

"Those Who Can, Teach"TM Affirms UCSD Theatre Professor in Receiving Career Achievement Award in Academic Theatre

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"As you all know, [they say] 'those who can't, teach.' Well, 'THEY' got it all wrong," says theatre professor Jorge Huerta. "It should read, 'THOSE WHO CAN, TEACH.' It is such a noble profession, one that I am so proud to be a part of."

Huerta, a 30-year-plus veteran professor and administrator at the University of California, San Diego, was presented last week with the *Career Achievement Award for Academic Theatre* by the Association of Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE) at its annual conference in New Orleans. ATHE is the largest national academic/professional theatre organization in the country.

"For me it has been a lifetime of doing what I love," Huerta continued in accepting the award. "I know full well that I am here, basking in your warm, good wishes because of a teacher who inspired me, and others along the way who kept that flame alive. They gave me a *Love of Learning*, and as that baton was past to me, the real joy comes from those inquisitive minds that sit before us in a classroom each day."

Hailed by his nominators as the "founder," "father," and "most distinguished scholar" of Chicano/a theatre studies, Huerta is the first Chicano theatre professor and professional to receive ATHE's career achievement award. He is the first Chicano to receive a Ph.D. in theatre.

"Beyond Dr. Huerta's profound leadership in Chicano Theatre Studies and performance in America, at UCSD he has supported and influenced richly so many generations of theatre scholars and artists over decades," says Allan Havis, theatre professor, playwright and Provost of UCSD's Thurgood Marshall College. "In addition to his long list of publications, he has directed countless valuable productions and ensemble projects."

Huerta is the author of *Chicano Theatre: Themes and Forms* (Bilingual Press, 1982) and *Chicano Drama: Performance, Society, and Myth* (Cambridge, 2000), each a sourcebook in the field of Chicano theatre. He has written more than 30 articles, countless book reviews, and edited three anthologies.

Huerta founded El Teatro de la Esperanza and also was a co-founder of the Old Globe's Teatro Meta and co-founder of Teatro Máscara Mágica. He has directed in theatres across the country, including the San Diego Repertory, Seattle's Group Theatre, Washington, D.C.'s Gala Hispanic Theatre, La Compañía de Teatro de Albuquerque, and New York's Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre.

In accepting the ATHE award, Huerta praised not only his teachers, but his colleagues "for their support and inspiration with their talent and wisdom," and his students.

"Our students, too, become our teachers," Huerta says, "keeping us in a constant quest for knowledge with their honesty and eagerness to learn."

In addition to holding the Chancellor's Associates Endowed Chair III as professor of Theatre at UCSD, Huerta, since 2005, has served at the Associate Chancellor and Chief Diversity Officer, appointed by UCSD Chancellor Marye Anne Fox to enhance UCSD's overall diversity.

Huerta says diversity is not only a matter of race and gender, but also includes the breadth of demographic and philosophical differences; that a diverse institution supports multiplicity by valuing individuals and groups without prejudice, and that mutual respect is the primary objective.

"We basically have to diversify without preferential treatment," Huerta says. "It's a thin line - but you cannot have excellence without diversity."

Among Huerta's teaching and theatre awards: he is the recipient of the Most Valued Professor Award from UCSD's John Muir College, was recognized as a Distinguished Artist by the California State University System's Distinguished Artist Forum, and received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the National Association of Chicana and Chicano Studies.

Huerta received his Ph.D. in theatre from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 1974. He came to UCSD in 1975 to teach, research, and direct Chicana/o theatre.

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