Guide to the Hank Tavera papers M1118

Michelle Morton
Department of Special Collections and University Archives
2007
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URL: http://library.stanford.edu/spc
Language of Material: English
Contributing Institution: Department of Special Collections and University Archives
Title: Hank Tavera papers
source: Tavera, Hank
creator: Tavera, Hank
Identifier/Call Number: M1118
Physical Description: 12.5 Linear Feet (16 manuscript boxes, 8 flat boxes)
Date (inclusive): circa 1980-1999
Abstract: The Hank Tavera Papers include files related to his work as an actor and director, a gay activist, a member of TENAZ (Teatro Nacional de Aztlán), a journalist and editor, and an organizer for the 11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival in San Francisco.
Special Collections materials are stored offsite and must be paged 36 hours in advance.
Language of Material: Materials in English and Spanish.
Processed
November 2007 by Michelle Morton

Biography
Hank M. Tavera, a performer, director, cultural worker, counselor, and activist in the Chicano and Gay and Lesbian movements, was born in East Los Angeles. He lived in Santa Barbara from 1976 to 1979, then he moved to the Mission District in San Francisco, where he remained until his death in 2000. Tavera performed in Brujerías, Hijos 1 and 2, and La Victima with Teatro de la Esperanza (Santa Barbara) and directed The Leash and Reunion with Teatro Gusto (San Francisco). He also published and edited columns on theater for the newspapers TENAZ Talks Teatro and El Tecomote. Tavera served as chairperson and board member of TENAZ, co-coordinated the 11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival, directed the AIDS Theater Festival and the Performing Arts Show of Latino/a GLBT Artists, and served on the California Theater Council. In addition to his theater work, Tavera worked as a high school and community college teacher, a counselor and an AIDS intervention specialist. He founded and directed La Casa Counseling Services, the Third World Counselors Association of California, and the Mission/Southeast Adolescent Day Treatment Center of Children’s Hospital of San Francisco. He was head of Client Services at the San Francisco Aids Foundation and co-chair of the Third World AIDS Advisory. Tavera also co-founded LLEGO, Latino/a Lesbian and Gay organization. AGUILAS (Asamblea Gay Unida Impactando Latinos a Superarse) has established a Hank Tavera Community Service Award, and the Mission Cultural Center has an Annual Hank Tavera Performance Show in his honor.

Tavera was a key participant in the Chicano Theater Movement, a grassroots, guerrilla organization closely associated with the Chicano Movement. In 1965 Luis Valdez left the San Francisco Mime Troup to found Teatro Campesino and work with César Chávez and the United Farm Workers. Made up largely of students and workers, Teatro Campesino drew on the vaudeville and carpas tradition of Hispanic Theater in the United States to dramatize political questions and raise the consciousness of their audiences. Teatro Nacional de Aztlan (TENAZ), a network of theater groups, was founded in 1969 by Teatro Campesino, Teatro de la Esperanza, and Los Mascarones of Mexico. TENAZ aimed to nourish and coordinate the Chicano Theater Movement, sponsoring theater festivals, holding seminars and workshops, and producing a newsletter, TENAZ Talks Teatro. Hundreds of theater companies in the U.S. and Latin American belonged to TENAZ in its heyday. The TENAZ Manifesto, produced during the 4th Chicano Theater Festival in San Jose, California in 1973, articulates its artistic, ideological, and organizational goals:

"El Teatro Chicano was born of the social struggle of la Raza; given birth by trabajadores who remain trabajadores. Este es un renacimiento: de lo Viejo sale lo Nuevo. Teatro es el espejo y el espíritu del Movimiento. Es el espejo de Tezcatlîpoca que ilumina el evil we are surrounded by; es el Espíritu de Quetzalcoatl en que hallamos la bondad y la Esperanza de la Raza. Teatro es la voz de los barrios, de la comunidad, de los de abajo, de los humildes, de los rasquachis."

"Los Trabajadores del Teatro Nacional de Aztlan are committed to a way of Life/Struggle ayudandole a la gente a entender el porqué de sus problemas sociales individuales and to search for solutions. Que sea nuestro Teatro el arco iris humano: let it create Teatro para toda la palomía—para niños, jóvenes, viejos, mujeres, estudiantes, obreros, campesinos y hasta para los tapados. Debe nutrirse de las raíces culturales de nuestros antepasados para sembrar semillas de liberación en el presente y para cosechar en el futuro la Victoria de nuestros pueblos."

"La organización de TENAZ, which will work with all oppressed peoples, must develop a humane revolutionary alternative to commercial theater and mass media. It is also necessary that we work and unite with all theaters struggling for liberation donde quiera, particularly en Latinoamerica. It should serve as a tool in the Life/Struggle of la Raza by developing Teatros as community organizations."
In the 1970s and 1980s, TENAZ offered seminars, produced publications, provided technical and design assistance, helped with fundraising and touring assistance, coordinated publicity and communication, and organized theater festivals throughout the United States and Mexico. The 1980s saw the professionalization of the Chicano theater movement. Many theater groups set down roots, established repertory theaters and received funding from organizations such as the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Ford Foundation. TENAZ disbanded in the mid-1980s.

Throughout the 1970s TENAZ was instrumental in the expansion, diversification, and maturation of the Chicano Theater Movement. During the 1974 5th International Chicano Theater Festival in Mexico City, sponsored by TENAZ and the Mexican theater organization CLETA (Centro de Experimentación Libre y Artística), there was a split between groups such as Valdez’s Teatro Campesino focusing on spiritual, mythical, and historical aspects of Chicano identity, and groups that insisted on more immediate material and explicitly political themes. As a result Valdez and Teatro Campesino left TENAZ and Teatro de la Esperanza took up leadership.

Scope and Contents

The Hank Tavera Papers include files related to his work as an actor and director, a member of TENAZ, a journalist and editor, and an organizer for the 11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival. Formats include correspondence, clippings and newspapers, column drafts, memoranda, minutes, play manuscripts, photos, playbills and programs, subject files on theater groups. It is arranged in four series:

Series I.
Tavera Personal Papers

Series II.
TENAZ Administrative Files

Series III.
TENAZ Talks Teatro

Series IV.
11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festivals

Acquisition Information

Accession number 2000-064. The papers of Hank Tavera were purchased by Stanford University by the Dept. of Special Collections from Hank Tavera in March, 2000.

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Subjects and Indexing Terms

Theater -- Political aspects
Street theater
Mexican Americans
Chicano theater
Mexican American theater
Mexican American theater -- History
Mexican American art -- California.
Mexican American theater -- California
Teatro Gusto
Teatro Campesino (Organization)
Teatro de la Esperanza
Tavera, Hank
Pomo, Edgar
Tavera, Hank
Siguenza, Herbert
Series I. Tavera Personal Papers

Scope and Contents
This series contains teaching materials and play manuscripts, notes, and reviews relating to the plays La Victima and Reunion. Reunion is thought to be the first Chicano theater piece to directly address homosexuality and homophobia in the Chicano community. Written by University of California Berkeley student Edgar Pomo (B.A. English, 1983), Reunion was performed by Teatro Gusto and directed by Hank Tavera at the Capp Street Playhouse in 1983. Reunion materials include play manuscripts, direction and production notes, stage design painting and sketches, a guestbook, correspondence, clippings, and printed materials related to gay and lesbian organizations and events in the Bay Area. Tavera's teaching materials include syllabi from Chicano studies courses at Santa Barbara City College (1975-1977), readings, and the by-laws of the Association of Mexican American Educators.

- box 1
  - La Victima, annotated typescript draft
- box 1
  - Reunion, annotated typescript drafts
- flat-box 2
  - Reunion, guestbook
- flat-box 3
  - Reunion, stage design paintings
  - Posters removed from series 2-4: "La cita" (series 2); "El canto de la cigarra" (series 2); "ASUC MECHA cino de mayo" (series 3); "AMAE ¡El grito!" (series 3); "Soldado raza" (series 3); Posters, 11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival (series 4); Posters with notes on back, 13th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival (series 4)
- box 4
  - Reunion, photos
  - Reunion, notes (3 folders)
  - Reunion, clippings
- box 5
  - Teaching materials (3 folders)
  - Association of Mexican American Educators
  - Student publications
  - Miscellaneous

Series II. TENAZ Administrative Files

Scope and Contents
This series includes board agendas, by-laws, minutes, and resolutions; clippings; correspondence; materials related to International Chicano Latino Theater Festivals; materials related to the establishment of a TENAZ archive; materials related to various theater groups; newsletters; plays and essays; playbills and posters. Note that TENAZ materials also appear in Series III, TENAZ Talks Teatro.

- box 7
  - TENAZ, board, 1980-1986
- box 8
  - TENAZ, clippings
  - TENAZ, correspondence, 1979-1985
  - TENAZ, Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center
  - TENAZ, miscellaneous
  - TENAZ, newsletters, various, 1979-1985
  - TENAZ, photos
  - TENAZ, plays and essays
  - TENAZ, Stanford Library
  - TENAZ, Teatro de la Esperanza
  - TENAZ, Teatro de la Unidad
  - TENAZ, Teatro Escambray
  - TENAZ, theater playbills and posters
- flat-box 3
  - Posters, “La cita” and “El canto de la cigarra”
Series III. TENAZ Talks Teatro

Scope and Contents

This series contains materials related to Tavera's work as editor of TENAZ Talks Teatro (founded in 1976; Tavera served as editor 1982-1986) and his column, "Puro Teatro," in El Tecolote, as well as newspapers and magazines collected by Tavera. TENAZ Talks Teatro materials include correspondence from various theater groups, information on TENAZ sponsored events, political flyers and essays, funding information, and subject files on theater groups and topics. Note that in addition to the photos file photos appear throughout the subject files. El Tecolote, a revival of a 19th-century Spanish-language newspaper of the same name, included a bi-monthly literary supplement, Revista Literaria El Tecolote (first issue April, 1980) with Tavera's column "Puro Teatro." Newspapers and magazines in this series include publications related to theater, arts, politics, and the Spanish-speaking and gay and lesbian community in California. For most newspapers and magazines there are 1-4 issues, but there are more extensive runs of ¡AHA!, El Observador, El Tecolote, and TENAZ Talks Teatro. Note that TENAZ Talks Teatro materials also appear in Series II, TENAZ Administrative Files.

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TENAZ Talks Teatro, photos (2 folders)
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, layout
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, contracts
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, funding
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, grant writing
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, mailing lists
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, Puro Teatro column
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, copy, April 1983
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, drafts and correspondence, 1981
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, drafts and correspondence, 1986
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, drafts and correspondence, 1987-1993
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, drafts and correspondence, no date
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, clippings, 1984
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, clippings, 1971-1993
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, catalogs
box 11  
TENAZ Talks Teatro, miscellaneous (2 folders)
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, plays and criticism, (2 folders)
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, Aztlián Dance Co.
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, Culture Clash
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, Grupo Cultural Zero
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, The Guadalupe Cultural Arts Center, photos
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, Nixtayolero Theatre Group
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, Paul Rodriguez
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, San Francisco Mime Troupe
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, San Francisco Mime Troupe, photos
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TENAZ Talks Teatro, San Jose Repertory Company
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, Teatro Gusto</td>
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, UCB MECHA Cinco de Mayo</td>
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, Venezuela</td>
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, Wall Flower Order</td>
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, Wilson Pico</td>
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, Women in Film and Theatre</td>
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, ¡AHAI!, 1984-1989 (3 folders)</td>
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<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, The New World, 1979-1980 (2 folders)</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro, Nosotros, 1983-1987</td>
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<td>El Calendario Chicano (1972, 1974, 1976)</td>
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<td>San Francisco Literary Calendar (1988)</td>
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<td>Art Beat (1980)</td>
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<td>Bay Guardian (1980)</td>
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<td>La Luz (1972, 1974)</td>
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<td>Leisure (1984)</td>
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<td>El Observador (various, 1984-1985)</td>
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<td>El Popo (1971)</td>
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<td>Santa Barbara News and Review (1975, 1979)</td>
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<td>El Tecolote (various, 1979-1984)</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>TENAZ Talks Teatro (various, 1982-1986)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Posters, &quot;ASUC MECHA cinco de mayo,&quot; &quot;AMAE ¡El grito!,&quot; &quot;Soldado raza&quot;</td>
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Series IV. 11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festivals

Scope and Contents
TENAZ held annual, and later bi-annual, theater festivals starting in 1970. In addition to performances, festivals included meetings, critique sessions, workshops, and seminars. The 11th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival took place in San Francisco, September 11-20, 1981. The festival was hosted by Teatro Latino, Teatro Gusto, and the Mission Cultural Center. Participating theater groups included Teatro Urbano (Los Angeles, Calif.), La Compania de Teatro Infantería Teatral Veracruzana (Mexico), Teatro Raices (Oxnard), Teatro Taller de Tecolote (Mexico), Paso de Oso (Mexico), Teatro Universitario (Mexico), International Mime Theatre (Colombia), Teatro la Mama (Colombia), Teatro Con Ganas (Texas), Teatro Para Obreros (Venezuela), The Bear Republic Theater (Santa Cruz, Calif.), Grupo Zero (Mexico), The San Francisco Mime Troupe, and Teatro de la Esperanza (Santa Barbara, Calif.), among others. This series contains the administrative, instructional, and media files of the festival organizers. Materials in these files include agendas, articles, budgets, committees, contact lists, correspondence, fliers, minutes, memoranda, notes, photographs, press materials, programs, reports, schedules, and workshop materials.

box 18  International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival, 1977
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box 18  International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival, 1981 (5 folders)
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box 19  International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival, 1982
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box 20  International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival, actors, 1981
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box 21  International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival, workshops, 1981
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flat-box 3  Posters with notes on back, 13th International Chicano Latino Teatro Festival