

3 One-Act Spanish Plays Draw An Enthusiastic Following Here

The green leafery of the sidewalk maple brushing the marquee of the Theater East, at 211 East 60th Street, attested to the fresh healthiness inside, where the Greenwich Mews Spanish Theater group opened a program of three one-act, Spanish-language plays Friday night. Tentatively slated for week-end performances through six weeks, and enthusiastically followed by a predominantly Spanish-speaking audience, the contrasting playlets made for an altogether satisfying, professional evening, even with aid.

First, from Spain, came Miguel De Unamuno's "La Difunta" ("The Dead Wife"), a neat, old-fashioned comedy that spoke for itself, snugly directed by Luz Castanos and just as snugly personified by Emilio Rodriguez, Inez Ivette Perez and Lolina Gutierrez. With stylistic, shadowy tenderness, Miss Castanos also staged Carlos Solorzano's "Cruce De

Vias" ("The Railroad Crossing"), from Mexico—and, spiritually at least, via Tennessee Williams. As a lovelorn youth and a wraithlike woman, Tony Diaz and Gay Darlene Bidart were excellent.

But the dazzler was Nelson Dorr's "Las Pericas" ("The Parrots"), in which four Sister recluses, the Madwomen of Havana, wage chattering, comical and volcanic intramural war. (Forget the unseen commotion next door, detailed in the synopsis.) The expressive faces of the yowling quartet are marvelous — the gaunt Shelly Pearson, button-eyed Miriam Cruz, carrot-topped Milagros Horrego and porcelain Linda Monteiro.

Rene Buch has beautifully directed this colorful splash of pure, inspired lunacy, perfectly exemplified by Zita Gomez De Kanelba's vivid Easter Egg backdrop. The Cuban playwright wrote it when he was 14, which says volumes in any language.

HOWARD THOMPSON.