



LatinoLA esta muy hot!

[Home](#)

[Calendar](#)

[Forum](#)

[A & E](#)

[Comunidad](#)

[Hollywood](#)

[People](#)

[¡Exprésate!](#)

[Careers](#)

[Add a Story](#)

[Add an Event](#)



### Life and Death in a Boxcar

Playwright Silvia Gonzalez-S. writes like a writer

By Kat Avila | Web Published 3.8.2004

Of the playwrights I have known, Silvia Gonzalez-S. remains the most dedicated and compassionate when it comes to writing about the experience of immigrants and their children in the U.S., and, additionally, the experience of women in patriarchal society. Her play "Boxcar" is playing until April 4 at Teatro Vision, in San Jose, California. The drama gives voice to the dreams of every immigrant who has crossed the political border creating two Mexicos, and reminds us of the tragic ends some have met along the treacherous path.



Web latinola.com



K: Kat Avila

S: Silvia Gonzalez-S.

K: Where did you grow up?

S: Pacoima, California. Where Ritchie Valens [of "La Bamba" fame] grew up. In the San Fernando Valley. I know L.A. and the valley like the back of my hand. I just met the first Hispanic Valley girl. I'm the second Hispanic Valley Girl.

K: What was your first play?

S: "Boxcar" is the first play I wrote. It has had numerous readings. My collection of articles and personal contacts with immigrants throughout the years

LatinoLA =  
hot LA Latinos  
Advertise to  
them here!

make the play life-in-progress.

The first plays I had produced were "T (for Torture)" and "La Llorona Lloro." Both are short one-acts that I directed in Chicago at A Stage of One's Own. A storefront theatre for women. The feedback was very good. "T" was attended by Chilean immigrants who remarked the torture in Chile was depicted well. The torture on stage was abstract, but if your mind reversed what you saw you were very affected.

K: How has your identity marked your writing?

S: I am somewhat Chicanacentric, or Latinacentric. I see through the eyes of a Latina. I write like a writer. Whatever hits me goes in my work. However, I strive to depict the Latino accurately, and I like to represent myself as a Latina who can write whatever.

K: How do you move through the world?

S: I think I move through the world with an observing eye. Then I decide to write it down, and to my surprise it is interesting to people. Now in my later years, I'm trying to observe people with compassion, even the ones who are blatant idiots. Playwrights are behavioral scientists and we document emotions.

K: What's being said about "Boxcar"?

S: What is remarkable is that it's going to play entirely in Spanish on certain days and English on other days. Days set aside for students are completely booked. Immigrant rights groups have come to rehearsals and tell me it is exactly as it is written. An attorney helping immigrants

loved the work and said it is exactly as we see it on stage. I believe the audiences will include many Spanish-dominant speaking people who have not had an opportunity to see a play, and that this work will make them theatergoers.

K: Is "Boxcar" your longest-running and most successful play to date?

S: "Boxcar" made several rounds. A company wanted to publish it, but I wanted to wait. I don't know why. Just felt I needed to wait and let the play grow more.

I let my play "Alicia in Wonder Tierra" get published. It's probably my most successful play to date. However, because of the political climate today, "Boxcar" will probably do much better. Isn't it interesting what timing does for an artistic work?

K: What's your most favorite play?

S: I love all my plays. I slept with them, so how could I not love them?

*Kat previously interviewed Silvia for Ollantay Theater Magazine 9.18 (2001).*

© 1999-2005 LatinoCities, Inc. | 27 Short Way, South Pasadena, CA 91030  
(323) 259-0388 Fax (310) 496-2972 info@latinola.com

Please submit your requests for listings in our Calendar [here](#), and feature stories [here](#).