

EL OBSERVADOR

Defending Rights of the Marginalized

Bilingual play at Milagro

From the mountains of Mexico's southeast, a small band of Zapatistas made their first strike at the stroke of midnight on New Year's Eve 1994. With the help of the Internet, news media and hundreds of international nongovernmental organizations, they struggled for indigenous rights, territorial rights, women's rights, everything for every oppressed group that is willing to stand up for their beliefs.

The "Zapatista" story is told in the latest bilingual play by Milagro Theatre, 525 S.E. Stark. Gilberto Martin del Campo (originally from Mexico) plays the role of Marcos. Omar Vargas (originally from Ecuador), an eight-year veteran of the Milagro troupe, plays the role of his principal Mayan cultural advisor, Don Antonio. Honduran native Jorge Madrid, from Miracle's Teatro Español Company, plays another Zapatista leader.

In conjunction with the closing performances on Saturday,



PHOTO BY STEPHANIE DAVIS
Gilberto Martin del Campo portrays Subcomandante Marcos in "Zapatista," the new bilingual play onstage at Milagro Theatre, 525 S.E. Stark St.

Jan. 19, Miracle Theatre Group will host "Our Word is Our Weapon," an open forum led by local community activists about the influence of the work of the Zapatistas in Latino communities

in Oregon. Issues related to indigenous rights, language and culture will be covered by activists from the Oaxaca Coalition, area Latino artists and Latino radio-program or-

ganizers. The forum is free and open to the public and will be held at the theater from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. following a 2 p.m. matinee of "Zapatista." For more details, call 503-236-7253 or visit milagro.org.

Immigration Debate Troubles Hispanics

Survey shows worries and discrimination

(AP) — Most Hispanics say the immigration debate and Congress' failure to overhaul immigration laws has hurt them, and many fear deportation for themselves, a relative or close friend, a recent poll found.

The survey, conducted by the nonpartisan Pew Hispanic Center, found that Hispanics in the United States are generally satisfied with their own lives and optimistic about the future. Yet many are wary of negative reactions prompted by heightened attention to illegal immigration in Congress and the presi-

dential campaign trail, and they increasingly cite discrimination as a problem.

Sixty-four percent said the immigration debate and Congress' failure to enact bills revamping immigration laws has made life harder for Hispanics. Just more than half said the increased attention to immigration has hurt them personally, ranging from 12 percent who said they are having more trouble keeping a job to 24 percent who said they are less likely to travel outside the U.S.

A minority — 41 percent — said they or someone close has experienced discrimination in the past five years. That proportion has grown since 31 percent said so in a 2002 poll by Pew and the Kaiser

Family Foundation. Roughly eight in 10 say they think discrimination against Hispanics is a problem in schools, the workplace and when it comes to success in the United States, with an increase in those citing school discrimination since 2002 and the other numbers changing little.

"Hispanics in this country are feeling vulnerable in the current political and policy environment," said Paul Taylor, acting director of the center.

There are about 47 million Hispanics in the U.S., about 16 percent of the country's population. President Bush and Congress have flopped in their efforts to enact legislation dealing with the country's 12 million illegal immi-

grants — which include many Hispanics — but increased deportations and tighter limits on government benefits have put pressure on the Hispanic community.

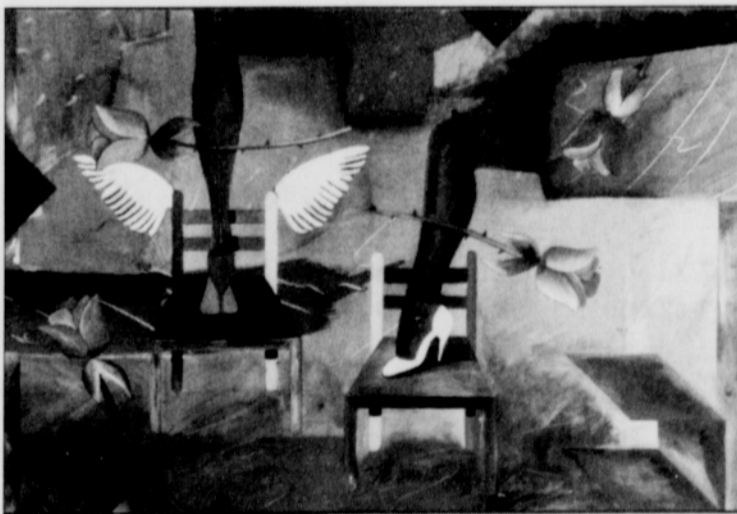
The issue has also become a major one in the 2008 presidential campaign, particularly with Republican candidates who have stressed how they would crack down on a problem widely cited by GOP voters as a top concern. The poll found 53 percent of Hispanics said they worry about deportation for themselves, a relative or close friend, including 33 percent who said they worry about it a lot. While foreign-born Hispanics were most anxious, even one in three native-born Hispanics — who are all U.S. citizens — expressed worry.

On NE ALBERTA ST Street

Onda Gallery, 2215 N.E. Alberta St., is hosting an exhibit this month of visionary paintings by Guillermo Martinez Garrido and sculptures of recycled materials by Samir Sankari.

The exhibit is Onda's second show presenting paintings by Martinez Garrido, a Mexican painter who died in 2005. The featured works are more representational and figurative than the artist's abstracts shown in April 2006.

Paintings, Sculptures at Onda



"Te presto mi silla" by Guillermo Martinez Garrido.

During his career, Martinez exhibited in Mexico City at the Palace of Fine Arts, the National Institute of Fine Arts, Gallery Picasso and Gallery Margarita Herrera among others.

Samir Sankari uses scrap metal and other materials and shapes them into finished abstract sculptures. The finished pieces sometimes allude to plants or animals, other times they resemble the human figure.

He has practiced his art in the community, placing sculptures in the neighborhood and public places for the enjoyment of many.

Driver's License Rules to Change

(AP) — Gov. Ted Kulongoski has rejected calls from Hispanic groups to delay implementing tougher state rules for obtaining a driver's license.

Last month, the groups submitted 5,000 petition signatures to the Driver and Motor Vehicle Services Division in Salem, asking for a one-year delay.

Ramon Ramirez, the president of the Northwest Treeplanters and Farmworkers United, the state's largest farmworker union, accused Kulongoski of not valuing the state's Latino immigrant community.

"What the governor is basically saying to immigrants is, 'I don't care about you, and I don't care about your rights,'" Ramirez said.

Kulongoski signed the executive order in November. It requires, after Feb. 4, that applicants show proof of legal residence to get an Oregon license.

Oregon is one of only a handful of states that does not require proof of legal residence for a license. Kulongoski has said all Oregon driver's licenses might become in-

valid as ID for boarding commercial airliners or visiting federal office buildings if the state doesn't comply with federal requirements insisting on proof of legal residence for a license.

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Major	10 - 12
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