

El Teatro Campesino will perform at UCSD May 3

April 28, 1975

El Teatro Campesino, the farm workers' theater that grew out of the 1965 grape pickers' strike, will perform at the University of California, San Diego at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 3, in the Mandeville Center auditorium.

The Teatro will present a new play, "Fin del Mundo," written by Luis Valdez, the group's founder and director.

"Fin del Mundo" tells the story of Mundo Chavez' journey through life to his death and rebirth. He is accompanied on his journey by Huracan, a life-death figure based on a Mayan god representing all of life's contradictions.

The play combines the cultures of the ancient Mayan civilization and of today's Chicano population emphasizing the ancient roots of the Chicano cultural heritage.

The character of Mundo, for example, is seen both as an individual and as a representative of the world as a whole just as the Mayan man was considered a manifestation of the Mayan god and consequently the whole universe.

Featured players are Ernesto Hernandez as Mundo and Felix Alvarez as Huracan. Also appearing will be Socorro Cruz, Allen Cruz, Jose Delgado, Diane Rodriguez and Edgar Sanchez.

Co-directors of the play, which premiered earlier this year, are Valdez and Alvarez.

The Teatro is an autonomous group which started on the United Farmworkers' picket lines in 1965 in Delano, California. Valdez, the founder, hoped the strikers could be inspired through drama.

"We wanted to make the strikers laugh to counteract the depressing effects of a bitter, basically humorless struggle," Valdez said. "So we developed a broad, fastpaced, slapstick form of comedy using the stock characters of farm labor."

The Teatro became the focal point of the nightly rallies of the historic 25-day, 300-mile march of farmworkers to Sacramento during the spring of 1966. Next, the group began fund-raising tours for the union throughout the country and in 1968 the group received the Obie Award for its off-Broadway performances.

The Teatro established an independent cultural center in 1967 in Del Rey, California and broadened its performances to include many issues of the Chicano movement. The use of barrio characterizations led to the first production of a full-length play which dramatized the social despair of a Chicano family living in a racist society.

Since 1971, the group has worked out of San Juan Baptista holding theater workshops during the winter and summer and touring throughout the year.

The repertory now includes puppet shows, plays, films, dramatic literature, a calavera band and actos, the Teatro's own short dramatic form.

"Our drama has a political root and a spiritual goal," according to Valdez. "We aim to combat poverty and oppression through the realization that the Chicanos, the plebes, the people, are the answer to a desperate society. We use laughter and song and pain and silence to create a theater of reality, a drama that reflects the life and hope of all La Raza."

Admission for the Teatro's UCSD appearance is \$3 and \$4 for the general public and \$2 and \$3 for UCSD students. Tickets are available at the box office in the UCSD Student Center. For information individuals should call 452-4559 or 452-4090.

For information contact Joan Rasmussen, 452-3120

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