DEPARTMENT OF HISPANIC & ITALIAN STUDIES
COLLOQUIUM ABSTRACTS

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2018

(10:00) Eugeni Osácar, “The Tourism Image of Barcelona Through International Films”

The audiovisual world and, as a result, the images, are a key element of the social, cultural and economic development of the 21st century. Real places transformed in audiovisual locations provoke a conscious or unconscious influence on spectators which induces them to incorporate into their personal imagination the places where their favorite productions are set. A new global survey by TCI Research (2018) reveals the increasing effect films have on international traveler’s choices. 80 million travelers chose their destinations mostly based on movies and TV series. In fact, most urban tourist destinations have observed the importance movies and TV series can have to potentiate the brand image among their potential market.

Therefore, this presentation examines the triangle comprised by tourism, movies and city, analyzing, comparing and assessing Barcelona’s tourist image perceived in source markets with the given image in 50 international movies filmed in the city. As the main conclusion, it must be highlighted that Barcelona’s given image in international movies corresponds fundamentally with the city’s perceived image in tourist source markets, as well as with the positioning strategy defined in tourism strategic plans 2015 and 2020. It is, therefore, about the projection of a mainly positive image. Most of the analyzed movies present a modern and open-minded city, with a high cultural component, artistic heritage and architecture, as well as a charming romantic urban space, mostly sunny and with the sea presence for background.

Finally, as example of this matter, it presents a comparative between Vicky Cristina Barcelona and Biutiful. Two movies directed respectively by Woody Allen and Alejandro González Iñárritu, shot in Barcelona in the same period, but with a different vision of the city.

(11:00) Silvia Colás Cardona, “The Spain is Different Marketing Campaign: Depictions of Early Tourism in Spanish Film”

Spain is Different!, a slogan created at the end of the 1940s to promote tourism in Spain, became particularly successful in the 60s under the direction of Manuel Fraga, the Minister of Tourism from 1962 to 1969. The root of the slogan’s success was to exploit the stereotypical images of the country that had been circulating since the end of the 18th century. In this talk, we will show the impact of this touristic advertising campaign on the construction of Spain’s national identity, using the example of El verdugo, a controversial Spanish movie filmed by José Luis Berlanga in 1963.

(1:00) Christine Forster, “Memory and Dark Tourism in the Southern Cone: Santiago and Buenos Aires Today”

This paper presents an exposé of the different types of tourism (“light” and “dark”) that exist in democratic Chile and Argentina today, more than thirty years after the end of the last dictatorships. Through descriptions of tourist destinations like the Violeta Parra Museum, the Pablo Neruda houses, the Museum of Memory and Human Rights in Santiago, and the ESMA and Memory Park in Buenos Aires, we see how the development of international tourism can contribute to creating memory and cultural heritage by raising awareness and promoting education in two countries struggling to find truth and heal the pain of a dark past.

(over)
The presentation explores aspects of visual communication in the urban space as they relate to two forms of public art in contemporary Mexico City: muralism and graffiti art. Mexican muralism, the most iconic cultural product stemming from the Revolution at the beginning of the twentieth century, can be read as a foil to the anarchic, subversive and dramatic sprawl of street art that has appeared in the last few decades in Mexico’s capital city. In my presentation I begin by addressing how these forms—officially sanctioned Muralism and popular graffiti art—set up a virtual dialogue. I then ask how graffiti has reshaped the conception of an aesthetics of public space in Mexico. What are the contours of urban aesthetics given the inescapable urban realities of sensory overstimulation, spatial disorganization and social alienation, of which graffiti can be seen as both cause and effect? How does street art impact discussions about the quality of urban life, symbolic capital, cultural heritage and urban management, as a new generation of visual artists both continue and challenge the traditional forms of visual communication in the cityscape? The focus of my presentation will be the work of a collective of street artists active mostly in downtown Mexico City called Street Art Chilango (http://www.streetartchilango.com/). I will document their practices, examine their aims and gauge their contribution to the aesthetic experience of urban life in Mexico City.