

Rosie Perez, Ruben Santiago-Hudson and others at The Lovinger Theatre

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Media Relations and Publications

Uptown audiences can enjoy some of today's most popular stars and preview plays from the Manhattan theatre scene - all for free - at the "Teatro Latino" ("Latin Theatre") series being presented this spring at Lehman College's Lovinger Theatre.

Featuring actors from Rosie Perez to Tony Award-winner Ruben Santiago-Hudson, the series will run from April 16 - May 4 and include two readings, two concerts and the world premiere of "I Love America," a one-woman play that will then move to an off-Broadway run.

"The richness of the Hispanic and Latino culture in theatre, dance and music affirms life and is both joyful, lyrical and passionate," noted **Betsy Shevey**, producer of the Lovinger, in announcing the series. "The keynote to culture is inclusion, and that is what this 'Teatro Latino' is all about. As Americans from many diverse cultures, we can share in the richness of each other's experiences and strengths." Professor Shevey noted that the series continues the Lovinger tradition of serving both as a showcase for premiere international entertainment and as a way of introducing area students to theatre.

Local high students, as well as Lehman undergraduates, will enjoy special performances that "invite them to see themselves in the culture and the culture in themselves."

Rosie Perez and John Ortiz will kick off the series on Monday, April 16, at 7 p.m. with a reading from The Joseph Papp Public Theatre's current production of José Rivera's new play, "References to Salvador Dalí Make Me Hot." A lyrical tale of passion and desire, the play mirrors the sexual and emotional tensions of an Army veteran and his wife with the mating wars between a cat and a coyote in a moonlit backyard.

Nominated for both the Golden Globe and Academy Award for her role in Peter Weir's "Fearless" (1993), Ms. Perez was last seen starring in Nancy Savoca's "The 24 Hour Woman" and heard in Dreamworks' animated film "The Road to El Dorado." Her film career began with a role in Spike Lee's "Do the Right Thing" and has included "Night on Earth," "White Men Can't Jump," "Untamed Heart," "It Could Happen to You," "A Brother's Kiss" and "Somebody to Love." On stage, she has performed in "The Vagina Monologues" as well as in the Los Angeles Philharmonic's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and a staged reading of "Borrowed Light" at Alice Tully Hall, a series of monologues on the evolution of life behind bars, written by woman inmates.

Mr. Ortiz, her partner in this new performance, has also worked in film, television and theatre. His TV and movie credits include the critically acclaimed "Before Night Falls," "The Opportunists," "Amistad," "Ransom," "Carlito's Way," "Touched by an Angel," "Lush Life" and "Promised



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Land." On stage, he has performed in "The Skin of our Teeth" at the Public's Delacorte Theatre, "Sueño" at Hartford Stage, "House Arrest" at Arena Stage, "Street of the Sun" at the Mark Taper Forum and "Cloud Techtonics" at Playwrights Horizons.

The Bronx Horns will continue the festival on Friday, April 20, at 8 p.m., as they present a concert of swinging Latin jazz. Led by Mitch Frohman, the group includes Bobby Porcelli on alto sax and trumpeter Ray Vega. All grew up in the Bronx and were mainstays of the Tito Puente Orchestra. Frohman, who plays alto, tenor, baritone, soprano and flute, is also a composer and music arranger. His first recording as a Puente regular was the 1978 Tico LP "Tribute to Benny Moré Vol. I," which won a Grammy for Best Tropical Music recording of the year. The other members of the group are pianist Oscar Hernández, who was music director for Paul Simon's Broadway musical "Capeman," Bennie Minoso on bass, Jimmy Delgado on timbales, and Chembo Corneil on congas.

The next event in the series will take

place on Monday, April 23, at 7 p.m. when Ruben Santiago-Hudson reads from his new play, "Lackawanna Blues." A one-person, multi-character tour de force, the play was commissioned by The Public Theatre, where it will make its world premiere a week prior to the performance at the Lovinger. Based on the actor's experiences and memories growing up in Lackawanna, New York, the drama centers on 32 Wason Avenue, a boarding house ruled by "Miss Rachel," where would-be philosophers, petty hustlers, ost souls and abandoned lovers all find refuge, comfort and nourishment.

Mr. Santiago-Hudson's stage credits include his roles on Broadway in "Jelly's Last Jam" and in August Wilson's Pulitzer Prize-winning play "Seven Guitars," which earned him the Tony and other major awards. At The Public Theatre, he has performed in "Henry VIII" (title role), "East Texas Hot Links" and "Measure for Measure." In film, he has appeared in "Shaft," "Devil's Advocate," "Blown Away" and the upcoming "Domestic

Disturbance" (with John Travolta). On TV, he has been in "American Tragedy," "Third Watch," "Touched by an Angel," "The West Wing," "Michael Hayes" and the upcoming "The Red Sneakers" (with Gregory Hines) for Showtime.

That same week, Compañía General Eléctrica, an internationally acclaimed performance ensemble from Spain, will make its American debut with two programs - "Solos," presented on April 26-27 at 8 p.m. and April 28 at 2 p.m., and "Paradise," presented on April 28 at 8 p.m. and April 29 at 2 p.m. and 8 p.m. The company is one of the hottest modern theatrical dance groups in Europe and has been hailed as "brilliant" by newspapers in Paris, Madrid and Rome.

Concluding the series will be Lidia Ramírez, who will perform in the world premiere and off-Broadway preview of "I Love America," a new play celebrating a Dominican woman's adventures in New York City, which will be presented on May 4-5 at 8 p.m. and May 6 at 2 p.m.

For more information on "Teatro Latino," call 718-960-8025.