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# Re-Imagining the Theatre: Existence and Change

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# Re-Imagining the Theatre: Existence and Change

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## **Abstract**

With acknowledgement of Nicaraguan Theatre and its different dynamics, this research works to expose and create visibility of current Nicaraguan Theatre with relation to social change in Managua, Nicaragua. The microcosm of theatre is revolutionary in creating the necessary change to reach a state of consciousness that allows others to accept and understand society and others for what they are and what they can be. The theater is simply a tool. Intrinsicly, all acts are political, therefore the theater is a political declaration. The theater is, and always will be, a political arena, when the aesthetics of the theater are continuously transforming.

*Keywords:* Theatre, Social Change, Nicaraguan Theatre

Con el reconocimiento del Teatro Nicaragüense y sus diferentes dinámicas, esta investigación trabaja para exponer y crear visibilidad al Teatro Nicaragüense actual en relación con el cambio social en Managua, Nicaragua. Los microcosmos del teatro son revolucionarios a crear el cambio necesario para alcanzar un estado de conciencia que permite a los demás aceptar y comprender a la sociedad y los demás por lo que son y lo que pueden ser. El teatro es simplemente una herramienta. Intrínsecamente, todos los actos son políticos, por lo tanto, el teatro es una declaración política. El teatro es, y siempre será, una arena política, ya que la estética del teatro se transforma continuamente.

*Palabras clave:* Teatro, Cambio Social, Teatro Nicaragüense

## **Dedication**

*To those who continue to fight,*

*To those who continue to believe,*

*To those who continue to dare to dream.*

*This is for you.*

## Acknowledgements

*In absolute gratitude and exuberant joy, I would like to acknowledge those that have watched and served as inspiration for this research and project.*

*To SIT:*

*Thank you for allowing me to explore and research what I love. This opportunity has been monumental and transformational.*

*To Ben:*

*Thank you! The nature of this project was ambitious and I thank you for the excitement that you exuberate for these research projects.*

*To Maria Teresa & Alvaro:*

*Thank you for being our parents away from home! You two have been phenomenal in every possibly way.*

*To Gabe:*

*Thank you for keeping the arts alive! You are a work of art!*

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*Thank you for being the joy of this program. You have truly allowed this project to come into fruition in ways you could not imagine. Thank you for being a mentor, but also a friend.*

*To David Rocha:*

*Thank you for being you. Your experience and passion for theatre has exuberated an energy that is truly admirable to all those who desire to enter the world of theatre.*

*To Azani, Jack, and Sarah:*

*Thank you for being my friends. You have all inspired me in ways you may never know. If it weren't for the three of you, this project would have not become what it is. Nothing, but absolute love for the three of you – I will forever cherish our moments together.*

*To My Mother:*

*Thank you for never giving up. Thank you for believing in our dream. You are my rock and I would not wish this life in any other way. I do this for you, I do this for us, I do this for those who never believed to have a chance.*

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*Andres 'Fluffy' Aguilar*

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## **Introduction**

*“Let them here produce their own lives in the simplest way;  
for the simplest way of living is in art”  
(Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 205).*

The purpose of this research and project is to expose and create visibility to the current theatre that is occurring in Managua, Nicaragua. I intend to relate the exposed theatre as a form of social change. For the sake of my research, I key *social change* as a defined means which aims to implicitly create socially conscious citizens of all ages to see their own reality, as well as that of society, and to act on their own rights and that of the people, to create a progressive and inclusive world for all. My project – a theatre production – reflects reoccurring key themes within the interviews I have conducted with theatre personnel throughout Managua.

Theatre has been a vital component of art for the Nicaraguan population; nonetheless, the purpose of theatre has evolved over periods of time. From highly notable influences in theatre, such as Bertolt Brecht, Santiago Garcia, and Augusto Boal, theatre has transformed and developed to be its own state of art in many different aesthetics here in Nicaragua, and worldwide.

This research will take a brief but thorough history in influence by the three-mentioned theatre theorists and practitioners: Bertolt Brecht, Santiago Garcia, and Augusto Boal. In creating parameters for this research, I will create a linear correlation to theorists Brecht, Garcia, and Boal, in that respective order, as a sphere of influence to Nicaraguan theatre. Additionally, I will cover Nicaraguan theatre history from the 1970s to present-day.

## **Methodology**

The methodology used for this research and project was an arts-based research method. All interviewees were asked prior to the interview to sign a consent form agreeing to the logistics of this investigation and project, including the protection of their identity via replacement of gender and age. Interviewees were selected based on participation in theatre and through mutual contacts from SIT personnel. Additionally, I received suggestions from my interviewees and proceeded to contact their networks with their acknowledgement and consent. All interviewees were contacted via text. Their interviewing times and locations were based on their availability and accessibility.

Through interviews with theatre personnel with current or previous experienced actors, directors, producers, professors, etc., I searched for reoccurring key themes throughout their theatre experiences. These reoccurring themes were used to create my theatre production. In creating my production, I used some of the theorists and practitioners' methods to depict some of the current types of theatre being produced in Managua, Nicaragua.

In intentionally planning my research, I selected the city of Managua as my specific site of investigation because it is the capital, which is supposed to host the most amount of 'cultural activities' in Nicaragua. While the city of Managua is structurally uncanny, it surged a development in the culture of theatre and, in general, Nicaraguan culture.

In strategically attacking my investigation and project, I intended to follow a structural weekly plan to achieve the finished product. The particular breakdown of this investigation was as follows:



- Week 1: Begin researching actual state of theatre in Managua, Nicaragua. Research history and influencers in Nicaraguan theatre. Contact list of interviewees for possible interviewing times and locations. Possibly, begin interviewing.
- Week 2: Conduct interviews. Continue reading research on Nicaraguan theatre. Begin writing creative project – theatre production, plus preparation for casting.
- Week 3\*: Finish interviews, creative project – theatre production, and casting. Begin rehearsals and writing of investigation.
- Week 4\*: Finish rehearsals and writing of investigation. Prepare to perform on the day of presentation.

*\*Due to unforeseen circumstances in the political arena of Nicaragua, I was unable to proceed forward with casting and preparation for a theatre performance as intended.*

This weekly plan was strictly followed as I proceeded to the end of this investigation; however, as noted, an obstacle faced during this research was Nicaragua's political climate which limited my intended project to come to fruition. Nonetheless, this surge of political activity surged to inspire and uncover interesting discoveries in the theatre realm.

Additionally, another obstacle I faced was the amount of theatre productions occurring throughout the city of Managua. The surge of theatre and the amount of theatre happening on a daily basis, especially in the midst of International Theatre Day (March 27th), is quite enough to overwhelm one attempting to witness it all within a restricted time frame. Due to the restriction of

time, it was not possible to view nor explore all types and aesthetics of theatre city-wide.

Moreover, due to the amount of theatre productions occurring, theatre personnel were generally busy and unavailable to interview. Hence, I had a limited pool of interviewees and contacts for this investigation. Along hand, it became difficult to contact those involved in theatre due to their commitments and their lack of visibility as artists in the city.

Lastly, substantiating my study with the appropriate research became challenging due to the lack of exploration in this field area – Nicaraguan theatre. While I did find sources, there is a lack of continuity and appropriate research for the state of theatre in Managua, Nicaragua.

Nonetheless, this research and project intended to expose and create visibility to the current state of theatre. While not all types of theatre are reflective in this research, it does present some of the contemporary theatre occurring in Managua, Nicaragua.

## **Sphere of Influence: Theorists**

*“Don’t accept the habitual as a natural thing.  
In times of disorder,  
of organized confusion,  
of de-humanized humanity,  
nothing should seem natural.  
Nothing should seem impossible to change.”*  
– Bertolt Brecht (Millán 6)<sup>1</sup>

To begin with, Bertolt Brecht, Santiago Garcia, and Augusto Boal have transformed, in a linear correlation, the way in which Latin American Theatre has evolved and situated. Nicaraguan theatre has, specifically, used these practitioners and theorists; however, their direct influence has gone unnoticed and unrecognized by the people that inhabit Nicaraguan Theatre. Therefore, I intend to shed light on the theorists that many Nicaraguan thespians use on a daily basis to reinforce the necessity to know and understand the importance of where these methods originate from.

Bertolt Brecht is recognized as a great influence to Latin American Theatre for his inherently political method of theatre. Brecht’s approach politicized theatre in making the spectators active rather than passive: “This theatre justified its inclination to social commitment by pointing to the social commitment in universally accepted works of art, which only fail to strike the eye because it was the accepted commitment” (Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 179). Thus, the accepted commitment must be challenged. If it failed to strike the eye, the approach and/or concept was not achieved as intended by Brecht. To strike the spectators, Brecht coined the alienation effect, also known as the A-Effect, to

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<sup>1</sup> *Translated:* “No acepten lo habitual como una cosa natural, pues en tiempos de confusión organizada, de arbitrariedad consciente, de humanidad deshumanizada, nada debe ser natural, nada debe ser imposible de cambiar– Bertolt Brecht (Millán 6)”

purposely distance the audience and the actors from immersing into the realism of the production. It must be understood that “the episodes must not succeed one another indistinguishably but must give us a chance to interpose our judgment” (Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 201). Hence, the production must continue to be a production, yet allow spectators to internally reflect on what is being showcased.

Another way of understanding Brecht’s approach is that “it constructs its workable representation of society, which are then in a position to influence society, wholly and entirely as a game” (Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 188). This game is reflective of society while also being critical and insightful to influence the actual realities that the spectators live. In addition, “the one important point for the spectators in these houses is that they should be able to swap a contradictory world for a consistent one, one that they scarcely know for one of which they can dream” (Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 188). Hence, the game continues to foster itself in a dream-state that can be the ideal situation for the spectator as they embark on a journey to imagine the change necessary to create their dream into reality.

In final remarks, Brecht reemphasizes the necessity for an active audience:

Not everything depends on the actor, even though nothing may be done without taking him into account. The ‘story’ is set out, brought forward and shown by the theatre as a whole, by actors, stage designers, mask-makers, costumiers, composers, and choreographers. They unite their various arts for the joint operation, without of course sacrificing their independence in the process. (Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 202)

Hence, this collaboration sets out to be reflective within the theatre personnel as much as the spectators of the production. In specific, everyone involved is what encompasses reality; Thus, if a true social change is supposed to represent reality, the people who embody existence should be in charge of uniting forces in

reflecting, and possibly creating, the change necessary for society to move forward.

Moreover, Santiago Garcia is a Colombian practitioner that has had a great influence on Nicaraguan theatre, specifically emerging the practice of *Colección Colectiva* [Collective Creation], also known as Devised Theatre. Undoubtedly, Santiago Garcia was influenced by Brecht's method: "It is evident that the relations of the work with the viewer are dialectical in nature, that is, both the public influences the relationship of the work, and ultimately in the conformation of an aesthetic, as the work of art influences the formation of a public" (Garcia, Chapter 1 - Determining Factors)<sup>2</sup>. Garcia recognizes the relationship between the public and the work, as well as the actor and the spectator, as 'dialectical in nature,' thus, acknowledging that reflection has been achieved through the work of art that has been presented.

In specifying Garcia's contribution and influence, he encouraged the idea of collectively working together with all facets, including outsiders of the theatre, to make a production come to fruition. While this technique may not be radical to portray reality, it changes the way in which theatre is approached, specifically when asking: "Who is it for?" (Garcia, Chapter 1 - Determining Factors)<sup>3</sup>. When critically thinking about the spectators, Brecht's influences is highlighted as it is addressing the audience to be an active participant of the staged works.

Additionally, Garcia denotes that "it is determined in the work of art its way of presenting its contents, the way of transforming reality in another reality that we

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<sup>2</sup> *Translated:* "Es evidente que las relaciones de la obra con el espectador son de carácter dialéctico, es decir, tanto el público influye en la relación de la obra, y a la postre en la conformación de una estética, como la obra de arte influye en la formación de un público" (Garcia, Capítulo 1 – Factores Determinante).

<sup>3</sup> *Translated:* "¿A quién le sirve?" (Garcia, Capítulo 1 – Factores Determinante).

call ‘work of art’ and in turn the relationship between this “other reality” and the reality from which it emerges” (Garcia, Chapter 1 - The Aesthetic Moment)<sup>4</sup>. In essence, theatre is a form of escapism for the peoples’ realities. While there may only be the reality that one lives, the creations of realities are subjective to the subject; therefore, creating multiple realities of the same situation and/or issue is different in alternative realities as they continue to be filtered through the person rather the people.

Therefore, Garcia highlights the necessity for artists and others to collectively work together to expose, understand, and comprehend the realities of society:

That is why for us artists it is necessary to examine the political conditions of our countries and the degree of development of conflicts between the State and popular organizations, because this examination reveals the policy that our organizations must assume in relation to the State, its cultural apparatuses and other apparently independent organizations, but that in the end they must be serving the interests of one or the other pole of the class society. (Garcia, Chapter 1 - Determining Factors)<sup>5</sup>

To this extent, Garcia speaks a truth that the concurrent political conditions of a country has a relation to what is exhibited on the stage; therefore, creating a binary whether in favor or opposed to what is being executed. However, this jointly exposes the interests of one versus that of a collective, which serves to be divisive in a classist’s nature. Hence, it is in the peoples’ interest to seemly be

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<sup>4</sup> *Translated:* “Determina en la obra de arte su forma de presentar sus contenidos, la manera de transformar la realidad en otra realidad que llamamos "obra de arte" y a su vez la relación entre esta "otra realidad" y la realidad de donde se desprende” (Garcia, Capitulo 1 – El Momento Estético).

<sup>5</sup> *Translated:* “Es por ello que para nosotros los artistas es necesario hacer un examen de las condiciones políticas que viven nuestros países y el grado de desarrollo de los conflictos entre el Estado y las organizaciones populares, porque de este examen se desprende la política que nuestras organizaciones deben asumir con relación al Estado, a sus aparatos culturales y a otras organizaciones aparentemente independientes, pero que en el fondo deben estar sirviendo a los intereses de uno u otro polo de la sociedad de clases” (Garcia, Capitulo 1 – Factores Determinante ).

conscious of the political conditions of one's country without creating a binary of systematic oppression for either party, whether morally correct or not.

Lastly, Augusto Boal, the Brazilian theatre theorist, has also renovated the way in which Nicaraguan Theatre approaches its work. While building on Brecht, and possibly Garcia, Boal seemingly reaches a new height with the spectators' role in the theatre.

To begin with, through his work, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, Boal addresses that "all theater is necessarily political, because politics are all the activities of man and theater is one of them" (11)<sup>6</sup>. As Boal states, his theatre is inherently political, which has a direct correlation with Brecht and Garcia's idea of theatre. Boal continues to say that "the theater is a weapon. A very efficient weapon" (11)<sup>7</sup>. Boal's attribution of theatre as a weapon is efficient in creating social change through a method of entertainment. Needless to say, Boal's theatre radically changed theatre.

Boal repurposed the role of the spectator as a complete active participant of the theatre. "We want to stimulate the spectator to transform their society, if we want to stimulate the birth of the revolution" (Boal 153). In wanting to stimulate the spectator, Boal expected spectators to be active 'performers' with the spectacle being shown. That is to say, the spectator could interrupt and change scenes, dialogue, etc. to construct a performance truly authentic to their own realities. This was revolutionary. This could birth a revolution within those that figured that "everything is transformable, and everything can be transformed

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<sup>6</sup> *Translated*: "todo el teatro es necesariamente político, porque políticas son todas las actividades del hombre y el teatro es una de ellas" (Boal 11).

<sup>7</sup> *Translated*: "el teatro es un arma. Un arma muy eficiente." (Boal 11)

instantly” (Boal 58-59)<sup>8</sup>. Thus, if ‘things’ were easily transformable, then society, in all of its essence, can be transformed within small scaled actions, such as being inclusive and dismantling systems of power one step at a time. Boal’s attack on the institution of theatre revolutionized the way in which theatre was approached moving forward, especially for those countries in positions of dismantling toxic systems of power. In final analysis of Boal’s theatre, “it may be that the theater is not revolutionary in itself, but have no doubts: it is a rehearsal of the revolution!” (Boal 59)<sup>9</sup>.

In final respect, it is inherently important for Nicaraguan Theatre practitioners to recognize these theorists as foundation to their current approach to theatre. While these are only a few theorists and practitioners, Brecht, Garcia, and Boal are the most important figures in Nicaraguan Theatre as they have had the most impact and influence on the current state of theatre in Managua. Their inherently political ties, nonetheless, have transformed the repertoire that is seen throughout the country, and in specifically in Managua, Nicaragua.

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<sup>8</sup> *Translated*: “Todo es transformable, y todo se puede transformar al instante” (Boal 58-59).

<sup>9</sup> *Translated*: “Puede ser que el teatro no sea revolucionario en si mismo, pero no tengan dudas: ¡es un ensayo de la revolución!” (Boal 59).



## **History of Nicaraguan Theatre**

*“Everything hangs on the ‘story’;  
it is the heart of the theatrical performance”  
(Brecht, Davis, et al., 2015, p. 200).*

History is a part of a story. A story to be told, a story to be shared, a story to reflect the true happenings of the past as they were; however, sometimes, history is lost; erased; destroyed. The history of Nicaraguan Theatre is limited, yet lives to tell a story.

From the 1970s to present-day (2018), there are gaps of what has become of Nicaraguan Theatre; nonetheless, there is much to share from the theatre occurring before, during, and after the Nicaraguan Revolution.

The Nicaraguan Revolution would hence have an impact on the theatre world in the development and formation of Nicaraguan Theatre. The Revolution was a fight for liberty against the Somoza dictatorship, which encompassed human rights violations, corruption, and censorship. As a result of this period, Nicaraguan Theatre was molded to reflect these occurrences and bring forth dialogue, criticism, and reflection of this particular past to fruition.

To begin with, there were many dramaturgs and practitioners that are worth mentioning as antecedents prior to the Revolution: Rolando Steiner, Alberto Ycaza, Octavio Robleto, Pilar Aguirre, Socorro Bonilla Castellon, and Alan Bolt.

Rolando Steiner (1936-1987) was a Nicaraguan dramaturg that initiated Nicaraguan playwriting regarding the two most important men in the history of Nicaragua (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolucion,” p. 1046). These men were

Augusto Sandino and Anastacio Somoza. Because of their role in Nicaraguan history, Steiner touched upon contingently ‘current’ (to Steiner’s time) social themes, such as social classes, dictatorships, feminine psychology, matrimony, etc. Moreover, Alberto Yzaca (1945-2001) and Octavio Robleto (1935-2009) were also highly notable and successful Nicaraguan dramaturgs. Both these dramaturgs touched upon Nicaraguan themes and motivations revolving social issues, nonetheless, including the Somoza dictatorship (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolucion,” p. 1046).

In relation, these dramaturgs were addressing political issues which Brecht, Garcia, and Boal aimed to expose and create dialogue and reflection, upon different approaches to theatre presentation. As a result, these dramaturgs, through the 60s and 80s, brought forth various groups of theatre, such as “*la Comedia del Arte (1960-1968)*, *el Teatro Experimental de la Escuela Nacional de Bellas Artes (1960-63)*, *el Teatro Experimental de Managua – TEM (1961-1978)*, y *la Comedia Nacional de Nicaragua (1965-89)*” (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1046). These groups formed as an essential movement to progress theatre forward through rough, challenging times as they took lead in maintaining their respective type of theatre against theatre works of the universal repertoire.

While there were many people invested and interested in Nicaraguan Theatre, like Pilar Aguirre and Socorro Bonilla Castellon, they did not achieve to configure a national theatre repertoire with a solidified identity due to the power structure developed between the elite, intellectual individuals and the people (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1047). Hence, this lack and unachieved national theatre identity hindered the progression of Nicaraguan Theatre. The

leading elite intellectuals created a power structure where the peoples' voice of the Revolution, in all of its essence, was hidden and silenced. Thus, the Nicaraguan Theatre was restricted by the elite to a universal repertoire rather than their own theatrical identity of their own experiences and history.

In the Nicaraguan Pre-Revolutionary Theatre, the polarization of the Nicaraguan society produced its artistic manifestations (Galich, "El Teatro de la Revolución," p. 1047). Therefore, as a result of Somoza's censorship, theatre had no exception: "to speak of the Theater of the Revolution it is necessary to speak of a political theater where two fundamental axes intersect: the elite theater and the theater that... we could call 'catacombs'" (Galich, "El Teatro de la Revolución," p. 1047)<sup>10</sup>. Hence, Theatre of the Revolution was a forced, usually from groups of *agit-prop*<sup>11</sup>, that combated universally known staged productions with the objective of mobilizing and organizing the people for the cause of the Nicaraguan people.

The theater of the 70s and 79s, until July 19, was a theater that was framed within a series of canons that had already been enunciated previously by a series of theorists, from the German Erwin Piscator and his Political Theater documentary up to Brecht; but, above all, Augusto Boal, the Brazilian who came to develop a whole series of Latin American popular theater techniques, as he himself has called them. (Galich, "El Teatro de la Revolución," p. 1048)<sup>12</sup>

This source demonstrates actions of the 1970s – 1980s which are correlated to

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<sup>10</sup> *Translated* "para hablar de Teatro de la Revolución se hace necesario hablar de un teatro político donde se entrecruzan dos ejes fundamentales: el teatro de elite y el teatro que, parodiando al poeta revolucionario Leonel Rugama, podríamos denominar "de catacumbas" (Galich, "El Teatro de la Revolución," p. 1047).

<sup>11</sup> *Agit-prop* is "political propaganda promulgated chiefly in literature, drama, music, or art" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

<sup>12</sup> *Translated* "El teatro de los años 70 y 79, hasta el 19 de julio, era un teatro que se enmarcaba dentro de una serie de cánones que ya habían sido enunciados con anterioridad por una serie de teóricos, desde el alemán Erwin Piscator y su Teatro Político documental hasta Brecht; pero, sobre todo, Augusto Boal, el brasileño que llegó a desarrollar toda una serie de técnicas latinoamericanas de teatro popular, como él mismo las ha llamado." (Galich, "El Teatro de la Revolución," p. 1048)

theorists, Brecht and Boal, that are mentioned in this study.

Continuing, during the revolution, Alan Bolt was recognized as the most versatile of Nicaraguan dramatists as he had been an actor and director (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1049). Bolt was able to unite two times of the same phenomenon, the dictatorship and the process of the revolution; however, he did not create a conceptual basis nor infrastructure that allowed for continuity between the two – that was not his goal (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1049). Therefore, Bolt had created something unique in the scene of merging two empirical moments into one as a true revolutionary force to be reckoned with.

However, with time and consequences of the war, the degradation of the Nicaraguan economy began to have its effects on the theatre. Nonetheless, with the triumph of the revolution, the Theatre of the Revolution began to mold itself as the Ministry of Culture was created and founded, along hand with a Department of Theatre (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1050). Within the Department, their mission was to:

to promote, as a main activity, the work towards the formation and consolidation of a movement of amateur theater or towards the search of a truly popular theater, whose principles are based on Nicaraguan cultural roots in the values driven by the Popular Sandinista Revolution. (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1050)<sup>13</sup>

As stated, this mission expressed work to be done on the theatre repertoire rather than, what is later mentioned, the preparation of the actor, which had and has not been renovated nor consolidated with modernized techniques. Therefore, the progression of theatre would stick to be the same as is.

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<sup>13</sup> *Translated* “impulsar, como principal actividad, el trabajo hacia la formación y consolidación de un movimiento de aficionados al teatro o hacia la búsqueda de un teatro verdaderamente popular, cuyos principios se asientan en las raíces culturales nicaragienses y en los valores impulsados por la Revolución Popular Sandinista” (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1050)

During this period of Nicaraguan Theatre, many themes were staged, including, but not limited to, “1) The Sandinista struggle and repression; 2) The literacy campaign; 3) The mass organization; 4) The economic reactivation; 5) The counterrevolution; 6) The heroes of the revolution; 7) Social problems (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1051)<sup>14</sup>. These themes would have a lasting effect, which can still be seen in today’s theatre.

Following, between the years of 1980-1987, National Shows of Theatre were showcased. The first national show – having 32 selected groups perform with an audience approximation of 13,000 – debuted a variety of groups with many different forms and approached to theatre, including Collective Creation productions (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1051-1058). Every proceeding National Show grew until its fourth year (1983), where a decadence was felt. After this year, the national budget allocated the money once held for the Department of Theatre to their defense (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1055); however, theatre survived. The Sandinista Associate of Cultural Workers – ASTC – and the Ministry of Culture helped aid the little groups that were able to survive the economic crisis and in 1987, the fifth National Show was showcased (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1055). This show was meant to analyze the defects of the theatre movement and how to move forward. The underlying issue was “the strictly theatrical problem, that is ... there is an acting and directorial problem, materialized in the voice and diction and the tendency to overact or gesticulate without directors knowing how to face it. The stagnation on the part of the directors was obvious” (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p.

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<sup>14</sup> *Translated* “1) La lucha sandinista y la represión 2) La campana de alfabetizacion 3) La organización de masas 4) La reactivación económica 5) La contrarrevolución 6) Los heroes de la revolución 7) Los problemas sociales” (Galich, “El Teatro de la Revolución,” p. 1051).

1056). Therefore, Nicaraguan theatre had struggled to survive, yet survived with its same mistakes of the past – unchanging their ways to the modernizing globalized theatre realm.

Nevertheless, Nicaraguan Theatre continued to prevail in the political arena through the 1990s. “And this, political theater, continues to agitate, continues to demand the spectator (especially) an exercise of activity, of political action. It does not seem that way, that one can think of another way, that it was not to build political action from the scene, that is: a theater that speaks only in terms of political agitation” (Álvarez p. 15)<sup>15</sup>. Hence, the post-revolutionary attitude of those involved in theatre continued to surge as wanting and needing change in society from what had once been. The agitprop productions manifested themselves in many different forms, but specifically in productions of Collective Creation, which practitioner Santiago Garcia coins. This everlasting political show reinforced that idea that “there is no action and experience without repetition” (Álvarez p. 31)<sup>16</sup>. Therefore, even though these revolutionary themes were being repeated, they were being approached differently as time moves forward.

In moving forward in time, this brief but thorough history of Nicaraguan Theatre exposes the real issue of how the theatre is stagnant and unwilling to change its ways to move forward due to its post-trauma of the Revolution. In correlation with the spheres of influences: Brecht, Garcia, and Boal, it is clearly evident that their methods of ‘politicizing’ theatre has become an effective tool

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<sup>15</sup> *Translated* “Y este, teatro político, sigue agitando, sigue demandando al espectador (especialmente) un ejercicio de actividad, de acción política. No pareciera así, que se pueda pensar de otra forma, que no fuese construir la acción política a partir de la escena, esto es: un teatro que habla sólo en clave de agitación política” (Álvarez p. 15)

<sup>16</sup> *Translated* “No hay acción y experiencia, sin repetición” (Álvarez p. 31).

for the Nicaraguan population to uphold and follow. Nonetheless, it requires recognition of strategies from these practitioners and theorists to effectively execute what the theatre has to offer. While the theatre does recognize its history and influences, it has lost its powerful voice to create the social change needed today. These particularly influences and situations in Nicaraguan history have lent themselves to use theatre as a method of social change, yet nothing has changed. The lack of theatrical culture has remarkably hindered the power that the theatre holds.

## **Creative Project**

*\*\*Spanish version of this Creative Project can be found in the Appendix\*\**

### **Like What?**

*Lights off. Clock ticking fills the room. No movement. (10 seconds)*

#### **SCENE 1 - Opening**

*Ticking beginning to speed up. (5 seconds) Lights on.*

*KARLA is sitting on the chair imitating the clock counter-clock wise. Opposite from KARLA, ELIA is laying on the floor imitating the clock, clockwise. DAVID is standing facing KARLA as he is motionless with expressive features of worriedness. MIGUEL is opposite from DAVID, sitting with his head down as if nervously counting time with his fingers.*

ELIA: What are you waiting for? Just do it, HIT ME!

DAVID: No, please! PLEASE DON'T LEAVE!

MIGUEL: If only... if only I can be here with you.

KARLA: Leave me alone, just get out. GET OUT!

#### **SCENE 2 – PART 1**

*On the off set, MIGUEL is watching this activity play out. He reacts and attempts to watch every move, moving side to side; however, he is unable to clearly see nor comprehend what is occurring on stage.*

ELIA: (whispering) No one would understand...

*DAVID and KARLA are talking and walking by when they see ELIA laying down.*

#### **TOGETHER:**

DAVID: Hey!

KARLA: Hey!

KARLA: What's up?

ELIA: Hey y'all! It's been a while. Uhhh, nothing much. Just laying down here. What are y'all up to?

*DAVID attempts to say something, but KARLA beats him to the punch.*



KARLA: We're just walking around, getting some air. There's been a lot happening lately.

DAVID: Yeah, we were just talking and clearing our minds.

ELIA: What do you mean?

KARLA: Well... I've been getting these really terrible headaches again and they just don't seem to be going away.

DAVID: Uhm, yeah... my sister has been thinking about leaving to Costa Rica. You know... she can't find work here and she just doesn't want to be here without being able to help... so I don't know what's going to happen.

ELIA: Oh... I'm sorry y'all. I had no idea. Where are y'all headed to now?

KARLA: We were just going to head back home. You wanna come?

ELIA: Sure... it'll keep my mind off of stuff.

*KARLA, DAVID, and ELIA start heading off. KARLA only lives around the corner.*

DAVID: Do you wanna talk about it?

ELIA: I mean... it's okay. I rather not... things will get better. Time will tell, right?

(whispering) Time... time.

*DAVID and KARLA look at each other, worried. KARLA changes the subject.*

KARLA: Have any of you heard from Miguel? He hasn't been around.

DAVID: Ooooooh... you don't need to worry about him. He's been talking to someone. I think he's just trying to feel things out. He should be fine.

ELIA: *(slightly chuckling)* Oh yeah... I do remember.

KARLA: Well, if you all say so... this is my house. I guess, I'll see you both later, possibly?

DAVID: Yeah, I'll text you.

KARLA: Alright. Later. If you need anything, you know how to find me.

ELIA: *(with a slight smile)* Later.

David: Ciao!

*ELIA and DAVID begin heading home. ELIA's home is the closest, so they walk toward their home. KARLA leaves for a second, but returns outside to meet MIGUEL.*

### **SCENE 3 – PART 2**

*KARLA and MIGUEL meet up outside KARLA'S home. ELIA and DAVID continue to walk home without noticing KARLA nor MIGUEL.*

KARLA: I need to tell you something!

MIGUEL: Oh, hey there to you too. So much for a greeting. (*snarky*)  
What is it?

KARLA: Elia is having a rough time, but they don't want to speak about it. Do you know what is happening?

MIGUEL: How would I know? I don't even speak to them as it is... but did David tell you about his sister?

KARLA: Yeah, it sucks. I think he's taking it much better than I expected.

MIGUEL: What do you mean?

KARLA: He seemed really sad about it, but I didn't get the sense that anything was wrong. Why?

MIGUEL: Oh. He didn't tell you?

*Aside:*

*Why wouldn't he tell her? He should have told her... well I'll tell her anyways.*

David is not okay Karla. He called me and it was probably the scariest thing.

KARLA: WAIT, are you being serious? He seemed totally okay... I don't understand. (*Karla looks down at her watch and realizes the time.*)

*MIGUEL keeps walking, while KARLA remembered she had to be home before her parents arrived, so she has to run home. DAVID and ELIA come around the opposite corner. ELIA begins to tremble as she sees MIGUEL approaching. DAVID is surprised to see him.*

DAVID: Oh, Miguel! I didn't expect to see you around here. What are you doing? Actually, where are you going?

MIGUEL: I was looking for you. Just checking in...

ELIA: (*timid*) Hey Miguel.

DAVID: Elia, are you sure you're okay?

*MIGUEL stares at ELIA as if to warn them of the possibility of speaking.*

ELIA: (*sturdy*) I'm good, fine. Yeah, just have a lot on my mind.

MIGUEL: Good, I'm glad you're doing okay there Elia. So David, what are you doing?

DAVID: I'm going to leave Elia at home and then nothing. Why, what's up?

MIGUEL: You wanna hang out and chill?

DAVID: Sure. Elia, do you mind if Miguel and I walk you home?

ELIA: Not at all. Uhm, I only live around the other block.

MIGUEL: Cool... let's get a move on it.

*DAVID, MIGUEL, and ELIA head towards ELIA'S home. It takes no time to arrive. Elia waves goodbye.*

DAVID: If you need anything, you can always text or call me, alright?  
See you later?

ELIA: (*sincerely*) Yeah... thanks David. I'll see you both later.

MIGUEL: Bye Elia.

*ELIA disappears.*

DAVID: What's up man?

MIGUEL: Nothing much... what was all that about with Elia?

DAVID: I don't know... she's been acting quite strange. Did you see how she was holding herself?

MIGUEL: Yeah...

DAVID: Yeah, I hope they are okay... Anyways, how are you and your boo thing? Anything new?

MIGUEL: Uhm, I mean... I guess not. I mean I guess we are seeing each other now, but it's been rough. Been trying to get distracted.

DAVID: Oh, I know the feeling.

MIGUEL: Yes, you do. And you need to stop lying to your friends.

*ELIA walks out of their house and head over to KARLA'S. Neither MIGUEL nor DAVID notice them as they leave.*

### **CONVERSATIONS SIMULTANEOUSLY**

DAVID: What do you mean?

MIGUEL: You know exactly what I mean David. You have to tell them that you have not been okay with your sister. Your sister is leaving. You know this. She's the only person that you have.

DAVID: Miguel, I don't need you to be telling me my life. I know what I'm going through, but I'm trying to be okay. You don't understand and you won't ever understand. Why don't you mind your own damn business?

MIGUEL: I'm only trying to be a friend here. Why lie? It's okay to be emotional and let others understand what you are going through.

DAVID: Leave me alone, dammit! I get it.

*DAVID runs off. MIGUEL stands still for a few moments and decides to go back to ELIA's.*

ELIA: Karla, thank goodness, you're home.

KARLA: What happened? Are you okay?

ELIA: So... I uh... I'm scared Karla.

KARLA: What happened?

ELIA: Uhm you know... Miguel. Uhm the person he's been seeing... yeah.

KARLA: *(slowly nodding)*

ELIA: I've been seeing Miguel and uhm, I just can't do this anymore Karla. *(Elia lifts up their sleeves – bruises. Bruises everywhere. Trembling)*

KARLA: (*shocked*) I...uh... what? I don't understand. That motherfucker! When did he do this to you?

*ELIA falls into KARLA's shoulders and cries. KARLA consoles them.*

#### SCENE 4 – WHAT HAPPENED

KARLA: Sometimes... sometimes, there are days like these. Days where everything is wrong... where everything seems like it is going wrong. Time passes and we just sit here and believe that things will get better... hoping things will get better. All you can do is remember, remember what has happened and what could happen... yeah... I remember what happened... and I can't ever forget... forget. It was those days and nights that seemed forever, hoping that it would end. It did... but didn't. I see it happen over and over again and I can't forget. Everything... everything was destroyed. What happened? What happened?! I wish I could tell you, but I just can't go back there, I can't... I wake up every morning to the sounds, the sounds of pain. What did I do? Where did I go? Where am I now? I need help, please.... Please... help me. No. No Karla, you are okay... convince yourself you are okay. Everything is fine. I'm going to be fine. Yeah... I'm fine. No. No, you're not. Yes. Yes, please... leave me alone. I just want to be alone. (*whispering and crying*) help me... please... help.

MIGUEL: What did you tell Karla?!

ELIA: (*scared*) What? I didn't tell her anything...

MIGUEL: (*aggressively*) Why are you lying?

ELIA: I'm not... I just spoke to her about things.

MIGUEL: THINGS, what THINGS?

ELIA: Things that don't concern you...

MIGUEL: What did you just say?

ELIA: I said... Things that don't...

*MIGUEL swings as to hit ELIA, when DAVID walks up and sees what is about to happen, DAVID runs and stops MIGUEL*

DAVID: Miguel, what the fuck is your problem?

*MIGUEL is shocked and still. DAVID pushes MIGUEL off and takes ELIA away.*

DAVID: You better never touch them again! I swear to GOD that if you lay your hand on them ever again, I will beat the shit out of you. Don't you dare even come close. You're a shithead, you fucking asshole. (To ELIA) Are you okay? Are you hurt?

*ELIA nods to answer DAVID. MIGUEL runs and suddenly trips as he looks back and what just happened. KARLA is coming towards his direction from where he was running. KARLA is infuriated.*

KARLA: Get lost you son of a bitch! If you ever... (angry beyond belief) I swear to your daddy that I will cut off your balls myself.

*MIGUEL scurries and runs away.*

KARLA: Thank goodness gracious! Are you okay?

ELIA: Yeah... (shaken)

DAVID: We should sit... here... here sit on here.

KARLA: David... I know this isn't the right time, but just wanted to let you know that I'm sorry about your sister. She left about an hour ago and she told me to give this to you.

*DAVID is shocked and grabs the letter.*

LETTER:

David,

You have no idea how hard it is to write this to you. I know this is not going to make you feel any better, I just wanted to let you know that I love you so much. I know you wanted me to stay, but you know that I can't. Mom and Dad need me to help. You know I can't stay here. I don't know how long it will be until we may see each other again, but just know I will always be your big sister and I will always be in your heart. You have to be strong. You can do this. And remember that your friends will always be there. You're lucky, David. Keep them close and keep them safe as I know you will do the same for our parents. I love you little brother.

Love,

Rosario

*DAVID is crying. ELIA is shook from what happened earlier, but also in regards to the letter. KARLA is in the middle of both and attempting to console them both.*

KARLA: (*whispering*) Time is a bitch... timing is a motherfucking bitch.

**FINAL SCENE – AGAIN?**

ELIA: What are you waiting for? Just do it, HIT ME!

DAVID: No, please! PLEASE DON'T LEAVE!

MIGUEL: If only... if only I can be here with you.

KARLA: Leave me alone, just get out. GET OUT!

## **Explained Project**

*“How much longer are our souls,  
leaving our ‘mere’ bodies under cover of the darkness,  
to plunge into those dream like figures up on the stage,  
there to take part in the crescendos and climaxes which ‘normal’ life denies us?”  
(Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 189).*

As a result of my research, I created a theatre production titled *Like What?* based on key themes that surged throughout my interviews. Additionally, throughout the semester with SIT, I was able to listen and see some of these and many other social issues that Nicaragua is encountering. Therefore, these interviews and observations allowed me to construct my project in its entirety with a critical, yet expository vision of sensualizing some of the many realities that day-to-day Nicaraguans face.

To begin, my theatre production was influenced by several themes; therefore, I highlight five main themes that prevail in Nicaraguan culture: 1) Domestic Violence, 2) Migration, 3) Love, 4) Trauma, and (5) Time. All these themes are arguably representative of a political atmosphere in the state of Nicaragua, which have allowed theatrical productions to be inherently political following the teaching of Brecht, Garcia, and Boal.

As the construction of this production became a reality, I began with playing with time and space. The reasoning of using time as a theme is of critical importance because of its foundational essence in Nicaraguan history and more specifically Nicaraguan Theatre history. Time in Nicaragua seems to have become stagnant – neither moving forward, nor backward – rather immobile in society. Time being the fifth and final theme is submerged within the structure of



the production – the theatre work begins and ends the exact same way. This being said, time in Nicaragua has become a source of political stagnation.

Moreover, the development of each character, as mentioned previously, was based on specified themes. Each character within the script is representative of one of these four themes, Elia – *Domestic Violence*, David – *Migration*, Miguel – *Love*, and Karla – *Trauma*. While these themes are powerfully charged in reality, the actual theatrical production is fictional. In the creation of this work, each character was envisioned as a whole.

The character of Elia embodies the experience of a domestic violence victim and survivor. Elia's character is confident with their identity, yet finds themselves in an abusive relationship that no one is aware of, creating a contrast on who they are. Elia's theme is inherently political as queer individuals are usually silenced in societies.

David's character is quite unique. David represents friendship, all while he struggles with his sister's abrupt choice of migrating to a different country. As a matter of fact, David's persona develops each character in this production; hence, creating an interesting political dynamic as a male figure continues to sustain a patriarchal system through an emotional period of 'losing' someone very important.

Miguel's character represents two concepts: the abuser to the domestic violence and the lover of Elia (which is an excuse for the domestic violence). Miguel was envisioned as a walking contradiction. Miguel's nature is static and unknown, yet he is representative of the normative male figure.

Karla's character shadowed trauma through a disguised mask of happiness and lightheartedness. Like Miguel, Karla is representative of the

‘normative’ female – full of joy and love. However, Karla’s character suffers from the trauma experience in her lifetime, whether that involves politics or not.

All four characters are contrasted with their positive and negative attributes. Additionally, they are all racially ambiguous and without a social class. While this may be alarming for many, it is done with intention. This production lends itself for directors, actors, and spectators to mold their own ideas of what could be possible with this production.

Moreover, within the work, the reader/spectator learns to understand the dynamics between characters. Some of the characters are friends, while others are not. The purpose behind the relationships ties toward a lack of understanding of friendship, but most importantly of communication. It is obvious that each character has a different relationship with each other; thus, communication becomes an issue. Communication between each character is vigorously different, creating a line of communication that isn’t quite clear to anyone, including the spectators. This is done intentionally as life is unclear. There are things we know and things we don’t know; thus, allowing the audience to figure out the actual relationships how they see fit in their own realities.

Lastly, the intended staging of this production was in a roundabout theatre. The staging would have been bare and simplistic with the involvement of the spectators. It would have mirrored a clock on the ground with specified times and locations during the production, symbolic of specified historical periods in Nicaragua. This idea manifested as a method to have the actors directly interact with spectators and to have the spectators be involved with the production itself, without their acknowledgement that they, too, were a part of the bigger issue -

apathy for societal changes. This intended staging would have served as a foundational characteristic to creating social change at the theatrical level.

## **Findings and Analysis**

*“Let us hope that their theatre may allow them to enjoy as entertainment that terrible and never-ending labour which should ensure their maintenance, together with the terror of their unceasing transformation.”*  
(Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 205).

Nicaraguan Theatre has much to do to progress forward. To begin with, the outlook at theatre must change from simply a hobby to a professional occupation. Throughout the interviews and sources used for this investigation, it became clear that theatre was not a viable occupation that was worth people’s dedication and commitment due to the economic instability. Many express their inability to live from solely being involved in theatre; therefore, theatre loses its cultural and occupational weight to become self-sustainable in the State of Nicaragua. For example, an interviewee mentions, “if you want to maintain that lifestyle or overcome that lifestyle you have to do something that is profitable here” (Female, 23). This interviewee’s perspective is, nonetheless, accurate – theatre, in Nicaragua as it is now, has no economic stability; hence, being involved in theatre will not overcome nor maintain a lifestyle.

Nonetheless, it is worth mentioning that many, if not all, my interviewees belonged to an affluent class in Nicaragua society – therefore, allowing them to do theatre. However, according to Augusto Boal, theatre can be done by anyone, anywhere – which then, in theory, theatre becomes accessible to everyone. Conversely, this is not the case in Nicaragua. Nicaraguan Theatre lacks accessibly to all its people due to power structures. One fundamental power structure is tied between finances and social class. Theatre requires some type of aid to create and showcase. With this being said, those with the capital have the ability to embark on a theatrical journey. Yet, if the necessary funding was

allocated toward the theatre and/or theatre companies/groups as they were historically after the revolution, the people would more likely view theatre as a professional and viable occupation with economic stability.

However, in continuation with financial burdens, today, traditional theatrical spaces are expensive: “The spaces to present are few and if you want to do so, they charge you amounts that are not available” (Espinoza, “El teatro nicaragüense, la cenicienta de las artes,” 2017)<sup>17</sup>. An interviewee briefly mentioned that spaces can run from \$350 to \$800 for two hours alone (Male, 48). Therefore, if a company/group needs rehearsal space for two weeks for four hours a day, except Saturday and Sunday; the group is looking at possibly a charge of at least \$10,500 for the rental of space, not including any of the production. Additionally, when tickets for the production are offered (usually C\$100 to C\$300), the Nicaraguan population does not desire to pay to see a performance that will bore them (Espinoza, “El teatro nicaragüense, la cenicienta de las artes,” 2017). This perspective proves to show that theatrical culture is not present nor appreciated in Nicaragua.

Furthermore, it’s worth mentioning that some productions do not require private spaces, such as Boal’s Popular Theatre; yet, due to the historical nature of Nicaraguan Theatre, the people lack the knowledge and understanding of such productions. Their inability to comprehend these types of theatre has stopped the progression of approaches and methods to different types of theatre. For example, Popular Theatre is usually free and done in open spaces with the participation of

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<sup>17</sup> *Translated*: “Los espacios para presentarse son pocos y si querés hacerlo te cobran cantidades que no hay” (Espinoza, “El teatro nicaragüense, la cenicienta de las artes,” 2017).

the spectators. This theatre is meant to be for the people, by the people; therefore, there is no capital involved, making it easily accessible to the entire population.

On the contrary, musical theatre has become the newest, luxurious form of theatre for the wealthy to enjoy. These productions are massive and require much preparation. It is the absolute form of a spectacle with hefty capital invested. This form of theatre, thus, is representative of the internal classist divide within the theatrical world.

While theatrical culture and financial security continues to be an issue, the city of Managua has arguably augmented the amounts of theatre exposed and presented (Espinoza, “El teatro en Nicaragua está creciendo” 2016). The genres of theatre include, but are not limited to, devised theatre, popular theatre, musical theatre, comedies, tragedies, satires, etc. “The growth is due to the fact that organizations that work with different topics (environment, domestic violence, childhood, among others) have observed that the work of the theater is an important element to achieve their objectives” (Espinoza, “El teatro en Nicaragua está creciendo” 2016)<sup>18</sup>. Nevertheless, wealth has determined accessibility to the theatre in general and its different types of theatre. Additionally, it has also shaped and created a social divide in the themes addressed in the theatre.

The themes that theatrical productions address are of critical importance. During my interviews and observations, it became clear that themes were also divided by social class. Each interviewee was asked “In general, what themes are addressed in Nicaraguan Theatre?” I received an array of answers; however, in specifying socio-political theatre, many of them were only aware of them by

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<sup>18</sup> *Translated:* “El crecimiento también se debe a que las organizaciones que trabajan con diversos temas (medio ambiente, violencia intrafamiliar, niñez, entre otros) han observado que el trabajo del teatro es un elemento importante para cumplir sus objetivos” (Espinoza, “El teatro en Nicaragua está creciendo” 2016).

association rather than direct involvement and/or observation. Nonetheless, some of the themes mentioned include, but are not limited to, sexual assault, gender and sexuality, femicides, etc. In relation to themes, an interviewee mentions that theatre “was not a ‘safe space’ ... it was a space of confrontation of art” (Male, 22)<sup>19</sup>. With this interpretation, in which I wholeheartedly agree, theatre has the liberation to expose “the good, the bad, and the ugly” (Male, 48). Theatre is a powerhouse to be reckoned with and the themes are critical as they reflect what is happening in respective societies.

Thus, the theatre’s ability to expose, criticize, and reflect is, in its essential form, a type of social change. As discussed throughout this section, the lack of accessibility and understanding of theatre has restricted the true power that theatre holds, especially in a society that has had many social issues in the past, as well as the present.

For those directly involved in the theatre, change happens from within: “the theater has always been a way of expressing oneself and a way of creating a change” (Female, 20). The method of expression has been closely tied to social change. For many of my interviewees, the ability to transform oneself into another has been a form of escapism: “You have the opportunity to play another person or another animal, whatever, anything, someone who is not you” (Female, 24)<sup>20</sup>. This form has allowed Nicaraguan actors to undergo a process of healing and liberation, which has and is necessary for their advancement in theatre.

Additionally, in advancing in theatre, in relation to the stagnation mentioned under this Historical section, theatre must advance in theatrical

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<sup>19</sup> *Translated*: “no era un 'safe space' ... era un espacio de confrontación de arte” (Male 20).

<sup>20</sup> *Translated*: “tienes las oportunidades de interpretar a otra persona o otro animal, lo que sea, cualquier cosa, alguien que no seas vos” (Female 20).

methods and approaches. As mentioned by two of my interviewees, Male 48 and Male 63, discipline is key for the continuation of a successful National Theatre identity. While Nicaragua lacks this identity due to the process of history, a construction of an identity could be a possibility with the emergence of a new disciplined generation willing to transform the theatre of today in Managua, Nicaragua.

The current companies/groups have the ability to create and sustain this transformation. Here is a list of some, not all, theatre companies/groups in Managua, Nicaragua:

1. La Comedia Nacional
2. La Escuela Teatro Justo Rufino Garay
3. Teatro Estudio de Nicaragua
4. Las Hijas del Maiz
5. Teatro Garabato
6. El Movimiento de Teatro Popular Sin Fronteras
7. TeUCA
8. Agora
9. Drugos
10. Los Wampiros
11. Guachipilín
12. Magdalenas
13. Showtime
14. Teyocoyani

Collaboratively, they can create what is long past due for Nicaraguan society.

Lastly, the emergence of a Nicaraguan Theatrical identity could radically transform thematic structures. As stated by an interviewee theatre “has been developing meanwhile the world has been developing, evolving” (Female, 20)<sup>21</sup>. Therefore, if the Nicaraguan population continues to stay in a sunken place, their theatre will only continue to suffer. However, I do not want to negate the process of healing for Nicaraguans - there needs to be an acknowledgment and

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<sup>21</sup> *Translated*: “se ha venido desarrollando mientras el mundo ha venido desarrollando, evolucionado” (Female 20).



understanding that Nicaraguans never had the space for healing regarding the revolution. Conversely, their culture is suffering, and without exception so is their theatre.

## Conclusion

*“there are many conceivable ways of telling a story, some of them known and some still to be discovered”*  
(Brecht, Davis, et al., p. 201).

This arts-based research intended to expose and create visibility to the current state of theatre occurring in Managua, Nicaragua with correlation to social change. Historically, Nicaraguan Theatre has had its course of action, yet the disruption of the revolution has affected its existing state – changing the complete presence of theatre.

With key theatrical practitioners and theorists, Bertolt Brecht, Santiago Garcia, and Augusto Boal, Nicaraguan Theatre was still able to flourish. However, the lack of acknowledgement and recognition of these individuals have hindered the necessary discipline of the upcoming theatrical personnel. This mere reference would hopefully inspire others to acknowledge and recognize those who have create and sustained a globalized theatre for others to use as they deem necessary in their respective countries.

Thematically, the state of Nicaragua continues to be divided; therefore, leaving theatre to reciprocate society and continue to flourish in a classist divide. While many themes are addressed throughout various theatrical works, society deviates into two spheres: conservatism and liberalism. Conservatism referencing themes of lightheartedness versus liberalism referencing socio-politically charged themes. This toxic divide has proven to be destructive to the progression of a National Theatrical identity.

Together, practitioners/theorists and themes, have exposed a social change that has prevailed in various ways. Theatre as a political act has exposed

and created visibility to that of society, whether pertaining to one's own country or not. Theatre has allowed people to know and understand themselves and their positionality to others. It has continuously questioned and forced reflection on audiences. This is internalized social change – it's attacking from within to question that which is external to, eventually, change.

While a National Theatrical identity for Nicaragua is absent and/or unknown, there is much happening, yet there is much to do to move forward. In accordance to recent events in Nicaragua, this politically charged atmosphere may allow a new surge of theatre to come into fruition. The grand performance is yet to come...

Therefore, this project serves to expose different approaches to theatre as well as critically important themes in Nicaraguan society, and the globalized world. While the creative project is fictional, it serves to tell a story – one not told in this manner nor in this light. Every story has power and this, this is one.

## Appendix

Proyecto Creativo:

*Luces apagadas. El tic tac del reloj llena la habitación. Sin movimiento. (10 segundos)*

### **ESCENA 1 - Apertura**

*Marcado empezando a acelerar. (5 segundos) Se enciende.*

*KARLA está sentada en la silla imitando el reloj en el sentido contrario a las agujas del reloj. Enfrente de KARLA, ELIA está tendida en el suelo imitando el reloj, en el sentido de las agujas del reloj. DAVID está frente a KARLA ya que está inmóvil con características expresivas de preocupación. MIGUEL está enfrente de DAVID, sentado con la cabeza inclinada como si estuviera contando el tiempo con los dedos.*

ELIA: ¿Qué estás esperando? Hazlo, HAZLO, ¡PEGAME!

DAVID: ¡No, por favor! ¡POR FAVOR NO TE VAYAS!

MIGUEL: Si solo ... si solo pudiera estar aquí con vos.

KARLA: Déjame en paz, salte, vete de aquí. ¡SALTE!

### **ESCENA 2 - PARTE 1**

*En el lado, MIGUEL está mirando lo que está sucediendo. Reacciona e intenta observar cada movimiento, moviéndose de un lado a otro; sin embargo, no puede ver claramente ni comprender lo que está sucediendo en el escenario.*

ELIA: *(susurrando)* Nadie me creería...

*DAVID y KARLA están hablando y caminando cuando ven a ELIA acostada en el suelo.*

**JUNTOS:**

DAVID: ¡Hola!

KARLA: ¡Oe!

KARLA: ¿Qué pasa?

ELIA: ¡Hola! Tanto tiempo sin vernos. Uhhh, nada... aquí no más... solo acostada. ¿Qué andan haciendo?

*DAVID intenta decir algo, pero KARLA le gana para hablar.*

KARLA: Andamos caminando, tomando un poco de aire. Hay tantas cosas ocurriendo últimamente.

DAVID: Pues eso que si... estábamos hablando y aclarando nuestras mentes.

ELIA: ¿Qué? ¿Cómo de qué?

KARLA: Bueno ... He estado teniendo estos dolores de cabeza realmente terribles otra vez y simplemente no se me parecen estar desapareciendo.

DAVID: Y pues yo me ando distraendo... mi hermana ha estado pensando en irse a Costa Rica. Ya sabes la situación... ella no puede encontrar trabajo aquí y simplemente no quiere estar aquí sin poder ayudar ... así que no sé lo que vaya a pasar.

ELIA: Ayyy ... lo siento. Y ahora, ¿hacia dónde van?

KARLA: Ya vamos de regreso a nuestras casas. ¿Quieres venir?

ELIA: Si, porfa ... no quiero caminar sola. Así también mantengo mi mente fuera de cosas.

*KARLA, DAVID y ELIA comienzan a caminar. KARLA solo vive a la vuelta de la esquina.*

DAVID: ¿Quieres hablar de lo que sucede?

ELIA: Uhhmm, no es quiera pero...hmm..., lo que quiero decir... está bien. Prefiero no hablar sobre... las cosas se mejorarán. El tiempo dirá, ¿verdad?

*(susurrando)* Tiempo... tiempo.

*DAVID y KARLA se miran entre ellos mismos, preocupados. KARLA cambia de tema.*

KARLA: ¿Han sabido algo de Miguel? No ha estado con nosotros, ni lo he visto.

DAVID: Ooooooh ... no te necesitas preocuparte por él. Él ha estado hablando con alguien. Creo que solo está tratando de sentir como van las cosas con la persona. Yo digo que está bien.

ELIA: *(riendo levemente)* Oh sí ... Sí recuerdo.

KARLA: Bueno, ojalá que sí sea así ... pues esta es mi casa. Supongo, ¿los veré más tarde, posiblemente?

DAVID: Sí, te enviaré un texto.

KARLA: De acuerdo. Nos vemos. Si necesitan algo, saben cómo encontrarme.

ELIA: *(con una leve sonrisa)* Adiós.

David: Ciao!

*ELIA y DAVID comienzan a dirigirse a sus casas. La casa de ELIA es la más cercana, por lo que caminan hacia su hogar. KARLA desaparece por un momento adentro de su casa, pero regresa afuera para encontrarse con MIGUEL.*

### **ESCENA 3 - PARTE 2**

*KARLA y MIGUEL se encuentran afuera de la casa de KARLA. ELIA y DAVID continúan caminando a casa sin notar a KARLA ni a MIGUEL.*

KARLA: ¡Necesito decirte algo!

MIGUEL: Ah, hola, a vos también. Estoy bien, gracias por preguntar.  
*(Snarky)* ¿Qué pasa?

KARLA: Elia no se mira bien, pero no nos quiere decir por qué. ¿Sabes lo que le está pasando?

MIGUEL: ¿Cómo crees que yo sepa? Ni siquiera hablo con vos... pero, ¿te contó David sobre su hermana?

KARLA: Sí, pobre David. Creo que lo está tomando mucho mejor de lo que esperaba.

MIGUEL: ¿Y eso por qué?

KARLA: Pues, se miraba realmente triste, pero no tuve la sensación de que algo estuviera mal. ¿Por qué me preguntas?

MIGUEL: Oh. ¿Él no te dijo?

*Aparte:*

*¿Por qué no le diría? Debería haberle dicho ... bueno, yo le diré de todos modos.*

David no está bien Karla. Él me llamó y probablemente fue la cosa más espantosa.

KARLA: ESPERA, espera, ¿estás hablando en serio? Se me parecía totalmente bien ... No entiendo. (*Karla mira su reloj y se da cuenta de la hora*).

*MIGUEL sigue caminando, mientras KARLA recuerda que debe estar en casa antes de que lleguen sus padres, así que correr a su casa. DAVID y ELIA llegan a la esquina opuesta. ELIA comienza a temblar al ver que MIGUEL se acerca. DAVID se sorprende de verlo.*

DAVID: ¡Oe Miguel! ¿Y este milagro? ¿Qué estás haciendo? No pues, mejor, ¿a dónde vas?

MIGUEL: Te estaba buscando. Solo quería saber si estabas bien...

ELIA: (*tímida*) Hola Miguel.

DAVID: Elia, ¿estás segur@ de que estás bien?

*MIGUEL le da una mirada a ELIA como para advertirle que no hable.*

ELIA: (*fuerte*) Estoy bien... sí, solo tengo mucho en mente.

MIGUEL: Bien, me alegra que estés bien, Elia. David, ¿qué andas haciendo?

DAVID: (*mira a Elia*) Voy a dejar a Elia a su casa y después nada. ¿Por qué, qué pasa?

MIGUEL: Nada, nada, pues lo más para pasar el tiempo.

DAVID: Ah está bien. Elia, ¿te importa si Miguel nos acompaña a tu casa?

ELIA: No, está bien. Uhm, solo vivo alrededor de la otra esquina.

MIGUEL: Genial ... vamos.

*DAVID, MIGUEL y ELIA se dirigen hacia la casa de ELIA. No toma tiempo a llegar. ELIA se despide.*

DAVID: Si necesitas algo, enviarme un texto o llámame, ¿está bien? ¿Nos vemos más tarde?

ELIA: (*sinceramente*) Sí ... gracias David. Los veo.

MIGUEL: Adiós Elia.

*ELIA desaparece*

DAVID: ¿Qué onda?

MIGUEL: Pues nada ... ¿qué le pasa a Elia?

DAVID: No sé... pero está actuando bastante extraño. ¿Viste cómo se estaba abrazando?

MIGUEL: Sí ...

DAVID: Sí, espero que esté bien ... De todos modos, ¿cómo estás tú y tu 'pareja'? ¿Algo nuevo?

MIGUEL: Uhm, pues supongo que no... pues si ya nos estamos viendo, pero ha sido un poco difícil. He estado tratando de distraerme.

DAVID: Oh, todos estamos así. Sé la sensación.

MIGUEL: Sí, lo sabes y debes dejar de mentirle a tus amigos.

*ELIA sale de su casa y se dirige a KARLA'S. Ni MIGUEL ni DAVID notan cuando se va.*

### **CONVERSACIONES SIMULTANEAMENTE**

DAVID: ¿Qué quieres decir con eso?

MIGUEL: Sabes exactamente lo que quiero decir David. Tienes que decirles que no has estado bien con tu hermana. Tu hermana se está yendo. Tú lo sabes. Ella es la única persona que tienes.

DAVID: Miguel, no necesito que me estés diciendo lo de mi vida. Sé lo que estoy pasando, pero estoy tratando de estar bien. No entiendes y nunca lo entenderás. ¿Por qué no te enfocas en tus malditas cosas?

MIGUEL: Solo estoy tratando de ser un amigo, David. ¿Por qué mentir? Está bien que te sientas emocional y dejes que otros entiendan por lo que estás pasando.

DAVID: ¡Déjame en paz!

*DAVID sale corriendo. MIGUEL se detiene por unos momentos y decide regresar a ELIA.*

ELIA: Karla, gracias a Dios, estás en casa.

KARLA: ¿Qué pasó? ¿Estás bien?

ELIA: Pues... lo que... yo ... tengo miedo, Karla.



KARLA: ¿Qué pasó?

ELIA: Uhm ya sabes... Miguel. Uhm la persona que ha estado viendo ... sí.

KARLA: *(asintiendo lentamente)*

ELIA: Yo he estado viendo a Miguel y uhm, simplemente no puedo hacer esto más Karla. *(Elia se levanta las mangas, hematomas, moretones por todos lados, temblores)*

KARLA: *(alterada)* Yo ... uh ... ¿qué? No entiendo. ¡Ese hijo de puta! ¿Cuándo te hizo esto?

*ELIA cae en los hombros de KARLA y llora. KARLA l@s consuela.*

#### **ESCENA 4: ¿QUÉ SUCEDIÓ?**

KARLA: A veces ... a veces, hay días como estos. Días donde todo está mal ... donde todo parece mal. El tiempo pasa y nos quedamos sentados aquí y creemos que las cosas mejorarán ... esperando que las cosas mejoren. Todo lo que puedes hacer es recordar, recordar lo que ha sucedido y lo que podría pasar ... sí ... recuerdo lo que sucedió ... y no puedo olvidarlo nunca ... olvídale. Eran esos días y noches que parecían para siempre, con la esperanza de que terminaran. Lo hizo ... pero no lo hizo. Lo veo suceder una y otra vez y no puedo olvidarlo. Todo ... todo fue destruido. ¿Que pasó? ¡¿Que pasó?! Desearía poder decírtelo, pero no puedo volver allí, no puedo ... Me despierto cada mañana con los sonidos, los sonidos de dolor. ¿Qué hice? ¿Donde fui? ¿Dónde estoy ahora? Necesito ayuda por favor.... Por favor, ayúdame. No. No, Karla, estás bien ... convenceste de que estás bien. Todo esta bien. Estaré bien. Si estoy bien. No. No, no lo eres. Sí. Sí, por favor ... déjame en paz. Solo quiero estar sola. *(susurrando y llorando)* ayúdame ... por favor ... ayuda.

MIGUEL: ¿Qué le dijiste a Karla?

ELIA: *(asustada)* ¿Qué? No le dije nada ...

MIGUEL: *(agresivamente)* Mentirosa ¿Por qué mientes?

ELIA: No soy ... solo le hablé sobre cosas.

MIGUEL: COSAS, ¿qué COSAS?

ELIA: cosas que no te conciernen ...

MIGUEL: ¿Qué dijiste?

ELIA: Dije ... Cosas que no ...

*MIGUEL levanta la mano para pegarle a ELIA, cuando DAVID entra y ve lo que está a punto de suceder, DAVID corre y detiene a MIGUEL*

DAVID: Miguel, ¡¿qué demonios?!

*MIGUEL está conmocionado e inmóvil. DAVID empuja a MIGUEL y se lleva a ELIA.*

DAVID: ¡Es mejor que nunca l@s vuelvas a tocar! Juro por Dios que si vuelves a ponerles la mano encima, te daré un putaso. No te atrevas acercarte. Eres un imbécil, maldito hijo de puta. (Para ELIA) ¿Estás bien? ¿Estás herid@?

*ELIA afirma para contestar a DAVID. MIGUEL corre y de repente tropieza mientras mira hacia atrás y piensa lo que acaba de pasar. KARLA viene hacia su dirección desde donde estaba corriendo. KARLA está furiosa.*

KARLA: ¡Piérdete, hijo de puta! (*enojadísima*) Te juro que yo mismo te cortaré las bolas.

*MIGUEL se escurre y huye.*

KARLA: ¡Ese maldito imbécil! ¿Estás bien?

ELIA: Sí ... (*asustada*)

DAVID: Ven siéntate ... aquí ... aquí.

KARLA: David ... Sé que este no es el momento adecuado, pero solo quería decirte que lo siento por tu hermana. Me hablo y me aviso que se iba. Se fue hace una hora y me dijo que te de esto.

*DAVID se sorprende y agarra la carta.*

CARTA:

*David,*

*No tienes idea de lo difícil que es escribirte esto. Sé que esto no te hará sentir mejor, solo quería que supieras que te quiero mucho. Sé que quieres que me quede, pero sabes que no puedo. Mamá y papá necesitan que ayude. Sabes que no puedo quedarme aquí. No sé cuánto tiempo pasará hasta que podamos volver a vernos, pero tu sabes que siempre seré tu hermana mayor y siempre estaré en tu corazón. Tienes que ser fuerte. Puedes hacerlo. Y recuerda que*

*tus amigos siempre estarán allí. Tienes suerte, David. Mantenlos cerca y mantenlos seguros ya que sé qué harás lo mismo con nuestros padres. Te amo David.*

*Con Amor,*

*Rosario*

*DAVID está llorando. ELIA está sacudida por lo que pasó antes, pero también con respecto a la carta. KARLA está en medio de ambos y trata de consolarlos a los dos.*

KARLA: (susurrando) El tiempo es una maldición ... una puta maldición.

### **ESCENA FINAL - ¿OTRA VEZ?**

ELIA: ¿Qué estás esperando? Hazlo, HAZLO, ¡PEGAME!

DAVID: ¡No, por favor! ¡POR FAVOR NO TE VAYAS!

MIGUEL: Si solo ... si solo pudiera estar aquí con vos.

KARLA: Déjame en paz, salte, vete de aquí. ¡SALTE!

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