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Theatre: Publicity and the Body

by Alberto Esteves

A public avid for comedy filled the Tapia last night to witness the fourth offering of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture's Third Theatre Festival, "Cielo Caído" by Emilio S. Belaval. A light drama dealing with the commercialization of bodies for publicity, Mr. Belaval's work poses the problem of artists having to prostitute their art for the sake of money. The setting, an advertising agency dedicated to the baser forms of publicity, provides a frame for the different passions which explode during the course of the evening as well as several amusing situations which the author did not see fit to exploit beyond obtaining the merest snicker from public.

In fact, I have a feeling the public laughed in a few places where it was not supposed to. In any case, Mr. Belaval's concept of a degenerating society comes across and so do his views on the cult of the body inherent to our society not being all it's supposed to be, since it precludes the existence of a soul.

In the lead role of a soft-hearted secretary in love with the boss, Josefina del Mar renders an excellent performance in spite of the fact that she filled the role on very short notice. The same, I'm afraid, can't be said for Rafael Saldaña; he plays the artist, now turned sour, who bosses the agency. His delivery is muffled hard to understand and his portrayal

without depth: he plays a heartless business man without proving the reason for his heartlessness.

Marimerche Romero, Myrna Casenave and Mercedes Sicardo are competent as models whose life depends on their figures, and José Luis Marro is excellent as a shady character who seeks relief from a misshapen body by relying on trick photography.

Angel F. Rivera's direction was effective except for a few times when incidental music and intentional off-stage noise interfered with the action to such an extent that the actors could not be heard. The set designed by Tony Cataldo, was mediocre, and the lights, by the director, incomprehensible.