

Language of Laughter

Semana de Cultura continues with a Latin-themed comedy show

By Josh Bohling
The Shorthorn News Editor

Hispanic comedian Ernie G surveyed the half-filled Rosebud Theatre.

"Did all of you tell your cousins about this?" he asked the predominately Latino audience. "You must not have, because if you had, this place would be packed."

The comedian, along with his group, the Picante Comedy Fiesta, made a stop in the Rosebud Theatre on Tuesday night. The show was part of Semana de Cultura, a week-long celebration of Hispanic heritage hosted by the Center for Multicultural Cooperation.

"This is a new concept," said Casey Gonzales, assistant dean of students and director of the center. "We've tried comedy acts in the past, but they were always local."

The Los Angeles-based comedian enjoyed ribbing individuals in the crowd.

"You people in the back, don't think you're getting off," he said after talking to audience members in the front rows. "I got something for all of ya."

The small audience erupted in laughter again and again as the comedian, and later two other members of his troupe, did their Hispanic-themed routine.

"He really has us down," said biology junior Angela Rico, who is also Hispanic.

Rico said she had seen the comedian perform on Spanish television.

Ernie G said he started the group two years ago and has seen tremendous demand, especially since he performed in an English-language comedy show on Galavision, a Spanish television station.

"There's really a niche here," he said. "Hispanic audiences are hungry for it."



The Shorthorn: Andrew Campbell
Students laugh as comedian Ernie G entertains them during the Picante Comedy Fiesta on Tuesday night in the Rosebud Theatre.

Elvia Soltero, a history senior who is directing events in this year's Semana de Cultura, said she and friends went to see Hispanic comedian George Lopez in December at NextStage and realized it would be a great to have a comedy show associated with Semana de Cultura.

"I had seen him [Ernie G] perform with George Lopez in the past, and knew him from TV, so we just found his Web site and asked," she said.

Tickets were \$2 for students, \$5 for non-students. Soltero said the proceeds from ticket sales wouldn't have paid for the cost of the group, which was \$3,500 including airfare to bring them here, even if the event had sold out the 480-seat Rosebud Theatre.

Gonzales said there was never any thought about off-setting cost. He said funds from the Center for Multicultural Cooperation and outside assistance from groups such as the Arlington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce helped pay for the program.

Gonzales said there was a simple reason for the small fee.

"If we give something like this away for free, I don't think people would appreciate it," he said. "This is a professional comedy show from Hollywood."

Soltero said she enjoyed the show.

"I'm glad we could have them out," she said. "There just aren't a lot of Hispanic comics out there, so the more we can hear from, the better."

She thought for a moment, then added, "And they're funny."