



February 14, 2011

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: Bonnie Gordon (505-661-4691 or (505-412-2233)  
[bjgordon@unm.edu](mailto:bjgordon@unm.edu)

**Teatro Paraguas presents "*Jim Sagel, poeta nuevomexicano*" at UNM-LA**

Teatro Paraguas will present *Jim Sagel, poeta nuevomexicano*, a tribute to the poet, writer, instructor, and long-time Española resident at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, March 4 in the UNM-Los Alamos Lecture Hall (Bldg. 2). The event is free of charge and open to everyone.

Sagel was a beloved instructor at UNM-LA for a number of years. He was director of the Division of Humanities at UNM-LA, a post he held until his untimely death (by suicide) in 1998. This event is part of the Jim Sagel Lecture Series, a UNM-LA program that was established to honor Sagel after his death.

Under the direction of Crawford MacCallum, four actors, Rosalia Triana, Paola Vengoechea Martini, Mario Moreno, and Argos MacCallum, will perform selections from Sagel's fifteen books of poetry and short stories written in Spanish, English and Spanglish. The one-hour performance will include 47 of Sagel's best-loved works.

Teatro Paraguas has presented *Jim Sagel, poeta nuevomexicano*, in Española at the Convento on the Plaza, at the National Hispanic Cultural Center in Albuquerque, and at the Teatro Paraguas Studio in Santa Fe.

Sagel was born in 1947 in Fort Morgan, Colorado. His grandparents on both sides were immigrants from the same village in Czarist Russia. In 1970 he graduated from the University of Colorado at Boulder with a BA in English, and found himself drawn to northern New Mexico. He settled in Española and began his long career in education as a substitute teacher at Española Valley High School. He married Teresa Archuleta, a weaver, built an adobe house with the help of his father-in-law, Jacobo Archuleta, and learned Spanish. In 1976 he earned a master's degree in creative writing from UNM. He began teaching at UNM-Los Alamos, Northern New Mexico Community College, the Institute of American Indian Art, UNM-Taos and other colleges. Sagel mastered Spanish, as well as the vibrant street language of Española, Spanglish. Chicano literary critics Donald Urioste and Francisco Lomelí coined the term *chicanesque* to recognize Sagel's contribution to Chicano literature. The term is now applied to non-Chicano authors who write sympathetically about Hispanic and Chicano culture.

In 1981 Sagel became the second U.S. citizen to win Cuba's prestigious Premio Casa de las Americas award (equivalent of the Pulitzer prize) for his Spanish-language collection of short stories entitled *Tunomás Honey*, which remains his best-known book. In 1997 he won the Premio Literario de Ciudad de San Sebastian (Spain) for his play entitled *Doña Refugio y su Comadre*.

*Jim Sagel, poeta nuevomexicano* is the latest in Teatro Paraguas' series of tributes to Hispanic and Latino poets, including Pablo Neruda, Miguel Hernandez, Violeta Parra, and Gabriela Mistral. The project is co-sponsored by the Spanish Resource Center and the National Hispanic Cultural Center, and is made possible in part by the Witter Bynner Foundation for Poetry, New Mexico Arts, a division of the Department of Cultural Affairs, and the National Endowment for the Arts.