

## ABSTRACTS

### 37<sup>th</sup> Colloquium of the Department of Hispanic and Italian Studies

#### 10.30 – 11.10 AM

**"The Politics of Disobedience in Guillermo del Toro's *Pinocchio*" by Lansdowne Visiting Scholar Cecilia Enjuto Rangel, Associate Professor, Department of Romance Languages, University of Oregon**

Why did Guillermo del Toro place his new stop motion animated film *Pinocchio* (2022) in Mussolini's Italy? How does his anti-fascist vision and the politics of disobedience in *Pinocchio* connect to his previous works (in particular *El espinazo del diablo*, *El laberinto del fauno*, *The Shape of Water*)? Guillermo del Toro has been defying the boundaries of genre films throughout his work, where fantasy and reality often merge to ask us as spectators who are the real monsters of the Spanish Civil War, the Francoist dictatorship, and the Cold war. Critically acclaimed and winner of the Academy Award for Best Animated feature, *Pinocchio* becomes not only a story about love, forgiveness, and fatherhood, but it also examines how the politics of disobedience becomes an ethical imperative during a totalitarian regime.

#### 11.15 – 11.45 AM

**"All About the Divas: Margo Channing and Huma Rojo in Almodovar's *All About My Mother*" by Prof. Silvia Colás Cardona (Hispanic and Italian Studies, UVic)**

Pedro Almodóvar's cinephilia is well known; tracing the references to other movies in his own films has become a clue-tracking game for critics, journalists, and audiences. *Todo sobre mi madre* (All About My Mother) constitutes one of the best examples of Almodóvar's intertextual discourse. By focusing on one of its main characters, Huma Rojo, I will show the depth to which some of these cinematic references are rooted in the director's work. Huma's character constitutes a culmination of several classic performances by other actors, though only some of them are explicitly named in the film. All these actors performed the same role: that of the aging star, product, and ultimately victim, of the star-system in 1950's Hollywood. Using these performances, Almodóvar takes a Hollywoodian model and reinvents it by turning it into a product of Spain's cultural tradition.

#### 11.45 AM – 12.15 PM

**"Sonnets: why are they important to you (and everybody else)" by Prof. Dan Russek (Hispanic and Italian Studies, UVic)**

In this presentation I begin by asking about the diverse, paradoxical roles of poetry in our current technocratic age. To answer the question, I will take an experiential approach by talking about poetry of my own authorship, particularly about a series of sonnets I have been writing for the last two plus years. They are part of an upcoming book entitled *Dones del día, Ochenta y seis*

*sonetos de ocasión* (Gifts of the Day. Eighty-six Circumstantial Sonnets). I will delve into the creative process I have been engaged in, and I will share a few examples with the audience. Inspired by modern classics such as Pablo Neruda and Jorge Luis Borges, I aim to show the ways the sonnet can become an efficient device to produce poetic statements about everyday life.

**1.45 – 2.15**

**Poetry Reading organized by Prof. Pablo Restrepo Gautier (Hispanic and Italian Studies, UVic): selected poetry read by students, faculty and community members.**

**2.15 – 2.45 PM**

**“Accidental Mambo- A musical journey towards a coalition of cultures” by Christina Morrison, Director of Salsa Caliente Dance**

Join us as we embark on a musical journey through the fascinating world of Mambo & Salsa, exploring how diverse cultures continue to come together to create something truly unique. Born at the crossroads of Afro-Caribbean rhythms and American Jazz, we will witness how Mambo evolved into Salsa and ignited a global phenomenon. The world of Salsa continues to transcend boundaries and unify its participants through music and dance, leaving lessons learned that transfer to many other areas of life.

**2.45 - 3.30 PM**

**Roundtable and Conversation: “Art in Times of Crisis” with Prof. Cecilia Enjuto Rangel and Prof. Emile Fromet de Rosnay, Department of French and Francophone Studies, UVic**

Statement by Prof. Cecilia Enjuto Rangel

The Spanish Civil War became a political and an artistic call to arms against fascism. The assassination of Federico García Lorca in August 1936 marks the violent beginning of the war, and in February 1939, the death of Antonio Machado, who had just crossed the frontier into France, anticipated the tragic end of the war. Throughout the war, a net of transatlantic solidarity was formed. The role of the 1937 Paris Exhibition Pablo Picasso's *Guernica*, Joan Miró's prints and posters, Alexander Calder and Julio González, among many others, redefined how art could be long lasting and at the same time serve as propaganda and support of the Republican side during the Spanish Civil war. From both sides of the Atlantic, Latin American poets such as Neruda and Vallejo joined Spanish poets such as Cernuda, Rafael Alberti, and Miguel Hernández in writing in support of the Republican cause. Their representations of the war vary in tone and style, from enraged, visceral imagery to nostalgic portrayals of the past and a pessimistic view of the future, but this historical period can clearly teach us that art needs to take a stand in times of political and social crisis.

Statement by Prof. Emile Fromet de Rosnay:

What is a way to think about "Art in Times of Crisis?" What does anarchism have to say today, in the context of Neoliberalism (or "capitalist realism," Mark Fisher) and the multiple crises it engenders? In my most recent work, I explore the ways in which one can re-imagine the creative process, through a parallel between anarchism, improvisation, and posthumanism as an "impersonal, pre-conscious notion of singularization," with the political implications that entails. The claim there is that the creative can be the invention of new spaces, rather than the reproduction of the same—forms of life which resist the imposition of given forms. Beyond a dialectic (or reciprocal relation) with law, such a creative process that emerges from below is unforeseeable and yet immanent to the specific realities and contexts of the individual(s), and break down the forms of law (creative, political) that characterize traditional views of artistic creation ("aesthetics," creation as "virtuosity" etc.). In other words, in times of crisis, artistic practices grounded in specific contexts and with their own singularities can resist the logics of the current order, not as models to follow but as approaches that are immanent to their unfolding.