

Troupe entertains elementary students

By **THERESA VASQUEZ**
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The El Paseo Arts Foundation helped entertain and educate over 600 students at Garriga Elementary late last week as the students enjoyed a live performance by Artes De La Rosa from Fort Worth.

Mary Hart, Chairman of The El Paseo Arts Foundation, said, "We would like this (the Laguna Madra Area) to become an arts destination." Darla Gilchrist, vice-chairman of The El Paseo Arts Foundation added, "One of the challenges is the lack of a venue, and we rely on the generosity of various in-kind donations to include the South Padre Island Convention Center, and various hotels in the area".

Gilchrist collaborated with the non-profit organization Artes De La Rosa, which is

focused on bringing bilingual programs suitable for students K-3rd grade, and contacted the group to arrange for it to Garriga Elementary School, and perform for both Garriga, and Derry Elementary students; the students from Derry Elementary School were bussed in for the one performance.

The performance was possible through the generosity of the sponsors, and a partial grant from the Texas Commission of the Arts.

In 2004, Robert Bosquez (leader of the quartet) recognized, "a need in our community, within Fort Worth, for outreach of the arts at the time."

He recalled that most of the outreach was limited to specific neighborhood, and Bosquez felt the need to branch out so the quartet collaborated and produced The Green Rabbit, (or conejo verde, a one hour



ARTES DE LA ROSA TROUPE

interactive bilingual performance) in their local neighborhoods.

Soon after, they expanded to travel along Texas with their performance and eventually the quartet of Artes De La Rosa became a traveling performance group among locations to include: the Smokey Mountains, Tennessee, Kansas

City, El Paso, Austin, Houston, and this will mark their inception, of sorts, in the Rio Grande Valley.

The quartet laughs about yearning to come back to the Lower Valley, as Cleghorn (one of the performing artists) is reminiscent of her youth as a Harlingen native.

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The performance is bilingual, and interactive, as Bosquez explains, "It's always great to have the audience, but even better when you're able to get the kids involved with the process."

Although the quartet has various, alternative/individual, ventures throughout the year, they come together for their performance dedicated to youth exposure of the arts. The Artes De La Rosa performers consist of four performance artists: Rob Bosquez, Annie Campbell, Ivan Jasso, and Stephanie Cleghorn. One a creative arts/writing teacher and others assist with theatre, and performance at different levels of

the arts, they have all, at one time or another, participated in the summer camp held at the Rose Marine Theater in Fort Worth, Texas.

Their plans for the future are youth classes, which encompass a rendition of little red riding hood called "rojo", and they also have another project in the works regarding "Big Foot".

Bosquez said their participation with bilingual audiences has been consistent, but their response from neighborhoods without knowledge of the Spanish language is impressive, explaining that much of their works is highly expressive/interpretive, and language is not necessarily

of importance to convey a message. The group insists, "The importance remains that, "language and ethnicity is not important to appreciate the arts, this is an art for everyone! Get out there, and don't be afraid to share, just do as much as you can!"

Bosquez believes, "stories are timeless!" and Cleghorn added, "this is an art for everyone, male/female/any age group."

The season for the El Paseo Arts Foundation runs from September – May. For more information, contact Mary Hart or Darla Gilchrist at (956) 943-4700, or log onto their website at <http://elpaseosouthpadre.com>.