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# Newsletter

## Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

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### *A Message from the Chair*

Over the break, amid great excitement, the Department of Modern Languages and Literatures moved into its new home in the New Building. A listing of the new offices can be found in the last page of this newsletter. FLL faculty has good reason to be delighted with their new offices and pleased to be situated in a luminous, spacious, and functional building. We extend our sincere thanks to Provost Jane Bowers and President Travis for designating FLL as the occupants of these fantastic offices, and our thanks to the movers and everyone else who made the process so smooth.

In the last months we have developed a new Certificate in Legal Translation and Interpretation, which has been recently approved by the Department and will be presented to the College Curriculum Committee. Heritage Spanish speakers represent the largest minority in our College and with this Certificate we hope to meet an increasing demand for interpreters and translators, in consonance with John Jay's mission, a college dedicated to educating for justice. We will provide more information on this in the next Newsletter.

We are also sponsoring a workshop on language teaching: "Pedagogies in the Modern Language Classroom." The workshops will help faculty create highly interactive learning modules that boost learning and promote target language fluency.

The Department will offer a "Cinema of the World" series beginning on February 8 under the direction of Prof. Raúl Romero. They are open to the public without charge and have English subtitles. The specific times and room numbers will be posted on the bulletin boards, the campus calendar, and the department web page. We hope to see you there!

Best wishes for a very successful semester.

*Silvia Dapía*

### *Students at Calligraphy Exhibit*

On November 22, students in Chinese 101, 102 and 290 attended a calligraphy exhibition and workshop at the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office on 42nd Street in Manhattan. Arranged by Prof. Yen-ling Yeh, the students toured the exhibition where they learned about Chinese culture and calligraphy as an art form and also had a hands-on experience doing Chinese calligraphy.



Students touring the exhibit and learning about the art of Chinese calligraphy with Prof. Yeh (on left).



Students practicing their own skills at calligraphy during the workshop that followed the tour of the exhibit.

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## Kudos

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**Silvia G. Dapía** delivered a paper on “¿Un realismo sin ontología? El dilema de Albucásim en ‘La busca de Averroes’ de J. L. Borges” at the CUNY Graduate Center in December, and another on “Witold Gombrowicz’s Argentine Interlude” at the annual meeting of the American Historical Association in Chicago in January. She also co-organized the symposium “Empowering the Tribe” at John Jay College in November and attended the workshop “Evolving Pedagogies in the Modern Language Classroom” at the John D. Calandra Italian American Institute in January.

**Arístides Falcón-Paradí** was co-producer and writer of *El Play*, a documentary film produced and directed by Pablo A. Medina, that was shown at the Dominican Republic Global Film Festival in November 2011.



**Suad Mohamed** attended the annual Middle East Association Conference in Washington, DC, in December and attended a panel discussion on bridging the gap between standard and colloquial in teaching Arabic language. She also traveled to Egypt where she attended a conference in Cairo University on Najib Mahfouz, the Nobel laureate for literature. The theme focused on philosophical vision of his novels and the language used to reflect his ideas and vision. The conference was organized by the Philosophy Department with participation from The Arabic Department. Prof. Mohamed also attended and participated in meetings in Cairo University with the English and Arabic departments to establish a new association called The English/Arabic Linguistic Association of Cairo University, of which she became a member.

**Raúl Romero** co-organized the symposium “Empowering the Tribe” at John Jay College in November and chaired a session on “Law, Violence and the LGBTI Community.”



**Raúl Rubio** delivered a paper on “Queer Stand-up Comedy: Art Form, Theory, and Community Empowerment” at the symposium “Empowering the Tribe” at John Jay College in November. His article titled “Argentine Anthropophagy: Carnal and Cul-

tural Encounters in Carlos Balmaceda’s *Manual del canibal*” appeared in the November 2011 issue of the journal *Chasqui: Revista de Literatura Latinoamericana*, and his review of *The Diaspora Strikes Back: Caribeno Tales of Learning and Turning* by Juan Flores appeared in the *Latino Studies* (Volume 9, Issue 4) in November. Prof. Rubio is currently part of the jury selection committee for the 2012 Lora Romero First Book Prize of the American Studies Association. The prize has been awarded since 2002 for the best published first book in American Studies that highlights the intersections of race with gender, class, sexuality and/or nation.

**John Sorrentino** presented his paper “Imagining Madeleine” on the panel entitled “The Feminine in the Works and Life of André Gide” sponsored by the Association des Amis d’André Gide at the 2012 Conference of the Modern Language Association in Seattle in January.



**Liliana Soto-Fernández** delivered a paper on “El tema de la libertad en la narrativa de Josefina Leyva” [Freedom in Josefina Leyva’s Narrative] at XLIX Annual Congress of *Círculo de Cultura Panamericano* held at William Paterson University in Totowa, New Jersey, in November. She chaired a session on

“Eroticism, the Lesbian Body, and Poetry” at the “Empowering the Tribe” symposium at John Jay College in November and a session on Cuban writers in New York at the International PEN Club in New York in October. In January she completed the faculty development Certification Workshop for Teaching Online.



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## Welcome

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The department is pleased to introduce the following faculty who have joined John Jay College this academic year.

**Diego Vargas Barona** holds an MA. in Applied Linguistics from Montclair State University and is a doctoral candidate in Hispanic Linguistics in the Hispanic and Luso-Brazilian Literatures and Languages Program at the CUNY Graduate Center. His research interests include Sociolinguistics, Phonology, Syntax, Applied Linguistics, and Documentation of Endangered Languages and includes “Native and Non-Native Language Attitudes Towards Non-Native Speakers” which appeared in the *Language and Literature Journal*.

**Nathan Bogardus** is in his second semester teaching Spanish at John Jay College. He holds a Master of Arts in Spanish from the University at Albany (SUNY) and is currently a doctoral student in Hispanic & Luso-Brazilian Literatures & Cultures at the CUNY Graduate Center.



**José Gabriel Chueca** holds an MFA degree from the Graduate School of Arts and Science at New York University specializing in creative writing in Spanish. An active journalist, he contributes a monthly column about arts and science to the Peruvian edition of *Poder* magazine and a weekly column on his experiences in New York City for the newspaper *Peru.21* published in Lima, Perú. Among his publications is “José Sabogal: Más que un indigenista, un peruanista,” a biographical essay on the Peruvian painter José Sabogal that appeared in a volume dedicated to his work published as part of the encyclopedia *Maestros de la Pintura Peruana*.



**Santiago Parga** Linares holds a degree in literature from the Universidad de los Andes in Bogotá, Columbia, and is a doctoral student in Comparative Literature at the CUNY Graduate Center. His recent publications include “Virtual Insanity” in *la Revista del Colegio mayor de Nuestra Señora del Rosario* (Vol. 101, no. 595) and “Lectura, religión y política: Libros buenos y malos en ‘Luterito’ de Tomás Carrasquilla” in *Convergencias* (Universidad de Los Andes). He is also a contributor and editor for the Columbian magazine *Revista Tentempié* and served as a researcher for the “Memory of Violence Project” of the Columbian National Library.

**Uschi Niethammer** received her degree in Germanic Studies from the University of Heidelberg in Germany and also holds New York State Education Department certification as a teacher of German. She has taught in Germany and the United States, and was an assistant for the preparation of *Deutsches Rechtswörterbuch*, a historical dictionary of Germanic law language



**María Lebedev Pimentel** attended the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) where she earned a degree in Hispanic Language and Literature. Fluent in English, French and Spanish, she has published translations from French to Spanish and English to Spanish. Her chapter “Juan José Saer y lo no” was published in the anthology *Muestra de Literatura Joven de México* (Mexico City: Fundación para las Letras Mexicanas, 2008). She also served as assistant editor for a volume of *Obras completas* of Alfonso Reyes published by Fondo de Cultura Económica.



## Department Symposium

John Jay was host to a very successful symposium, “Empowering the Tribe,” featuring prominent speakers on lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender topics on November 3-4. The following photos, taken by Prof. Raúl Romero, illustrate some of the presentations.

President Jeremy Travis opened the symposium with words of introduction to some fifty people who attended the first session.



Pauline Park, Chair of the New York Association for Gender Rights Advocacy (left), pictured here with symposium co-organizers Raúl Romero and Silvia Dapia.



John Jay College Prof. Chitra Raghavan (right), who chaired the first academic session, shares a moment with John Jay student Jillian Dispoto who delivered a paper on “Abuse Dynamics and Schemes of Power.”



Daniel Balderston, Mellon Professor of Modern Languages at the University of Pittsburgh, delivered Friday morning’s keynote address on “‘A Man Kicked to Death’ to ‘Killing a Fag’: Representations of Violence and Traditions of LGBT Writing in Latin America.”

Leonardo Raznovich came from Christ Church University in the United Kingdom to deliver his paper on “Argentina: A Queer Country.”





Guillermo de los Reyes Heredia came from the University of Houston to deliver a paper on “Queer Migrations: Performing Sexuality, Gender and Mexican Identity in Houston.”



From left: Shawn Schulenberg (Marshall University), Raúl Romero (John Jay College), Silvia Dapía (John Jay College), Leonardo Raznovich (Christ Church University), and Guillermo de los Reyes Heredia (University of Houston).



Liliana Soto-Fernández (right) introduces Elena Martínez of Baruch College/CUNY who spoke on “La escritura del cuerpo lésbico: la poesía de Alina Galleano.”



From left: Daniel Balderston (University of Pittsburgh), Elena Martínez (Baruch College/CUNY), Gladys Triana, Liliana Soto-Fernández (John Jay College), Alina Galleano (poet), Raúl Romero (John Jay College), Silvia Dapía (John Jay College), and Raúl Rubio (John Jay College)



Raúl Romero (right) introducing Victoria Neilson, Legal Director at the Immigration Equality/Action Fund, who delivered the Friday afternoon keynote address.



Participants enjoying Thursday evening dinner at the Istanbul Café.

## “Cinema of the World” Series

Come and join us for a festival of international films! During the spring semester, Prof. Raúl Romero will be hosting “Cinema of the World,” a series of movies from around the globe accompanied by lively discussion. For times and locations, keep an eye on the bulletin boards.

Date	Film
Feb. 8	<i>The Skin I Live In</i> (Spain) – A plastic surgeon creates a synthetic skin and tries in on a mysterious woman who holds the key to his obsession.
Feb. 16	<i>Matrubhoni, A Nation Without Women</i> (India) – Thousands of baby girls are killed every year in India. This film explores these crimes and consequences.
Feb. 22	<i>A Separation</i> (Iran) – A couple must decide whether to move for the sake of their child or stay in Iran and look after a deteriorating parent with Alzheimers.
Mar. 1	<i>Carandiru</i> (Brazil) – Dr. Drauzio Varella works in a prison in São Paulo where hundreds live in degrading conditions resulting in a rebellion and police killings.
Mar. 7	<i>Carancho</i> (Argentina) – A love story set against the background of insurance fraud that costs the lives of over 8,000 people in Argentina each year.
Mar. 15	<i>Black Bread</i> (Catalonia) – A young boy develops a sense of moral consciousness in the brutal aftermath of war and recrimination in the Catalan countryside.
Mar. 21	<i>2046</i> (Hong Kong) – An author writes about a mysterious train that carried people to a time where they can recapture their memories.
Mar. 29	<i>Good Bye Lenin</i> (Germany) – To protect his mother from trauma after she awakens from a coma, a young man tries to keep her from finding out that her nation, East Germany, no longer exists.
Apr. 4	<i>Chico y Rita</i> (Spain) – A musician and a singer embark on a romance that leads to heartache and torment.
Apr. 12	<i>A Prophet</i> (France) – A young Arab is sent to a French prison where he becomes a mafia kingpin.
Apr. 18	<i>Four Days in September</i> (Brazil) – Two men join a terrorist group to fight the Brazilian government. When one is captured, the other plots to kidnap the American ambassador to gain his friend’s freedom.
Apr. 25	<i>Human Zoo</i> (France) – In Marseilles, a young Serbian-Albanian relives her traumatic past during the upheavals in Kosovo and her relationship with a gangster and assassin.

## Department Moves to New Building

The Department of Modern Languages and Literatures has moved! Over the holiday break, our offices were moved to the 7th Floor of the new building at 524 West 59th Street. Telephone and fax numbers remain the same. A listing of the new offices is as follows (with the room listed as floor.suite.room):

	Room	Ext.
Main Office	7.65.00	8577
Office Manager, Erica Wise	7.63.01	8577
Faculty		
Silvia G. Dapía	7.65.03	4415
Daria Montero-Paulson	7.65.05	8716
Raúl Romero	7.65.06	8714
Raúl Rubio	7.65.04	4413
Liliana Soto-Fernández	7.65.02	8712
New Hire	7.65.07	
Emeritus Faculty	7.66.00	
Part-time Faculty	7.66.00	
Conference Room	7.65.38	
Language Resource Room	7.65.10	
Interpretation/Translation	7.65.08	
Private Meeting Room	7.65.09	
Work Room	7.65.37	

## Department Contact Information

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