

BORGES' GENIUS PRAISED ON THE CENTENNIAL OF HIS BIRTH

By Laura Weffer Cifuentes.

(from the Latino On-Line News Network)

London, Jan 14 1999 (EFE).- During his lifetime, Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges would shy away from fame, but on the centennial anniversary of his birth the whole world commemorated, together with the best known writers, in praise of his genius.

As part of the celebration in Britain, an anthology of his work of fiction was published and well-known British writers Martin Amis and Ian McEwan participated in a colloquium on Borges, the author of "Aleph."

In a packed hall, with tango music playing in the background and readings of fragments from "Circular Ruins," "Pierre Menard" and "Babylon," Amis and McEwan analyzed Borges' work and influences.

According to Amis, the presence of an English grandmother and nanny early in life made an indelible impression on the writer, "to the extent that English could be considered his mother tongue."

Although he could not remember how he came in contact with "Borges' ironies and daringness," Amis said that after the first reading he knew he had found someone he could consider his own.

"Borges' genius leaves me speechless, his work should not be considered minimalist, but extravagant. His way of facing the horror in the eternal and the transitory is extraordinary," Amis said.

McEwan, like his fellow writer, did not hold back in praising Borges' "colossal intelligence."

"There is something liberating in Borges' writing; it is the pure pleasure of the game of literary abstraction," the author of "Amsterdam" added.

The two British writers agreed that Borges' best work was written in the 1940s and 1950s.

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