Recent MFA Graduate in Dramatic Writing

Leonard Madrid

Leonard Madrid, a recent graduate of the MFA Program in Dramatic Writing, has won, for the last three years, the Kennedy Center Award for Hispanic Playwrights, one of the most prestigious awards in the business. Madrid’s latest Kennedy Center-winning play, Aurora, was shown in the Spring 2008 Words Afire Festival at the University of New Mexico.

Madrid, 32, who grew up in Portales, NM, feels like it’s about time Hispanics stepped up and started writing plays. “I write New Mexican storytelling plays. In the real world, they’re called magical realism.”

After graduating in May 2008, Leonard debates the future with his fellow Hispanic classmates: “It’s either going somewhere else and introducing them to our culture, or staying here and introducing our culture here. The idea is that we’ll start a new works company here.” Leonard Madrid’s voice is strong and his works beautifully reflect the culture and art of New Mexico Hispanics.
THEATER AND DANCE
http://www4.unm.edu/theatre/

The faculty places great emphasis on teaching and provides an environment in which students develop their personal visions. We work one-on-one with our students, discussing their ideas and helping them to identify and develop their particular strengths. Through our active and diverse production season we focus on the presentation of student work in the Rodey Theatre, Theatre X and Carlisle Gym South Arena. Departmental outreach activities and special programs celebrate the cultural expression both of the Southwest region and Latin American countries.

At the masters level we offer theatre education and outreach, and dance history and criticism. Through ongoing classroom and production activities, the theatre and design programs prepare students for graduate work and for professional work in the wider world.

We are the only dance program in the United States with a fully developed curriculum in Flamenco Dance to complement our courses in ballet, modern, African, jazz, Spanish classical, Mexican folk, and hip hop. Each summer, the International Festival Flamenco brings Flamenco artists, teachers, and students from all over the world to UNM for workshops and performances.

William Liotta has served over the years in a variety of capacities, including lighting and sound designer, consultant and project designer and developer, designing more than 100 productions both nationally and internationally. He has been on the faculty at: California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles, Tulane University in New Orleans, the Professional Theatre Training Program at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee, and teaches lighting and sound design at the University of New Mexico.

He has done consulting and design work for Universal Studios Hollywood, Warner Brothers Pictures, the Mark Taper Forum in Los Angeles and the Danny Kaye Playhouse and Fredrick Loewe theatre in New York City. He has worked with the Bella Lewitsky Dance Company, the Martha Graham Dance Company, the Universal Ballet of Korea and The Acting Company. He has been a guest lecturer at the Central Academy of Drama and the National Academy of Chinese Dramatic Arts (formally the Beijing Opera Academy) in Beijing China.

His designs have been selected as part of the American contingent to the Prague Quadrennial, and he is the recipient of two Big Easy Awards for Best Lighting Design for New Orleans. He is a member of United Scenic Artists Local 829, and owns the patent on the “Gamchek” a lighting industry testing device marketed and sold by GAM Products, Hollywood.