

The Boy Who Cried Wolf In the Court of Madrid

"The Truth Suspected," by Juan Ruiz de Alarcón,
a comedy writer born in Mexico in the 16th Century,
in a bright and witty production in English

Hugo Quintana
Theatre Editor

Thanks to an inspired translation by Dakin Matthews and stage direction grounded on the virtue of simplicity and the transporting power of rhythm, The Antaeus Theatre Company is mounting a smart and classy production of "La verdod sospechosa" (here called "The Liar") by Juan Ruiz de Alarcón.

The playwright was born in Mexico in 1581 and studied in Spain, where he turned himself into one of the premiere practitioners of the Golden Age Comedia. In this particular theatrical tradition, one cannot talk about motivation in the modern sense of the term, inasmuch as the characters--or better, character types--are driven by a single defining impulse which remains unchanged over the course of the play. These character types, simple and energetic, do not reflect on what they are doing, or how they do it, but instead move forward compelled by an inborn instinct which does not let them deviate from their rut, no matter where it leads.

This being so, the comedy works in today's world on the strength of the technical facility with which it is constructed and the rapid rhythm imparted by the director Anne McNaughton, who keeps the focus steadily on the action of the plot and downplays any psychological complications.

Once this is understood, the twists and turns of the plot grab the audience's attention and hold it to the very end, without the need of any further complexity. In fact, there is

nothing beneath the surface here; all is in plain view, and quite satisfying just as it is.

The plot deals with the adventures of the young Don Garcia who, upon his return to Madrid after pursuing his studies in Salamanca, is powerless to resist his obsessive compulsion to tell the most barefaced lies (albeit with a kind of poetic *brío*) on whatever slight occasion presents itself.

This liar, of a wonderful imagination, but also a sadly unredeemable one, has no intention of doing ill, nor does he lie for profit or gain, but rather on compulsion--and expects his lies to have only a momentary effect, forgotten almost as soon as he speaks them. In other words, he has no idea of the consequences of his actions--so typical of an immature young man still stuck in his adolescence.

The biggest problem is that the consequences of his actions not only do not disappear but, on the contrary, inevitably keep on developing of their own accord, and become impossible to stop.

Except with yet another lie. Until finally the same thing happens as in "The Boy Who Cried Wolf"--by the time the liar tries to tell the truth, everyone suspects him.

Although Don Garcia's lies initially weave the net of deception in which everyone will, sooner or later, become entangled, the interesting thing about this comedy is that, quite subtly and ironically, not only does Don Garcia deceive others, he is himself deceived--by reality.

El pastorcillo y el lobo en la corte de Madrid

"La verdod sospechosa", de Juan Ruiz de Alarcón, con el título traducido en México en el siglo XVI, se presenta en una inteligente y graciosa producción en inglés

Por Hugo Quintana

El teatro

El teatro de la ciudad de México tiene una gran tradición de producción en inglés. En este sentido, la Antaeus Theatre Company es una de las compañías que más ha contribuido a esta tradición. Su producción de "The Liar" (título traducido de "La verdod sospechosa" de Juan Ruiz de Alarcón) es un ejemplo de una producción inteligente y graciosa. El texto, escrito en el siglo XVI, se adapta perfectamente a un escenario moderno. La dirección de Anne McNaughton es brillante, logrando un ritmo rápido y una claridad técnica que hacen que la obra sea muy accesible para el público. Los personajes, simples y energéticos, están bien definidos y sus acciones son fáciles de seguir. La obra funciona muy bien en el mundo actual gracias a su estructura sólida y a su ritmo. Los tipos de personajes no reflejan lo que hacen, sino que simplemente lo hacen, lo que le da un carácter único a la obra. Esto es algo que se puede apreciar en cualquier época. La obra de Alarcón es un ejemplo de cómo un texto antiguo puede ser adaptado y presentado de una manera que sea relevante y divertida para el público moderno. La producción de Antaeus Theatre Company es un ejemplo de cómo se puede hacer teatro en inglés en México con calidad y creatividad.



Para el debut de "El pastorcillo y el lobo en la corte de Madrid" se presentaron los actores Juan Ruiz de Alarcón, con el título traducido en México en el siglo XVI, se presenta en una inteligente y graciosa producción en inglés