística* Diane Rodriguez has analogised her relationship with the troupe to a traditional western marriage. While not totally egalitarian, 'it's not like someone is dictating to us that we must be here ... Rather, we all have our own input and we all want to be here because we can contribute'.<sup>13</sup> By comparing herself to a wife, Rodriguez acknowledges the constraints created by her so-called 'biological roles' and also expresses feelings of active dedication and willing contribution.<sup>14</sup> This dual consciousness is further emphasised when she explains that she and the other *teatristas* 'could have walked away, but we stayed because we believed we were moving a community to self-empowerment through art'.<sup>15</sup> While Rodriguez's work may have been downplayed or marginalised in Teatro Campesino, in El Movimiento and in academia, she believes that embracing her

culturally-specific gender role did not prevent her from actively participating and meaningfully contributing.

While it is important to reveal how Chicanas have been marginalised in the history and academic historicisation of Teatro Campesino, feminist scholars must also examine ways in which these women actively engaged with, altered or pluralised their subject positions. In illuminating the creation, implementation and evolution of several gender-bending performances, this article asserts that performance practices were both a creative outlet for artistic expression and also a means for *teatristas* to shape and control their own multilayered identities. Unlike theories of a universal, singular identity of difference, multiracial feminism allows for multiple identities to simultaneously and complementarily exist in one body. Chela Sandoval proposes a differential consciousness where women of colour should not be encapsulated by their gender, class or race alone but instead move actively among these various power bases and ideological positions.<sup>16</sup> Emma Pérez creates a space for the ‘decolonial imaginary’ in which women of colour can experience and theorise about their own specificity, history and legacy in non-western and therefore non-opposing ways.<sup>17</sup> By ‘queering mestizaje’, Alicia Arrizón is able to theorise about Chicanas in a way that allows racial hybridity and transculturation to be empowering and positive rather than contradictory.<sup>18</sup> In these theories, the subjectivity of women of colour is constructed not from one but, as Yarbrow-Bejarano surmises, ‘multiple determinants – gender, class, sexuality and contradictory membership in competing cultures and racial identities’.<sup>19</sup>

In the influential text *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Gloria Anzaldúa presents the ‘*mestiza* consciousness’ as a framework for how Chicanas can embody legacies of location, ethnicity and gender and also exist in a way that is not oppressively confined by these identities.<sup>20</sup> The *mestiza* is a Chicana woman who combines Spanish, American Indian and Mexican ancestry and therefore potentially embodies multiple and/or contradictory racial, cultural, sexual, colonised, class, gender and border identities. This *mestiza* woman does not reject or abandon these aspects of her identity or history but rather integrates these factors into her contemporary self to create a grounded yet flexible dual consciousness. Cherríe Moraga speculates that this type of consciousness is achieved by embodying and enacting ‘a theory in the flesh’.<sup>21</sup> For both Moraga and Anzaldúa, embodied theory is accomplished through the writings of radical women of colour. It is my position that Teatro Campesino’s *teatristas* were able to both identify with Chicana gender roles and also create flexibility in these borders by performing their ‘theory in the flesh’ with gender-bending parts.

Using photographs, scripts, fliers, programmes and media from the recently reopened Teatro Campesino archives, this article illustrates instances of male/female, non-female, androgynous, sexless and otherworldly gender-bending performance by Chicanas.<sup>22</sup> Staged gender-bending, also referred to as cross-casting or drag, is canonically defined as an individual of one dimorphic sex category performing opposing gender displays for an audience who is aware of his or her underlying ‘authentic’ sex and gender. For example, Steven Schacht and Lisa Underwood define drag queens as ‘individuals who publicly perform being women in front of an audience that knows they are “men” regardless of how compellingly female – “real” – they might appear otherwise’.<sup>23</sup> By consciously employing the term ‘gender-bending’, I seek to expand this definition to include stage acts that may replicate but can also complicate, layer, deemphasise, multiply, blur or otherwise shake up normative conceptions of identity.

I argue that the *teatristas* were able to coexist and grow within Teatro Campesino and El Movimiento because gender-bending roles allowed them to embody a plural subjectivity. A core member of Teatro Campesino from 1973 to 1980, Diane Rodriguez frequently played what she called ‘androgynous’ or ‘non-female’ characters such as La Muerte (Death) and Satanás (Satan).<sup>24</sup> Core member Socorro Valdez was known for performing ‘male’ or ‘sexless’ roles such as *pachucos* (thugs) and *calaveras* (skeletons).<sup>25</sup> Core members Yolanda Parra and Olivia Chumacero played the mythical angel character San Miguel (St Michael). Angela Cruz played Satanás. Stephanie Buswell and Vicki Oswald played *diablos* (devils). I assert that these non-normative performances of gender and sex – these acts of gender-bending – allowed *teatristas* to ‘transform or rewrite [their] environment, to continually augment [their] powers and capacities’ and to reconfigure static, binary or singular definitions of Chicanahood.<sup>26</sup> I argue that the *teatristas*’ efforts to create and perform gender-bending characters demonstrate their active embodiment and mobilisation of a *mestiza* consciousness.

### Historiography of the *teatrista*: shifting analysis from script to stage

While expressions of *Chicanismo* and *indigenismo* were exploding in 1970s and 1980s arts movements, western academia was also going through an epistemological change. Scholars in humanities and social sciences were publicly questioning canonical texts and actively engaging with cross-disciplinary theories and methods to map the untold stories of marginalised individuals. For example, feminist performance studies scholar Sue-Ellen Case confronted the established notion that Greek scripts and acting theories were foundational to contemporary theatre practice. She argued that none of these canonical texts were written by or portrayed Greek women accurately and that they in fact perpetuated (and are perpetuating) socially pejorative beliefs about women’s weak, passive or biologically-ruled natures.<sup>27</sup> This type of gender-focused critique of canonical texts was also initially used to point out instances of stereotyping and essentialising in Chicano TENAZ theatre productions. For example, Yarbrow-Bejarano’s study on Teatro de la Esperanza, largely based on textual critique, concluded that when Chicanas are perpetually depicted in familial roles, they ‘propagate the notion that women’s power to change society is limited to influencing their husbands’.<sup>28</sup> While beginning to integrate ethnographic methods into their work, feminist scholars still relied on familiar text-centred script analyses to add legitimacy to arguments.

Broyles-Gonzales, who had access to a multitude of unpublished play scripts during her research residency with Teatro Campesino in San Juan Bautista, asserted that scripted protagonists were never female and therefore all female parts were stereotypical, auxiliary roles. Using the type of feminist critique that Case applied to Greek playscripts, Broyles-González argued that Teatro Campesino plays perpetuated a Chicana subjectivity defined by biological or age relationship to men. Satellite identities such as *la madre*, *la abuela*, *la hermana*, y *la esposa/novia* (the mother, the grandmother, the sister and the wife/girlfriend) were then further essentialised into one of two reductive categories: *La Virgen* (the innocent) or *La Malinche* (the fallen woman). Defined by a ‘handful of visible female traits’ such as biological sex relation, gender role as homemaker and caretaker, sexual availability and ethnicity/colour, Chicana characters represented a ‘single dimension’ of social powerlessness and cultural victimisation.<sup>29</sup>

These claims can indeed be supported by examples from the small collection of Teatro Campesino plays published in 1971 as well as the many scripts now publicly available in the Teatro Campesino archives.<sup>30</sup> For example, in one of Teatro Campesino's earliest plays, *Las Dos Caras del Patroncito* (The Two Faces of the Farm Boss) (1966), the only female character is the silent, unnamed, fur bikini-clad wife of the white farm boss, a status symbol that the *esquirol* (scab) 'acquires' when he takes over the role of *patroncito*. In *La Pastorela* (The Shepherd's Play) (1976), Gila, the only female character, is forced into marriage by her father but then spurned by her would-be husband when she does not spend enough time preparing food. Later, when a *hermitanio* (hermit) attempts to sexually molest her, her family justifies his actions as a product of 'spells' and not lechery. Broyles-González believed that these fragmented, non-threatening and controllable female types 'consistently demonstrated stagnation in [Teatro Campesino's] treatment of women'.<sup>31</sup>

In focusing on the creation and perpetuation of pejoratively gendered character types, early feminist scholars were not necessarily addressing the actual Chicanas who embodied these roles and otherwise participated in *teatro*. So while Broyles-González's original gender critique was grounded in the script, her final conclusions about Teatro Campesino were also carefully supported by primary statements from the *teatristas*. For example, when interviewed about the canon of female parts, Diane Rodriguez explained 'there have been very few roles in Teatro Campesino that I have thoroughly enjoyed. Because of what they're saying and who they are'.<sup>32</sup> Her statement implies that these essentialised Chicana characters did directly affect the enjoyment, satisfaction and perhaps even the subjectivity of the *teatristas* who constantly embodied them. Using oral testimony to support her arguments, Broyles-González used women's 'own words' to not only highlight their contributions and debunk the 'great man' myth of Luis Valdez but also to support her larger analysis that the *teatristas* themselves were essentialised within the troupe.<sup>33</sup>

Broyles-González made it no secret that her methods and conclusions contributed to a substantial delay in her scholarship. Although her research residency was conducted in the early 1980s, her book on El Teatro Campesino was not published until 1994. By then, the use of oral testimony collection and post-structural analysis was common practice in many humanities and social sciences fields.<sup>34</sup> *Theatre Journal* reviewer Laura D. Nielsen wrote a glowing review of the book, commenting that Broyles-González's exemplary work on Chicano historiography and performativity 'writes against the grain' of previous publications on the subject.<sup>35</sup> José Muñoz wrote in *The Drama Review* that 'her methodology . . . in direct opposition to conventional modes of theatre history' was successful in revealing the social processes behind women's overlooked contributions.<sup>36</sup> And in the feminist studies journal *Signs*, Mary Pat Brady praised Broyles-González for writing 'against the grain of Teatro' and focusing on 'the collective work of the ensemble'.<sup>37</sup> But while Brady appreciated the use of feminist methods of analysis in the book, she added that Broyles-González's conclusions focused too much on the patriarchal organisation of the troupe and the book 'would have been complemented by greater attention to the story of Chicanas' developing roles within the ensemble'.<sup>38</sup>

While Broyles-González uses *teatristas'* words to highlight their experiences, her larger critique of Teatro Campesino and El Movimiento constantly shifts the focus away from their accomplishments. The oral statements she chose to publish do not

focus on the *teatristas* as much as they support her overarching conclusions about gendered cultural misogyny. And while Broyles-González writes that these interviews were in fact the nucleus of her book, there is only one short chapter devoted to this original research. In a manuscript draft of this chapter, Broyles-González has penned into the margin a note explaining that, instead of elaborating farther, she has decided to continue her discussion of the *teatristas* in a future book.<sup>39</sup> This projected book on the innovations of *El Teatro Campesino's* *teatristas* was never completed.

By focusing on the limitations of the *teatristas* within hegemonic cultural beliefs and practices, Broyles-González does not allow these women enough credit for their own acts of agency. Sandoval theorises that women of colour should pursue a 'tactical subjectivity' that precludes entrapment in a singular and unitary definition of self and allows them actively to negotiate their multiple and often contradictory locations and allegiances, systematically to deconstruct simple binarisms and build coalitions.<sup>40</sup> Like Pérez's space of the decolonial imaginary, Sandoval's differential consciousness is a 'theoretical tool for uncovering the hidden voices of Chicanas' and also allowing those voices to enact agency.<sup>41</sup> While pejorative or sexist casting practices and organisational structures need to be identified as a counterpoint to the scholarly literature on *Teatro Campesino*, feminist analysis must also seek out places where *teatristas'* activity mobilised and altered definitions of themselves as marginalised victims.

In the early Delano, California days of *El Teatro Campesino*, simple and straightforward performances were disruptive, subversive and powerful. The power of these *actos* (skits) was in their appeal as a visual act of transmission, 'a learning experience with no formal prerequisites' of reading or writing.<sup>42</sup> The physical body's ability to act as a conduit for basic human truths and complex social issues is one of the core epistemologies of performance theory. I suggest that when Moraga's 'theory in the flesh' is theatrically performed, static categories of gender, ethnicity and sexuality can potentially blur, shift and hybridise. In the words of Anzaldúa, this paradigm must be produced through 'continual creative motion that keeps breaking down the unitary aspect' of identity.<sup>43</sup> *Teatristas* such as Diana Rodriguez, Olivia Chumacero and Socorro Valdez continually reiterate:

I think my most favorite roles have been the roles that are neither man nor woman. The androgynous roles, like the Muerte and like Satanás. Those are the most fun. What's happened with playing, um, female roles . . . they were always somehow victimised because that's how it was seen in the society, do you know what I'm saying? So they weren't that much fun to play. You know, they're very supportive. They weren't very fun . . . So I have always liked to play the roles that are neither man nor woman. They're the most fun.<sup>44</sup>

These 'fun' roles, the roles the *teatristas* chose to perform time and time again, were not the one-dimensional Chicana characters that Broyles-González discussed. In shifting analysis away from playscripts and towards performance practices, it becomes clear that while *teatristas* may have been dissatisfied with scripted parts, they also actively pursued opportunities to enact complex, hybrid characters.

I assert that gender-bending performance practices were direct methods of re-working the bounded subjectivities imposed on Chicanas by *Teatro Campesino*, *El Movimiento* and American society. The *teatristas* eagerly performed 'fun' roles such as Diablo, Satanás and Calavera with strength, physicality, tenacity and gusto. Yarbrow-Bejarano mentions in a 1986 *Theatre Journal* article that Broyles-González's work on *Teatro Campesino* will call 'attention to [the *teatristas'*] imaginative strategies for

dealing with these limitations'.<sup>45</sup> While Yarbro-Bejarano hints towards a discussion of gender-bending practices, only one paragraph of Broyles-Gonzalez's book actually addresses these performance innovations. The physical embodiment of a category of characters that could not be entirely bounded by a reductive or singular identity is an extremely significant part of Teatro Campesino, and the transformative nature of these performances has yet to be sufficiently addressed. I propose that gender-bending performances were direct and active methods for *teatristas* to rework singular subjectivity and embody an actively plural *mestiza* consciousness. Using my own feminist method of close-reading performance tactics, the following sections explore the *teatristas'* gender-bending performances. This analysis will both document the evolution of these role-types as well as provide examples of resistant and complex performance strategies.

### **Bending the gender roles of the *teatristas*: Socorro Valdez's masculine *calavera***

Evidence of *teatristas* gender-bending as masculine, androgynous and sexless mythical characters is stamped into the history of Teatro Campesino. I have discovered numerous photographs in the newly public Teatro Campesino archives of actors with breasts and hips performing in head to toe *calavera* costumes, masks and skullcaps. I have found an image of a *teatrista* blowing dense smoke out of her nostrils and down over her sinister goatee as the frightening Luzbel (Lucifer). I have examined stills of Socorro Valdez standing aggressively as a *machismo*-dripping *pachuco*. And on her hands and knees with tongue wagging out as a dog-like *calavera*, Valdez is virtually unidentifiable.<sup>46</sup> According to Diane Rodriguez, these types of roles were referred to as 'the androgynous roles' or 'the roles that are neither man nor woman'.<sup>47</sup> 'Androgyny' is a type of gender-bending performance that confuses dimorphic gender categories by combining masculine and feminine traits on a single performing body. Androgyny also refers to performances that are absent of gender displays and which confront the invisible and assumed connection of sexed bodies to gender. Maria Marrero writes that this latter type of performance, 'not as the encompassment of all genders but as an erasure of visible gender or sexual markers, was the significant representational possibility' for *teatristas*.<sup>48</sup> Mythical or otherworldly characters began as unsexed, ungendered and unraced 'universal beings' so, when bringing them to life, *teatristas* had a range of possibilities for character development that included shifting, mixing or otherwise bending standard identity categories.<sup>49</sup>

Several unpublished photos in the Teatro Campesino archives elaborate on Socorro Valdez's characterisation of the *calavera* character, Huesos (bones), for the 1980 Californian and European tour of *El Fin del Mundo* (The End of the World).<sup>50</sup> As this masculine *pachuco* character demonstrates, *calaveras* began as neutral figures but could potentially take on gendered and raced characteristics. Valdez's basic costume is a light-coloured sleeveless leotard covered by a full-size painted image of a skeleton.<sup>51</sup> Her face and neck are sharply defined in contrasting white and black makeup lines that mimic a human skull; while her face is painted white, her eyes and nose are filled in with large black circles and huge teeth envelop her mouth and jaw. The general indicators of her skeletal leotard and makeup communicate the universal

and inhuman look of a *calavera*. But over this skeletal frame she wears zoot suit style trousers held up with wide suspenders and a pack of cigarettes tucked under one of the straps.<sup>52</sup> Her short hair or wig is formed into a large pompadour. Directly below her coiffure, Valdez has pulled a wide bandana down over her eyebrows and ears, and stippled-on muttonchop sideburns jut from underneath this bandana. The layering of these ethnically and masculinely distinct displays over the neutral *calavera* form creates an eerie hybrid effect: a subject that no longer lives yet still retains distinct aspects of his former human identity.

I have not found a video recording of this production, but many of Valdez's acting techniques for producing gender and race are identifiable through a close reading of performance photographs. In one photo Valdez is thrusting her hands into her pockets while simultaneously pushing them forward, creating tension in her upper arms, shoulders and chest. Her shoulders remain hunched as she pushes out her lower chest and pelvis.<sup>53</sup> Combined with an unbalanced stance, this body positioning replicates the look of upper body strength as well as core-centred propulsion. This very masculine *pachuco* stance has been iconically characterised by Edward James Olmos in the stage and film versions of Teatro Campesino's *Zoot Suit*. In other photo stills, Valdez's Huesos is in mid-interaction with protagonist Reymundo Mata and several other *calaveras*. As she talks and gestures to them, Valdez thrusts her chest and shoulders forward and pulls her hips back, creating an aggressive and confrontational body tableau. Although covered in black and white makeup, her eyes peeking below her bandana are perceptibly tensed and fixed on her subject.<sup>54</sup> Holding tension in her jaw and jutting it towards her scene partners, Valdez successfully replicates a recognisable gender display of *machismo*. Although *calaveras* begin as universal beings, Valdez's clothing, carriage and body language effectively communicate a physical power and aggressive energy that is culturally identifiable as masculine.

Although Valdez's performance of Huesos oozes *machismo*, these photos clearly show that her short and thin body is unevenly matched to her larger-than-life *pachuco*. Performing next to Marco Rodriguez, the biologically male actor playing Reymundo, Valdez barely reaches to the bottom of his chin (although her pompadour does give her a few extra inches).<sup>55</sup> Her tight leotard does not disguise her physical form and her slumped stance outlines the curves of her waist, bottom and breasts. In historical examples of women who passed as men, secondary sex characteristics such as breasts, hips and waists were effectively concealed or downplayed by loose or androcentric clothing choices or by binding and padding undergarments. But Valdez's costume does not obliterate or even fully conceal the shape of her body. Indeed, it is not necessary that she or her character be understood as either biologically male or female because, although Huesos acts in a masculine manner, he is neither male nor female. As a *calavera*, he does not have an 'essential' sex identity because, underneath the pompadour and muttonchops, the zoot suit trousers and the bandana, Huesos is nothing but an *esqueleto*, a collection of bones.

After examining archival photos from this production, it was evident to me that Huesos was played by a female actor. Valdez is small and curvy and possesses many biological markers that are culturally associated with femininity. Yet after having watched Valdez perform in this very production of *El Fin Del Mundo*, Broyles-González writes 'how astonished I was to discover backstage after the performance that the extraordinary Huesos was played by a woman'.<sup>56</sup> I suggest that Valdez's performance

as a *calavera pachuco* was so convincing because the role itself did not rely on or emphasise her own identity in any meaningful way. In more traditional gender-bending performances such as male impersonation and drag queening, the act is presented as an 'illusion' which is revealed when the performer's 'authentic' identity is disclosed; a removal of a wig or hat validates the audience's suspicions as to how the actor's body is fundamentally different from that of the performance. In the case of *calavera* characters, the acting body is not meant to contrast, support or otherwise inform the quality of the act or the character.

Reflecting on her willingness to take on and perform such roles, Valdez explains it was a method of 'aborting the fact that I was female and only female'.<sup>57</sup> This quote is reproduced in Broyles-Gonzalez's work to support claims that *teatristas* felt their 'female' Chicana identity constricted them. But equally important is the context in which this statement was made: in order to 'abort' a singular identity, Valdez actively pursued a performance in which her body could simultaneously characterise traditional and non-traditional categories of sex, gender and ethnicity. In doing so, Valdez created a space 'among' and also 'between them' where her subjectivity as 'female and only female' blended and hybridised with her character's, at once possessing biological and racial specificity and also eschewing such simple classifications of self.<sup>58</sup> In performing 'theory in the flesh' as Huesos, Valdez's acting body becomes undefined by cultural borders of identity and 'she can move across them, refusing to be contained by them'.<sup>59</sup> Although Valdez herself is always visually available for audiences to identify and classify, it is her embodiment of the *calavera* character that makes her performance both striking and effective.

### **Bending the gender roles of the *teatristas*: gender-neutral *calaveras***

In a 1976 talk show interview, Teatro Campesino core member Phil Esperanza explains 'each and every one of us has a *calavera* inside. And so when you reach that point, skin color, nationality, it doesn't make any difference because we are all *calaveras* inside'.<sup>60</sup> While mythical characters could take on binary signifiers or a mixture of signifiers, they all begin with this 'common denominator'.<sup>61</sup> Characters such as these offered *teatristas* a blank slate on which to build their final performance, one that could or could not conform to specific gendered, sexed or raced identities. While *teatristas* did perform some mythical characters in distinctly gendered and raced ways, nonsignified characters were just as common. *Teatristas* performed as ungendered *calaveras* in *La Carpa de Los Rasquachis* (1976 and 1978) and *El Fin Del Mundo* (1980), the gender indistinct Satanás and *diablos* in *La Pastorela* (1977 and 1980), as La Muerte in *La Carpa de Los Rasquachis* (1976 and 1978) and as Diablo in *Corridos* (1970s). The *teatristas* performed these androgynously 'unsexed' roles without inhibition of movement, body language or voice, which reflected the audience's lack of authority to position them or their characters based on preconceived notions of gender and cultural role.<sup>62</sup>

In addition to her masculinised Huesos character, Socorro Valdez performed as Calavera, the ungendered skeleton companion to Diablo in the 1978 European tour of *La Carpa de los Rasquachis*.<sup>63</sup> Every villain in the play (and there are many) is enacted either by Diablo or Calavera. Calavera morphs into various personas when directly interacting with protagonist Jesus Pelado Rasquachi and then back into original

form as an inhuman skeleton creature. Valdez's base costume for this role is a black long-sleeved leotard, black stockings and ballet flats. As with her *Huesos* character, a crude skeletal structure is printed down the front. The top half of her head and face is concealed in a smooth, skull-shaped headpiece that extends from the base of her skull over the top of her head to her upper lip. A black cloth covers her neck while the exposed skin in the mask's eye holes is filled in with black makeup. Free from the mask, the bottom half of her face and mouth is painted black and highlighted with long white teeth.

In one photo, Valdez is animalistically posed on her knees, hands flopping in the air and head tilted quizzically to the side.<sup>64</sup> In this particular scene, Jesus Rasquachi has been employed as a dog walker and Calavera has morphed into 'Babushka', the dog of a wealthy Russian woman. While the mask Valdez wears as Calavera does not allow for much expression around her eyes, forehead, cheeks and nose, her slightly smiling mouth and exposed tongue supports her inhuman characterisation. On her right, Diane Rodriguez plays an elaborately made-up Russian woman dressed in a feathered hat, cat-eye glasses and long fur coat. She strikes a snooty yet demure pose as she holds a delicate chain on the tip of her extended index finger: the leash of her babushka. To the left, Jesus Rasquachi is sporting a thick black moustache and dressed in the *campesino* uniform of a flannel shirt and trucker hat. Kneeling in-between the upper-class Russian woman and the male *campesino*, Calavera appears to lack their distinct gendered, sexed and raced identities. In this photo tableau, the body of Valdez is transmitting only in terms of her characterisation of the *calavera* creature; Valdez's own body and identity does not influence or augment her portrayal as it does for the actors who flank her. In fact, Calavera is purposefully posed on the floor, head cocked to the side and tongue out, in contrast to the more traditional representations of flexing *machismo* and delicate femininity that surround it. The most human thing this *calavera* character does is speak to Jesus Rasquachi. Of course, Calavera is a villain, so it is only to berate him.

In other photographs from this production, Calavera has morphed out of its villain persona and is elaborately bowing to its 'partner in crime' Diablo. As Calavera, Valdez extends her hands in the air and, while one leg is pointed towards the audience, her other leg is bent down to facilitate a deep and sweeping bow.<sup>65</sup> In another photo, Valdez is tensed and crouching with knees bent and hands poised to strike. She faces the audience, the black hollows around her eyes creating a striking contrast to her white mask and fully open mouth.<sup>66</sup> In these photos, Valdez freely uses the full range of her body: she crouches, points her legs, shapes her body into an 'S', extends her arms and thrusts her chin forward. Her *calavera* leotard does not conceal her physical form, which is 'marked' with secondary sex characteristics.<sup>67</sup> While performing these elaborate full body movements, Valdez's costume in no way hides her bottom and hips, her short but curving figure and her breasts. But if her *calavera* costume were loose fitting or accompanied by a heavy cloak so that the shape of her body was less evident, she would not be able to create such elaborate characterisations.

And even if audiences could not visually identify her by shape, they certainly had other means to identify and classify Valdez. By 1978, Valdez was known as a prominent and skilled player in Teatro Campesino productions; at least some individuals would be familiar with her work and repertoire of characters. Hand bills, posters and programmes with her name would also serve to identify her as a Chicana woman. Although Valdez is

enacting a character that has no specific gender, sex or ethnicity, her own signification would be readily available to audience members. But Valdez did not need to conceal herself in order to legitimise her performance or attract audiences. *Calavera* characters were a continual part of the Teatro Campesino repertoire specifically because they were such familiar and beloved symbols. As Rodriguez explains, the *calavera* 'is a very universal symbol . . . It's a symbol that is very strong, and that our race is not afraid of'.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, in her characterisation, the embodied identity of Valdez is only relevant in terms of her physical ability to enact the *calavera* creature. While Valdez's distinct body and cultural identity never truly disappears, the universal neutrality of the character itself negates any need for her to be classified, represented or otherwise implicated in the act. These gender-bending roles allowed performers to enact gender or racial displays if they wished but also allowed them the leeway to create and enact a character apart from hegemonic cultural definitions.

### **Bending the gender roles of the *teatristas*: 'en unas pocas centurias, the future will belong to the *mestiza*'<sup>69</sup>**

In *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Anzaldúa explains that in order to achieve *mestiza* consciousness, Chicanas must 'break down the subject-object duality that keeps [them] prisoner' and create space for polymorphic movement.<sup>70</sup> *Mestiza* consciousness therefore depends on an awareness of subject positions as well as the ability to mobilise those positions as a 'necessary prelude to political change'.<sup>71</sup> Evidence in the Teatro Campesino archives demonstrates how *teatristas* achieved *mestiza* consciousness not only by enacting gender-bending characters but also by actively reworking the characters themselves. Broyles-Gonzalez's short discussion of gender-bending critiques the stifling and racially-masking nature of the costumes.<sup>72</sup> During a *Nine AM Morning Show* interview with Lillian Rojas, *teatrista* Olivia Chumacero models the style of *calavera* costume that was being used in the 1980 production of *El Fin Del Mundo*: a light-coloured leotard with a cartoonish skeleton shape painted down the front. Several archival snapshots show Chumacero in this costume during and after a European run of this production. Unlike her interview appearance, Chumacero is in full makeup in these photos. She sports black-rimmed eyes, white and black defined features and two rows of long skeletal teeth surrounding her mouth painted in a style similar to that of Valdez's *Calavera* in *La Carpa de los Rasquachis*.<sup>73</sup> But the significant difference between Chumacero's costume for this production and Valdez's costume for *La Carpa* is that Chumacero does not wear the half-mask over her face and head that Valdez did.

The half-mask worn by Valdez in *La Carpa* undoubtedly stifled her ability to act with her entire face. But during the *Nine AM Morning Show* interview, Chumacero holds one of these *calavera* half-masks in her hand and explains,

But now we don't use the mask; we have makeup. And it's very interesting because you can use your entire face for your expressions. It's really interesting. Before we went from half-mask, half *calavera* mask, and the lower part was makeup. And now we do the entire face and it's just great.

Her interviewer, Lillian Rojas, exclaims 'now you get to use the whole body'.<sup>74</sup> While still portraying a sex-, gender- and race-neutral figure, the transition from mask to makeup allowed *teatristas* more flexibility in how they could enact these characters.

I assert that the *teatristas* contributed to and perhaps even instigated this shift in how *calavera* characters were costumed. It is obvious from archival records that *teatristas* took on many technical production roles in Teatro Campesino; programmes and fliers list *teatristas* as directors, assistant directors, choreographers, lighting designers, technical directors, music designers, musicians and costume designers. In fact, almost every programme from 1977 to 1980 lists Diane Rodriguez as a costumer or costume designer. In the second segment of the *Nine AM Morning Show*, Chumacero explains that ‘we have a costume lady in our company. Her name’s Diane Rodriguez and usually she’s the one that gets everything together and makes it’.<sup>75</sup> It is a fair assumption that Rodriguez – herself a performer of these *calavera* roles – had influence in the decision to shift *calavera* costumes from half-masks in 1978 to makeup in 1980. This costume choice not only allowed *teatristas* more physical performance flexibility, it also exemplifies their active pursuit of performance flexibility.

Discussing her own *calavera* character on the *Nine AM Morning Show*, Chumacero notes that many of the *calavera* characters in this production have distinct personality characteristics. Chumacero announces that her character is named La Flaca because the skeletal bones on her costume are painted thinly. Used as a title or name rather than an adjective, La Flaca employs a gendered article and noun to indicate a feminine or female person.<sup>76</sup> But *calaveras* were actualised through the actor’s own creativity and improvisation; as Broyles-González explains, ‘to play a role or character . . . meant literally to create a character by improvising it to life, bringing it to life virtually from scratch’.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, the most accurate information as to what type of *calavera* La Flaca is must come from Chumacero’s own interpretation and performance. During the interview, Chumacero herself translates her character’s title from Spanish into English not as ‘the thin woman’ but gender-neutrally as ‘the thin one’.<sup>78</sup> Because these parts were creatively built and performed by the individual actor, Chumacero’s verbal interpretation best represents the character’s signification. And while several *calaveras* in *El Fin Del Mundo* do perform gender and race (like Valdez’s Huesos), neither Chumacero’s translation of her character nor her costume can be singularly or distinctly categorised. Although she could enact this character in an identifiable way, Chumacero’s explanation makes it clear that she has chosen for herself how this character will be performed.

### **Moving toward a *mestiza* discourse on Teatro Campesino’s *teatristas***

The bodies of the Teatro Campesino *teatristas* are at once sites of gendered, sexed and raced specificity and also their means of mobilising these boundaries and inhabiting a new consciousness. El Movimiento established a powerful front of solidarity by perpetuating an identity of difference. Removed from pejorative or marginalised connotations of race or class, *Chicanismo* projects proudly invoked history, culture and *indigenismo* ‘in the construction of an exclusionary, singular Chicano identity’.<sup>79</sup> But while this separatist consciousness has been framed as subsuming Chicana experience, I argue that even within the borders of Teatro Campesino, ‘the construction of an inclusive multiple’ Chicana consciousness is evident.<sup>80</sup> More than simply an alternative performance option, gender-bending was *the* performance option for Chicanas to traverse a pejorative, exclusionary or otherwise singular subjectivity and inhabit a plural identity.

By working toward *la causa* through established Chicano TENAZ artistic outlets, *teatristas* likely did find their voices and contributions marginalised or subsumed under the banner of solidarity. And a relational theory of difference must acknowledge the inherent essentialism in Chicanas' gendered and raced heritage, cultural roles and social positions. But I assert that the gender-bending work of the *teatristas* demonstrates their awareness of and embodiment of these identity borders as well as their active production of a plural identity, and further their tolerance for this position of ambiguity and duality. To re-quote Rodriguez, 'we could have walked away, but we stayed because we believed we were moving a community to self-empowerment through art'.<sup>81</sup> While the sexist organisational structures and scripted roles in Teatro Campesino and El Movimiento are an important part of the story, so are the ways *teatristas* both embodied and mobilised those structures. *Teatristas* had the tools actively to complicate and expand their singular positions in the troupe: gender-bending characters. These roles represented a significant opportunity for them both within the troupe repertoire and also as 'agents of action and radical change' within El Movimiento.<sup>82</sup> By actively taking on and evolving gender-bending parts, the women of Teatro Campesino created a more flexible position for themselves as Chicanas, as members of *teatro* arts and as La Raza (the race).

By approaching the study of Teatro Campesino's *teatristas* through multiracial feminist analysis, my goal has been to uncover acts of *mestiza* consciousness in a performance methodology that combined liminality with plurality. As Anzaldúa writes, it is 'only by remaining flexible [that the *mestiza*] is able to stretch the psyche horizontally and vertically'.<sup>83</sup> While audiences may have been aware that Socorro Valdez, Diane Rodriguez, Olivia Chumacero or the other *teatristas* were Chicanas, when these women played gender-bending roles their acting bodies were unconstrained by such definitional borders. But rather than losing their subjectivity in these performances, they became blended or hybrid figures, at once possessing biological and cultural specificity and also inhabiting a space of difference. By focusing on the gender-bending performances of the *teatristas* as well as their active evolution of these characters, a clearer picture of these women and their specific contributions can be introduced into the historiography of Teatro Campesino.

## Notes

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1. El Teatro Campesino, *El Teatro Campesino: The Evolution of America's First Chicano Theatre Company 1965–1985* (San Juan Bautista: El Teatro Campesino Inc, 1985), p. 7.
2. El Teatro Campesino, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 7.
3. The translation of El Teatro Campesino as 'the farm worker's theatre' is generally accepted in academia and the public press. However, the word *campesino* is literally translated as rural person or country peasant.
4. Expressions of *Chicanismo* and *indigenismo* in the United States are generally artistic (visual or literary) and focus on the connection to Chicano or Mexican religious and historical legacies as well as promote pride in contemporary cultural practices.
5. See Diana Taylor's introduction in Diana Taylor and Juan Villegas (eds), *Negotiating Performance: Gender, Sexuality and Theatricality in Latin/o Theatre* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994), pp. 1–16;

- Margaret Rose, 'Traditional and Nontraditional Patterns of Female Activism in the United Farm Workers of America, 1962 to 1980', *Frontiers* 11 (1990), pp. 26–32.
6. Taylor, *Negotiating Performance*, p. 5.
  7. See Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, 'Chicanas Experience in Collective Theatre: Ideology and Form', *Women & Performance: A Journal of Feminist Theory* 2, 2 (1985), pp. 45–58; 'The Female Subject in Chicano Theatre: Sexuality, "Race", and Class', *Theatre Journal* 38 (1986), pp. 389–407. Yolanda Broyles-González, 'Women in El Teatro Campesino: 'Apoco estaba molacha La Virgen de Guadalupe?', in Teresa Cordova et al. (eds), *Chicana Voices: Intersections of Class Race and Gender* (Austin: CMAS Publications, 1986), pp. 162–87; Yolanda Broyles-González, 'Toward a Re-Vision of Chicano Theatre History: The Women of El Teatro Campesino', in Lynda Hart et al. (eds), *Making a Spectacle: Feminist Essays on Contemporary Women's Theatre* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1989), pp. 209–37; Yolanda Broyles-González, 'The Living Legacy of Chicana Performers: Preserving History through Oral Testimony', *Frontiers* 11 (1990), pp. 46–52; Yolanda Broyles-González, forward to Laura E. Garcia, Sandra M. Gutierrez, and Felicitas Nuñez (eds), *Teatro Chicana: A Collective Memoir and Selected Plays* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2008), pp. x–xviii.
  8. Teatro Nacional de Aztlán (hereafter TENAZ) was the umbrella term for many Chicano theatre troupes operating in the United States during the 1960s and the 1970s.
  9. Yolanda Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1994), p. 132.
  10. Broyles-González, 'The Living Legacy of Chicana Performers', p. 47. Broyles-González uses *teatrista* specifically to refer to female performers in Teatro Campesino. While she interviewed both female and male troupe members, only *teatristas'* accounts appear in her published work. She explains that the *teateros* did not talk about gender issues enough to make their testimonial useful to her project. *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 134.
  11. Yolanda Broyles-González, 'The Powers of Women's Words: Oral Tradition and Performance Art', in Juan Flores and Renato Rosaldo (eds), *A Companion to Latina/o Studies* (Malden: Blackwell Pub, 2007), pp. 116–25, here p. 120. After being specifically commissioned for the Renato Rosaldo lecture series, Broyles-González's talk was not published in its yearly monograph and does not appear in archival lists. The conflict between Broyles-González and Valdez serves as just one example of the larger pattern of contention between male and female Chicano studies scholars in the 1980s and early 1990s.
  12. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, pp. 140, 144.
  13. Diane Rodriguez, interview with Broyles-González, 'The Living Legacy of Chicana Performers', p. 51.
  14. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 144.
  15. Diane Rodriguez, correspondence with Maria Teresa Marrero, 'Out of the Fringe? Out of the Closet', *The Drama Review* 44, no. 3 (2000), pp. 121–53, here p. 134.
  16. Chela Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2000).
  17. Emma Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary: Writing Chicanas into History* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), p. xvi.
  18. Alicia Arrizón, *Queering Mestizaje: Transculturation and Performance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), p. 3.
  19. Yvonne Yarbro-Bejarano, 'Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*: Cultural Studies, "Difference", and the Non-Unitary Subject', *Cultural Critique* 28 (1994), pp. 5–28, here p. 11.
  20. Gloria Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza* (San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books, 1987), p. 77.
  21. Cherríe L. Moraga, 'Entering the Lives of Others: Theory in the Flesh' in Cherríe L. Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa (eds), *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (Berkeley: Third Woman Press, 2002), pp. 21–2, here p. 21.
  22. Housed by the California Ethnic and Multicultural Archives (hereafter CEMA) at the University of California, Santa Barbara's (UCSB) Davidson Library, the El Teatro Campesino archives (1964–1988) contain personal, performance and publicity photographs, audio and video, unpublished scripts with handwritten notes, graphic art and designs, newspaper clippings, programmes, posters and internal paperwork. Closed after Broyles-González's research residency, the archives were transferred to UCSB in the late 1980s. In 1985, archivist Andres V. Gutierrez wrote that 'the formal relationship we are establishing with the University will provide for the preservation of the Archives and the increased availability of the collection for *legitimate scholarly research*' (italics mine). In late 2009, these archives became accessible for 'general scholarly research'. El Teatro Campesino, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 44.
  23. Steven P. Schacht and Lisa Underwood, 'The Absolutely Flawless but Flawlessly Customary World of Drag Queens and Female Impersonators', in Steven P. Schacht and Lisa Underwood (eds), *The Drag Queen Anthology* (New York: Harrington Park Press, 2004), pp. 1–18, here p. 4.

24. Diane Rodriguez, interview by Broyles-González, 'The Living Legacy of Chicana Performers', p. 50.
25. Socorro Valdez, interview by Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 149. *Pachuco* does not have a direct English equivalent but might be historically generalised as a male youth who participated in urban street gangs. *Calavera* is technically translated as 'skull' but the word for skeleton, *esqueleto*, is far less commonly used. Many examples from the Teatro Campesino archives and scholarly writing translate this word as 'skeleton'.
26. Elizabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1994), p. 188.
27. Sue-Ellen Case, 'Classic Drag: The Greek Creation of Female Parts', *Theatre Journal* 37 (1985), pp. 317–27.
28. Yolanda Yarbro-Bejarano, 'The Image of the Chicana in Teatro', in Jo Cochran, J. T. Stewart and Mayumi Tsutakawa (eds), *Gathering Ground: New Writing and Art by Northwest Women of Color* (Seattle: The Seal Press, 1984), pp. 90–96, here p. 94.
29. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, pp. 135–6.
30. Luis Valdez and El Teatro Campesino, *Actos* (San Juan Bautista: Cucaracha Publications, 1971).
31. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 140.
32. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 140.
33. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 134.
34. Charlotte Canning, 'Constructing Experience: Theorizing Feminist Theatre History', *Theatre Journal* 45 (1993), pp. 529–40, here p. 534.
35. Laura D. Nielsen, review of *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement*, by Yolanda Broyles-González, *Theatre Journal* 48 (1996), p. 388.
36. José Esteban Muñoz, review of *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement*, by Yolanda Broyles-González, *The Drama Review* 41, no. 1 (1997), pp. 155–8, here p. 156.
37. Mary Pat Brady, review of *El Teatro Campesino: Theater in the Chicano Movement*, by Yolanda Broyles-González, *Signs* 23 (1998), pp. 1090–93, here pp. 1091, 1092.
38. Brady, review, p. 1092.
39. Manuscript of chapter three, Yolanda Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino: Four Cardinal Points*, 8 October 1990, p. 62. CEMA 97, Box 1.
40. Sandoval, *Methodology of the Oppressed*, p. 58.
41. Pérez, *The Decolonial Imaginary*, p. xvi.
42. El Teatro Campesino, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 4.
43. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, p. 80.
44. Diane Rodriguez, interview by UCLA librarian Paulina Sahagun, San Juan Bautista, 1983. CEMA 5, Series 9.
45. Yarbro-Bejarano, 'The Female Subject in Chicano Theatre', p. 389.
46. Socorro Valdez is the younger sister of Teatro Campesino figurehead Luis Valdez. For the purposes of this article, I refer to her by last name only and Luis Valdez by first and last name.
47. Diane Rodriguez interview. CEMA 5, Series 9.
48. Marrero, 'Out of the Fringe?', p. 134.
49. Phil Esperanza, interview by Leticia Ponce, *Catch 2: Los Vendidos*, Denver, KWGN, ch. 2, 1976. CEMA 5, Series 5.
50. Prevalent in Mexican mythos and culture, *calaveras* are skeletal apparitions that symbolise a spiritual connection between the world of the living and that of the dead or the unknown. *Calaveras* are important elements in Día de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) celebrations and appear frequently in the artwork of Mexican illustrator José Guadalupe Posada.
51. While human skeletal structures are medically classified as male or female based on pelvic shape and size, the bones painted on *calaveras* costumes are too simplistic to indicate biological sex.
52. *Tramos* (peg leg) trousers are part of the zoot suit look popular among young male Chicanos in Los Angeles during the 1930s and the 1940s. This reference is from a costume sketch by Peter J. Hall in a playbill for a Los Angeles production of *Zoot Suit*. CEMA 5 Series 14, Box 9, Folder 6.
53. Photograph of Socorro Valdez in *El Fin del Mundo* European tour, 1980. CEMA 5, Series 6, Box 8, Folder 5, photograph # 59.
54. Photograph of Socorro Valdez in *El Fin del Mundo* European tour, 1980. CEMA 5, Series 6, Box 8, Folder 6, photograph #70A and Box 9, Folder 1, photograph #75.
55. Photograph of Socorro Valdez in *El Fin del Mundo* European tour, 1980. CEMA 5, Series 6, Box 8, Folder 5, photograph #59.
56. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 129.

57. Socorro Valdez interview, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 150.
58. Gloria E. Anzaldúa, 'La Prieta' in Moraga and Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back*, pp. 220–33, here p. 232.
59. Moya Lloyd, *Beyond Identity Politics: Feminism, Power and Politics* (London: Sage Publications, 2005), p. 48.
60. Phil Esperanza interview. CEMA 5, Series 5.
61. Phil Esperanza interview. CEMA 5, Series 5.
62. Socorro Valdez interview, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 149.
63. The title *La Carpa de los Rasquachis* cannot be translated in a direct way. *Carpa* means tent but I believe the title refers to *carpa* performances popular in the Southwestern United States and Mexico. In a 1973 script, *Rasquachis* is translated as the lifestyle of the oppressed: run-down, dirty, poor, crude and short. CEMA 5, Series 1, Box 13, Folder 5.
64. Photograph of Socorro Valdez in *La Carpa de Los Rasquachis*, 1976. CEMA 5, Series 6, Box 12, Folder 4, photograph #18.
65. Photograph of Socorro Valdez in *La Carpa de Los Rasquachis*, 1976. CEMA 5, Series 6, Box 12, Folder 3, photographs #5 and #10.
66. Photograph of Socorro Valdez in *La Carpa de Los Rasquachis*, 1976. CEMA 5, Series 6, Box 12, Folder 3, photograph #15.
67. Peggy Phelan, *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* (London: Routledge, 1993).
68. Diane Rodriguez, interview by Leticia Ponce, *Catch 2: Los Vendidos*, Denver, KWGN, ch. 2, 1976. CEMA 5, Series 5.
69. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, p. 80.
70. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, p. 81.
71. Yarbro-Bejarano, 'Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*', p. 13.
72. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 152.
73. Photograph of Olivia Chumacero in *El Fin Del Mundo*, European tour, 1980. CEMA 5, Series 6, Box 8, Folder 3, photographs #2 and #7.
74. Olivia Chumacero, interview with Lillian Rojas, *Nine AM Morning Show: Part II*, Monterey, KMST, ch.46. 27 March 1980. CEMA 5, Series 5.
75. Olivia Chumacero interview, *Nine AM Morning Show*. CEMA 5, Series 5.
76. The translation of this term has been discussed with Ariel Schindewolf, a doctoral candidate in Hispanic Linguistics at UCSB. Ariel Schindewolf, personal interview, 2 June 2011.
77. Broyles-González, *El Teatro Campesino*, p. 150.
78. Olivia Chumacero, interview, *Nine AM Morning Show*. CEMA 5, Series 5.
79. Yarbro-Bejarano, 'Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*', p. 12.
80. Yarbro-Bejarano, 'Gloria Anzaldúa's *Borderlands/La Frontera*', p. 12.
81. Marrero, 'Out of the Fringe?', p. 134.
82. Kirsten F. Nigro, 'Inventions and Transgressions: a Fractured Narrative on Feminist Theatre in Mexico', in Taylor and Villegas, *Negotiating Performance*, pp. 137–58, p. 138.
83. Anzaldúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*, p. 79.

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