

# Theater Festival Culminates in Parade, Puppets, Dancing



Bulletin Photos by Jeff Evans, Staff Photographer

By JIM STIDFOLE  
Bulletin Staff Writer

NEW LONDON — I had spent seven full days with these people, writers, actors, directors and producers from all over the Western Hemisphere.

They had been brought together by the Theater of Latin America (TOLA) for the first Hemispheric Theater Festival because even as those in the

United States knew little about Latin American theater, Latin Americans knew little about the theater of their neighboring countries.

Many had spent nearly a month together, a week of performances at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., two more at various places in New York City, and finally this incredible week of workshops and discussions at the

Eugene O'Neill Theater in Waterford and at Connecticut College in New London.

For many, Saturday would be the last day of being together. What better way to celebrate the culmination of this time than with a theater parade starting on Blinman Street near the Spanish American Cultural Organization and ending at the monument on Captain's Walk in front of Union Station.

I had started for the parade at 2 p.m., traveling by bicycle with my family from Quaker Hill. It poured and we got soaked in the warm summer rain that fell so hard at times that we could barely see. But on Blinman Street it was yet dry and the warmth there dried our clothes. Peruvian Director Alonso Alegria took my son aside and dried him off.

Out of the Bread and Puppet Theater bus came banners, huge rod puppets,

enormous masks, a 30-foot dragon, a baby dragon, and Bread and Puppet director Peter Schumann on twelve-foot stilts.

As the clouds darkened the sky, one actor ran to the head of the parade shouting at the clouds to go away.

Feeling honored at having been asked to join the parade, I took my place in the larger dragon.

And it started. Down Blinman to Bank Street and up through the construction torn street winding back and forth, the dragon opening its huge mouth, the children in the body growling at the occupants of the cars that had to wait for us to go by.

An ambulance came up Bank Street and, seeing us, made a quick detour up a side street.

Quick glances out from under the dragon revealed Schumann on his stilts dancing up the street in front of the

small Bread and Puppet band. Behind trailed the rod puppets, nearly 20 feet tall surrounded by a sea of banners displaying flowers and flowers and flowers.

At the monument there was dancing. Brazilians with Canadians, Argentinians with Chileans, Mexicans with Jamaicans. An actor from Ecuador held a child from Montville on his shoulders so she could see. A Brazilian actress did the same for a boy from Blinman Street.

And then came the puppet show, not with small puppets, but with the huge rod puppets and sporting full body costumes with outsized masks.

They had a peace conference, not for a small peace but a huge peace for everyone.

They told the story of the happy washerwoman whose husband death and went gladly into his company.

They told the story of the sad washerwoman whose husband met at his door some men who took him away. They took the flowers from the garden. They took the house. They even took the washerwoman's watering can.

There were other women who had lost their husbands. Some had lost their fathers. Others had lost their sons and none could find their men.

But the women found each other. They went to the center of the village. They gathered closely together. And they danced.

Some in the audience applauded the truth here. Some cried for it. Many held each other.

And it was over.

On Sunday and Monday, the nearly 200 who attended this week of festival will return to their separate countries, to their separate stages, to act out the plays of their realities.

## Rain Forces Postponement

BROOKLYN — Rain cancelled last evening's outdoor Summer Pops '79 concert, An Evening with Tchaikovsky. All advance tickets will be honored on the rescheduled date, July 3.

The first in a series of three, the Tchaikovsky celebration is to feature Daniel Parker conducting the Connecticut Pops with Diane Merck.

Tickets are still available and may also be purchased at the gate.

The Tchaikovsky concert begins at 8 p.m. at the Brookland Fair Grounds. David McKay, the concert producer, says the grounds open at 6 p.m. and urges those attending to bring "a picnic, a blanket and a friend."

## NARES Miffed at NEAR, But Will Negotiate

By ANTAR MAKANSI  
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BROOKLYN — NARES representatives are willing to continue negotiating toward a single education service center for this area, but refuses to recognize NEAR.

Still stung by what they consider an 11th-hour sneak attack by NEAR, officials from the Northeastern Area Regional Education Service (NARES) center agreed only to accept the state's proposal for granting their center provisional approval and the corresponding funds.

At Thursday's meeting the board unanimously tabled all other con-

centers, but NARES felt NEAR "already torpedoed" this by not being faithful with the first round of talks conducted by a joint committee.

NARES Board Chairman Boyd Christofori explained, "The main problem is not the effort of a combined center. It is the very fact that we were shunted aside by NEAR, and I cannot see how you can say this is a fair proposal."

The state school board, at its June 6 meeting, had instructed NEAR and NARES to appoint three members each to serve on a committee with two state board members. Department of Education re-

And NEAR officials complained that they were not represented equally because NARES would be approved as a center, but not NEAR. NEAR felt it wasn't on an equal footing with NARES and thus rejected the joint committee report.

Consequently, NEAR officials contacted Dopp the night before the state board meeting to request another proposed proposal. NARES officials were not notified of the meeting until an hour before it met, and they are convinced they were not represented

four years in this rural area and that the regulations were developed last year.

Sergi, who told the board that NARES "left a very strong impression with the state board June 6," promised to relate NARES' feelings back to Shedd.

NARES, despite rejecting negotiations with

an approved NEAR, asserted that it "will never refuse negotiations with anyone toward a single center."

Indeed, the board reappointed its three committee members to continue negotiations as they arise. They hope to have a report for the next state board meeting on August 8.

## Area Superintendents