

LIFE UPON THE SACRED STAGE

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The art of mime

It's easy to see why Carlos Martínez was selected by the audience to win the prize of honour for the best show at the XXI Almada Theatre Festival in Portugal. He has such love for his characters -- he becomes them as he brings everyday experiences to life in shimmering detail. Mime "allows you to see what you do not see," he explains, and it's true. A trip to the barber, waiting for a bus, these ordinary things are lost to our consciousness through their very routineness. But not when Carlos portrays them, with a twist. For more than 25 years he has been refining his art so that he can communicate easily around the world. "Hand Made" has subtitle selections so that Carlos' setup commentaries in Spanish can be understood in English, French and German. But the DVD can also be played without the commentaries because none is needed. He calls his characters his "loyal travel companions and imaginative translators" who take over on stage and "speak" for him.



In his bio, Carlos Martínez says he was fascinated by the "woodcarving expressiveness of mime and its plain reduction to the essential." Without words, props or ornamentation, he wants the audience to experience on a sensory level "the entire story of their minds."

Carlos' previous DVDs, also based on his touring shows, are "My Bible," in which he brings to life stories from the Bible from a surprising perspective, and "Human Rights," for which the Declaration of Human Rights becomes truly human. He also conducts seminars and workshops. You can see trailers on Carlos' website, www.carlosmartinez.es, or on www.youtube.com/carlosmartinezactor.

I first fell in love with mime at my beloved CENTERSTAGE in Baltimore. I started volunteer ushering there when I was in high school as a way to see all their shows for free. Sophie Wibaux and Bert Houle, who as I recall were husband and wife, choreographed "Julius Caesar" in the 1972-73 season and included their mime. It was spellbinding to watch them perform their wordless dialogue of Shakespearean drama. As I remember, they were part of CENTERSTAGE's resident company and were incorporated into shows over several years. That would certainly be in keeping with CENTERSTAGE's creative approach to theatre. Wibaux and Houle have written that "mime is the art of touch, not intellectual or physical, but emotional touch."

I extended an open invitation to [Carlos Martínez](#) to perform at Broadway Blessing if he is ever in New York on the second Monday of September. Until then I will enjoy "Hand Made."

POSTED BY [RETTA BLANEY](#) AT 12:24 PM