The Cultural Journal
Spring 2017

The Culture Club, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, and Africana Studies

The Cultural Journal is a non-profit magazine devoted to sharing experiences with an emphasis on culture. Contributions of prose, poetry, literary criticism, short stories, essays, poems, anecdotes, drawings, photos, and recipes concerning culture, perceptions and interactions of people from different countries are accepted. Submissions can be in any language provided they are accompanied by an English translation. Text should be typed and if possible submitted on a flash drive along with a printout. We also accept online submissions.*

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*From the editors: Accepted submissions will be published in the order received as space permits. Articles will be edited at the editors’ discretion. Opinions expressed by contributors do not reflect the editors’ points of view.
President
Peter P. Mercer's Message to Campus.
Dear Students, Colleagues, and Friends I look forward to celebrating with you the achievements of the Ramapo College Class of 2017!
The Ceremony on May 11 at the Prudential Center will feature the largest graduating class in our history. 1,625 graduates will earn their bachelor’s or master’s degrees. Among the graduates are 92 Educational Opportunity Fund Program participants; nine veterans representing the Navy, the Marine Corps, and the National Guard; 124 graduates that have affiliated with our Office of Specialized Services; and 30 graduates who earned their degrees through the Adult Degree Completion program. Our graduates will be joined by faculty, staff, friends, and family (all of whom helped contribute to their success).
RamoWeb/President's Office of the President / President's Post 110: 201.

Dr. Beth Barnett, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs:

Right:

Dr. George Gonpu, assistant professor of economics, ASB, posed at the closing banquet of the 49th Annual Conference of the Liberian Studies Association hosted at Ramapo College, March 30 – April 1, 2017.

Photo: Niza Fabre
Letter of the Dean

On a finnote, this will be my last “Letter of the Dean,” as I am stepping down from this position and returning to the faculty after June 30. I have been honored to serve as Dean of the Salameno School for the past four years and happy to have had a chance to further Ramapo’s commitment to the humanities and to global studies. More than ever, we recognize today the need for the kind of understanding and empathy that these areas of study lead us to. I look forward to many more years in the classroom.

For the complete “Letter from the Dean” go to the SSHGS Perspectives, Newsletter of the Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, Spring 2017, pp. 1-2, edited by Hugh Sheehy, assistant professor of creative writing.

Dr. Stephen P. Rice, Dean of SSHGS

Dr. Stephen Rice displays the award he received in recognition of his leadership as Dean of the Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, 2013-2017.

For the complete “Letter from the Dean” go to the SSHGS Perspectives, Newsletter of the Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, Spring 2017, pp. 1-2, edited by Hugh Sheehy, assistant professor of creative writing.

Dr. Henry Davis

professor of history Medgar Evers College, CUNY, made a presentation titled “From Slavery to Incarceration: Blacks and the American Justice System.” This presentation was enhanced with visual images of historic events involving African Americans and the justice system of USA. This event, in celebration of African Ancestry Month, took place on February 27, 2017, it was sponsored by The Culture Club, Africana Studies, and Brothers Making a Difference, BMAD.

Left to Right:
Ryan Greff ’20, business administration major,
Drs. George Gonpu, Henry Davis, and professor Mitch Khan, at Dr. Davis’ speech, held on February 27, 2017.

The Global South Cinema of the Americas, Faculty Resource Network Seminar, New York University, NYU Summer 2017.
Andrew Herrera, Culture Club president, environmental studies major, class 2018, made a presentation titled “Conservation as Discrimination? Putting the Maasai Protected Area Conflict Into Context.”

Andrews’ presentation focused on the “wicked problem” of park management and land rights, particularly in the southeastern African countries of Kenya and Tanzania. They are famous for their spectacular, imperiled wild life, but the indigenous Maasai herdsmen who live with them in the savanna are at risk as well, of losing their way of life. The Maasai have continually had their property rights and thus their ability to live as pastoralists constrained by new laws and business. Mwangi (2009) traces this problem to its beginnings with the arrival of the British, but it has continued through Tanzania’s independence to present. Native Tanzanians want to farm land that Maasai may inhabit, and this leads not to gunfights but to legal battles that often portend dire consequences for the Maasai’s independence, as discussed by Askew, Maganga, Odgaard, Lund, and Boone (2013). But this is not merely the familiar conflict between indigenous peoples and settlers: The Maasai often must contend with wilderness conservation groups that force them off of their land or exclude them from the management process. Goldman (2011) discusses the strife that develops as Maasai are denied the right to work with conservationists, with the animals they know so well, a conflict that sometimes disrupts the ecological sustainability of a protected area.

This research has synthesized a hypothesis that while the ecotourism industry should (and may slowly be) changing to benefit and include the Maasai, this gulf between Maasai concerns and conservation interests is reflective of inequalities and disconnections rooted through the governments of the East African Community at multiple levels and within the major actors in the growing conservation industry.

This presentation took place on April 26, 2017 for Ramapo College’s Fifth Annual Scholars’ Day. Faculty Supervisor: Dr. Ashwani Vasishth.

Dr. Michael Bitz, professor of Teacher Education, School of Social Science and Human Services, gave a talk on “Exploring Creativity and Literacy in Ethiopia.” The presentation explored the trip undertaken to Ethiopia in January 2017 by professors Bitz and Sineshaw. Through the Provost’s Sub-Saharan Africa Travel Grant, Bitz and Sineshaw traveled to Ethiopia to work with school teachers, university faculty, and graduate students. The theme focused on the cultural connection established in Ethiopia. Professor Bitz described the efforts of helping Ethiopian students undertake a creative pathway to literacy through writing, designing, and publishing original comic books. He explained some of the lessons learned as well as described efforts to return to Ethiopia to continue the work in the future. This presentation took place on April 10, 2017. It was sponsored by The Culture Club and Africana Studies.

Dr. Rosetta D’Angelo, professor of Italian in the Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, chaired panel IV on “The Diaspora, Institution-Building and Reconstruction” at the 49th Annual Conference of the Liberian Studies Association, hosted at Ramapo College, March 30 - April 1, 2017.
Franklin Ben-Weller II, University of Liberia, and Dr. Karl Johnson, associate professor of African American studies, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, posed at the 49th Annual Conference of The Liberian Studies Association hosted at Ramapo College, March 30- April 1, 2017.

Photo: Niza Fabre

Dr. David Colman, associate professor of African American history, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, convener of Africana Studies, gave the Introductory speech at the 49th Annual Conference of the Liberian Studies Association, Hosted at Ramapo College. March 30- April 1, 2017.

Photo: Niza Fabre

Dr. Virgina Gonsalves Domond, professor of psychology, School of Social Science and Human Services, made a presentation on “Security Sector reforms: Micro-level Blueprint and Recommendations for a Sustainable Peace and Democracies in Liberia and Haiti,” at the 49th Annual Conference of The Liberian Studies Association, hosted at Ramapo College, March 30 - April 1, 2017.

Photo: Niza Fabre

Dr. George Gonpu, assistant professor of economics, Anisfield School of Business, made a presentation on “Governance Quality Institutional Credibility and the Flow of Remittances to Liberia,” at the 49th Annual Conference of the Liberian Studies Association, hosted at Ramapo College, March 30- April 1, 2017.

Photo: Niza Fabre
Maricel Mayor Marsán, author, poet, playwright, and redactor of *Baquiana Literary Magazine*, member of number of the North American Academy of the Spanish Language (ANLE), and therefore correspondent member of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (RAE).

Renacer en el Mar
A un niño que despertó pasiones a su paso por la ciudad
Un triángulo inseguro fue su partida, quizás desesperación, quizás necesidad, quizás un poco de amor y aventura.
Un lobo marino teje telaránas
En el vientre de una madre insepulta.
El hijo no duerme tranquilo desde que ella se tornó ausente y su suerte quedó a cargo de unos delfines que coronaron el silencio en su rostro.


To Be Reborn in the Sea
To a child that stirred up passions in his passing through the city
An insecure triangle was his departure, maybe desperation, maybe exile
maybe necessity, maybe a little of love and adventure.

A sea lion spins webs
In the belly of an unburied mother.
The son doesn’t sleep quietly since she became absent and his luck was left in charge of dolphins that crowned the silence of his face.


Dr. Marithelma Costa, author, Poet, and professor, Graduate School and Hunter College, City University of New York, (CUNY.)

La Casa Primera
Aroma de tomillo y romero envío a mi padre tras el día de su cumpleaños
Tomillo de las huertas de Palomera
Romero del manantial donde las golondrinas lo agarran en su vuelo para que llegue íntegro a la casa primera
A la casa rodeada de orégano donde se está con paciencia porque no se puede viajar a la mía la mar océana es inmensa, los avatares múltiples y papá necesitaría un golpe de dados en el tablero para llegar hasta aquí.

Author: Dr. Marithelma Costa, CUNY.

The Primary House (La casa primera)
(Translation)
Aroma of thyme and rosemary I send to my father after the day of his birthday
Thyme of the orchards of Palomera
Rosemary from the wellspring where the swallows catch it on their flight so that it arrives intact to the primary house
To the house surrounded by oregano where one stays with patience because one cannot travel to mine the ocean sea is immense, the avatars multiple and dad would need to play a dice game to get here.

Author: Marithelma Costa. Translator: Niza Fabre
Nicola Tanelli
(1963-2013)
Nicola Tanelli, son of Dr. Orazio Tanelli. Dr. Tanelli, professor of Italian, founder and director, Il Ponte italo-Americano International Magazine of art, poetry and culture.

A Better Life Than Mine
Spring begins with a beautiful day.
Depressing thoughts must take sway.
I realize I don't miss you anymore.
Anyway, I consider it your terrible loss.
Oh to be me,
to rule over kingdoms
laughing at everyone’s tremendous faults.

Nicola Tanelli, Il Ponte italo-Americano. 26th Anniversary, Anno XXVII No. 2, Fall 2016, p. 20.
Cecile Carty ’17, political science major, vice president of the Culture Club, shares her experience in Italy.

Exploring Rome
I spent most of my time at Ramapo wishfully dreaming of one day studying abroad and every time I would get discouraged and think that it would never be a possibility for me. But ultimately everything worked out for the best and I was able to spend a month this summer studying abroad in Rome and it was one of the most unforgettable moments of my life.

I was somewhat nervous before my trip given the fact that I do not speak Italian and I thought that it would be challenging to overcome the language barrier but it ended up being a lot less challenging than I was expecting. Many of the people in the town of Trastevere where I was based actually spoke English, but they infused some Italian whenever I spoke to them, so I was able to learn some Italian words while I was there. The area is full of life and at night everyone is out on the streets talking in the local entertainment and restaurants. My weekdays consisted of attending classes, my classes were mostly with other study abroad students from the United States but there was quite a few Italian and other international students as well.

Cecile Carty ’17, Ramapo College.

Nothing Was, Nothing Will be

Nothing was, nothing will be
Everything has reality and presence*
As the river moves within me
So awakens the eternal essence
Flowing, flowing
Flowing past, flowing present
Intertwining souls are buoyant
Absent tension; reason prevails
Namaste appears resplendent
Communion with all that entails

I
II
III
IV

Swirling currents of insight
Lifting spirits to take flight
Alighting upon kernels of truth
Flowing, flowing
Flowing past, flowing present
Flowing, flowing
Flowing past, flowing present
Nothing was
Nothing will be

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* "He saw that the water continually flowed and flowed and yet it was always there; it was always the same and yet every moment it was new." pg. 83. Inspired by Hermann Hesse, Siddhartha, 1951, New Directions, New York. Chapter: “The Ferryman” pp. 82-94.

Megan Kearney, coordinator for Commuter Affairs. Commuter Affairs is committed to academically and socially connecting commuter students to the Ramapo College community by providing services and programs that will identify and meet needs of commuter students.

John Atti ’08, economics major, class 2008, posed with Simon, his son. Shortly after graduation John joined Ramapo College as area Director, Mackin and Bischoff desk attendant coordinator, Office of Residence Life.
Randall Bem '18, literature major

Dark Beat Light
If there was a day
The moon turned away from earth
The birds flew away from their turf
It would be in May
What if it all stayed?
The snow and the sun were nerfed
The birds would stay north for sure
And all days would be today
Time and time again
The planet stayed sick
Of its same pigment of skin
Nobody playing in the wind
When the wind is always just
The wind
Everything’s eternal
No shift in beginning
To end.

Randall Bem '18, Ramapo College

Camo Night Vision
They're here nightly.
Savaging urban city scraps
They're all black
and they all scratch.
Neighbor to bats.
Unknown where they nap,
but I know they relax.
In the dark they attack.
I don't knock their stars.
Myself, I consider a match.
Myself, I consider a cat.

Randall Bem '18, Ramapo College

Blanca Segarra, writer. author, poet, and prolific writer

Invisible
Nos une un hilo dorado
que nadie logra ver.
La luna me ha contado
de tus noches de desvelos,
os une el mismo poder
y nos une el mismo cielo.
También nos une la estrella
fugaz a la que pedimos
y la noche por ser ella
reina, la hora en que nos vimos.
El mismo afán nos conforta
uniendo más nuestras vidas.
y la ansiedad que soporta
saludos y despedidas.

Blanca Segarra, Miami, Florida. Translation, Niza Fabre.

My Guitar
My guitar is my heart of hearts
it’s the place where I listen often
where I get my advice from
where I go when I get lost in the crazy world
where I pick the strings and birth music
the kind of music that heals the wounded
the sick, the lonely, the distraught
the weak, the lost, the survivor,
the amputated, the silenced one, the changed
the captured, the naive, the one in chains
and my tears of songs wash and mourn
oh how strongly they mourn
the ones in the battles lost
my tears know too well, you see
what's lost is lost,
only the wounded can still be healed
and my guitar never seizes to play
and my heart never seizes to hope
that the wounded will find her way, all

Emma Cesarelia Hotar, '00 Ramapo College
Julianne De Lisi, class of 17, literature major and contributor to *Trillium*, the College’s literary magazine. Julianne posed at the literature luncheon and induction as member of Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society. This event took place on April 19, 2017.

Dr. Edward Shannon, convener and professor of literature, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, gave an introductory speech at the literature luncheon and induction of new members of Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society. This event took place on April 19, 2017.

Haiku
An egret alone
under the drooping willow
contemplates the grass


Cake decorated in honor of graduating Culture Club eboard members, Troy Reyes Caldwell and Cecile Carty at the Culture Club End of Semester Party, on April 27, 2017.

Left to right: Troy Reyes Caldwell ‘17, contemporary arts major, Culture Club ambassador, vice president of Brothers Making a Difference, Andrew Herrera ‘18, environmental studies major, Culture Club president, Cecile Carty ‘17, political science major, Culture Club vice president. Troy and Cecile display the award they received from Andrew, at the End of Semester Party, for their Culture Club Leadership. This event took place on April 27, 2017. It was sponsored by the Culture Club.
Jarrod García ’19,
literature major,

Last Look
Her father lets me into her room. He tells me to take my time. Downstairs, everyone is leaving; they’ve had their fill of crying and cold cuts. I shut the door and look at the beautiful wreckage of her unmade bed, trying to make out the indentation of her body. Apple hand cream and cherry lip gloss cling to the air, sweet and strong, as if she just breezed in and wrapped herself around me.

A pair of leather boots stand in a corner the way she would, and I half-expect them to start walking around. On the dresser, a bookmark sticks out of a bad novel she wanted me to read, and I notice a curled brown hair resting beside it. The teenager in me considers taking the hair, for God knows what purpose, and I think about how she would laugh at that. The girl who gets the joke: that’s how I want her remembered. Not the way they found her that morning. Not surrounded by floral arrangements. Not in the words of a priest, or in the photo collage her friends made. The last car pulls away outside, and one of her boots falls over with a dull flop. She’s telling me it’s okay to go home.

Author: Jarrod García ’19, Ramapo College

Joe Moncada ’15,
business management
major, international
business minor. Joe served as Culture Club president, 2012-2015. He is now part of the Culture Club as a consultant and editor of the Cultural Journal magazine produced every semester by the Culture Club. Joe posed at the Culture Club’s End of Semester Party held on April 27, 2017. This event was sponsored by the Culture Club.

Joe Moncada ’15

Photo: Niza Fabre

Left: Andrew Herrera ’18, president of the Culture Club. Right: Negin Kholdi ’19, accounting major, incoming vice president of the Culture Club, posed at the End of Semester Party, held on April 27, 2017.

Photo: Niza Fabre

William Hooper ’19, political science major, incoming treasurer of the Culture Club.

Photo: Cecile Carty

Photo: Niza Fabre
René León,
historian, author, poet, and editor of Pensamiento Digital Literary Magazine.

Solo Una Pena
Yo tengo solo una pena en mi vida, es morir en el destierro lejos de mi tierra querida.

Lejos del agua mansa y clara de nuestros ríos, de nuestras montañas y valles.
De la primavera con sus colores alegres y el trino de los pájaros.
De los días claros, de las tardes soleadas, de las noches sosegadas, y de nuestra brisa tropical.

De las olas del mar que baten nuestras playas, del mar embravecido que rompe las olas en espumas.

Mi querida Cuba que llevo muy dentro de mi corazón y sé que no volveré nunca.

René León, Tampa Florida, 2017.

Just One Sorrow
I have only one sorrow / in my life,
is to die in exile / away from my beloved land.

Away from the crystal clear water of our rivers, away from our mountains and valleys.

Away from the Spring with its bright colours and the trill of the birds.

Away from the clear days / sunny afternoons, peaceful nights, / and from our tropical breezes.

Away from the waves of the sea that reach our beaches, / of the raging sea that breaks the waves in foams.

My beloved Cuba / that I carry in my heart and I know I will never return to.

Translation, Niza Fabre

Dr. Antonio Corsaro,
associate professor, University of Urbino, made a presentation on, Art, Love, and Divinity in Michelangelo’s Poetry. This event Took place on March 23, 2017. It was sponsored by The Italian Club.

Nilda Cepero,
Author, poet, singer and editor.

Lady Blue
And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lip. Budding adieu . . . .
–John Keats

Nightly she turns up poised before the piano Beset with beads and scenting like a rose this recherché dame who thrills from the talents of others cheers eagerly every tune
Her chair unoccupied at times
I then miss her pomp and requests for an uncommon melody
Yet we each deem It is the music man who seizes her and there she risks a tight rope for her let into her soft spot
in maudlin Don Juan Juanesque / blue print he dazzles her /
I forewarn her and strive to ward her / from lesions. Overwhelmed she alights me /
Hi his quaint, intoxicating strains away her demeanor, entangling her / True to a jazz man only his tunes / are transparent.


The Olive Tree, Favorite Son of Nature
On a wise land, certainly invincible, on a land, God’s Olympus of moving generosity, rises, like sphinx of life, the olive tree. Visible and still the sea of poverty, breathes echoes of emotions surrounded by siblings of silence that flows and spreads throughout fields with beats of lines. All its heritage of centuries perpetuates the glory of its essence for the hearts that bear fruits of doors always opened, dawns tangled with smiles, crops of happiness sunny, nuptial…
The olive tree… dresses in mysteries on its twisted body.
The olive tree… barn of hope, miracle brimming with dreams and reasons with fragrances of laughter without rust and hopes that shade lights of blind paradises of aureoles of suns. Oh loyalty of victorious sources! Oh revealed song to a world of renewals soaked in light to the core! The olive tree… treasure for the man who goes into its fertile labyrinths with faith to love them, look after them and protect them.

El olivo, hijo predilecto de la naturaleza

Sobre una tierra sabia, ciertamente invencible,
sobre una tierra, olimpo de los dioses
de generosidad conmovedora,
se eleva, como esfinge de la vida,
visible e inmóvil, como el mar de la pobreza,
respira resonancias de emociones
rodeado de hermanos, de silencio que fluye
y se expande por campos con latidos de versos.
Todo su patrimonio de siglos perpetúa
la Gloria de su esencia para los corazones
que dan frutos de puertas siempre abiertas,
añadas de lobos benedicidos,
se revuelven versos de apacibles
y el dolor, tan despacio...

El olivo... con traje de misterios
sobre su viejo cuerpo retorcido.
El olivo... granero de esperanza,
prodigio rebosante de sueños y razones
con fragancias de risas sin herrumbre
y de ilusiones que derraman luzes
de paraísos ebrios de aureolas de soles.
¡Oh lealtad de fuentes victoriosas!
¡Oh canto revelado a un mundo de renuevos
empapados de luz hasta la médula!

Me siento primavera, el corazón aúlla

Qué bien se está en mi casa.
Así los dos, mi casa que es tu casa
y recorremos juntos
los libros que aun amamos.
Silencio...
Solo el tic-tac lo sabe.
Es una tarde larga, verde
de tulipanes rojos, amarillos
--mirálos allí abajo,
mira que raro es verse triste en esta tarde
con las puertas abiertas.-Señor de la alegría-
con cal entre las uñas
y el dolor, tan despacio...--

Es la hora del trigo y zumban las abejas
y la hiel de mi vida se dulcifica ahora.
Debo cantarlo, debo,
decirlo a alguien:--
--Hoy estoy primavera...y nos crecen las ramas--
¡Qué delicioso sueño!

Author: Carlos Benítez Villodres. Sonata del agua viva.,
(English translation on p. 22)

Eat This Poem
Your thighs of rope
Every twitch
draws me closer
to hemp consciousness
I might as well \ eat this poem

2006, p. 32.
Robert Hagan '17, literature major

I'm not afraid to sleep, it's staying awake that frightens me.

Tethered to the fate of ozymandius, stained bedsheet, and the fatal attraction of months. I advertise northern light.

I find comfort in strangers, an invitation to the restless.

I'm afraid of my rickety bed, it isn't built for rest, always tossing, always turning.

Swiping Right

I'm afraid of my rickety bed, it isn't built for rest, always tossing, always turning.

An invitation to the restless.

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First Read, Then Sung

Spirits of the woods, made of wind and green, spirits of the woods, what music do you sing?

Spirits of the woods, see how the hawk soars! Spirits of the woods:
The butterfly rests at last. Spirit of the woods, Spirits of smoke and growth.

What truth do you speak? What music do you sing?


Luz Argentina Chiriboga, is an essayist, fiction and non-fiction writer, and poet. Among other recognitions, she has been recently nominated for the Alba de las Letras Award, Ecuador, and for the National Espejo Prize of Culture. In March 2015, Luz Argentina was recipient of the "Matilda Hidalgo de Procer Medal of Honor," the highest distinction delivered by the Asamblea Nacional.

Los domingos

En la ciudad ceñida por el mar, el agua fluye junto a los barcos. Este domingo casi todos los habitantes duermen y despiertan asustados con el murmullo de una especie de discurso mal dicho. Una voz de mujer rompe el silencio. Se preguntan intrigados quién será, qué sucede; Es la primera vez que en esas circunstancias ocurre algo semejante.

Algunos se asoman a la ventana, intrigados por el murmullo y voces de alguien que canta. Algo pasa en la plaza. Impacientes, preguntan qué pasa. El canto se agiganta por momentos, la gente corre a ver. Roto así el ritmo habitual de la ciudad, los espectadores aplauden y gritan ¡otra!. Las palabras de una mujer rebotan en el silencio de la mañana, palabras enternecedoras enraizadas en lo más noble de su existencia. La mujer tiene un rostro infantil y una forma sencilla de expresarse, lo que suscita aplausos.

Era una sorpresa para todos que ella se hubiera transformado magicamente. Con su disfras y con movimientos a veces grotescos, su figura inspira alegría y también tristeza. La interpretación que realiza de Celia Cruz, la guarachera, Y de Angela Davis, siembra en lo más noble de su existencia. La mujer tiene un rostro infantil y una forma sencilla de expresarse, lo que suscita aplausos.

Unos dicen que se hace la loca; otros que es medio trastornada. Asistimos a algo de lo que no se puede hablar. Algunos se asoman a la ventana, intrigados por el murmullo y voces de alguien que canta. La interpretación que realiza de Celia Cruz, la guarachera, Y de Angela Davis, siembra en lo más noble de su existencia. La mujer tiene un rostro infantil y una forma sencilla de expresarse, lo que suscita aplausos.

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Ella llora. Algunos domingos recita poemas mezclando varios autores, aunque dice que son de su creación. Entonces, la gente se ríe, y cuando olvida la letra, recita canciones. El público, lleno de sorpresa y de risas, la aplaude. Nadie conoce a fondo la esencia de su locura, pero a ratos ella se burla de la locura inusitada de los cuerpos.

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Los domingos recorre calles y plazas cantando y bailando merengue y salsa. La interpretación que realiza de Celia Cruz, la guarachera, Y de Angela Davis, siembra en lo más noble de su existencia. La mujer tiene un rostro infantil y una forma sencilla de expresarse, lo que suscita aplausos.

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Unos dicen que se hace la loca; otros que es medio trastornada. Asistimos a algo de lo que no se puede hablar. Algunos se asoman a la ventana, intrigados por el murmullo y voces de alguien que canta. La interpretación que realiza de Celia Cruz, la guarachera, Y de Angela Davis, siembra en lo más noble de su existencia. La mujer tiene un rostro infantil y una forma sencilla de expresarse, lo que suscita aplausos.
Sundays
(Los domigos, translation)

In the city bordered by the sea, the water flows alongside the boats. This Sunday almost all the inhabitants sleep and wake up frightened by the murmur of a sort of discourse badly said. A woman’s voice breaks the silence. They wonder who will be, what happens; it is the first time in such circumstances.

Some peep out of the window, intrigued by the murmur of someone who is singing. Something happens in the square. Impatient, people ask what happens. The chanting is enlarged for moments; people run to see.

Broken thus the habitual rhythm of the city, the spectators applaud and shout, another one! The words of a woman bounce in the silence of the morning, moving words rooted in the noblest of her existence. The woman has a baby face and a simple way of expressing herself, which gives rise to applause.

It was a surprise to everyone that she had magically transformed herself. With her disguise and with sometimes grotesque movements, her appearance is joyful and also sad. Her interpretation of Celia Cruz, the guarachera, and of Angela Davis, sows in the hearts of all, a single truth: it expresses tenderness. She remembers her town: “I see you from this distance, I see your river, your green mountains, your beaches. Come back to me, loved town,” she cries.

Some Sundays she recites poems mixing several authors’ poems, although she claims that those poems are of her creation. Then, people laugh, and when she forgets the lyrics, she recites songs. The audience, full of surprise and laughter, give her a round of applause. No one knows in depth the essence of her madness, but at times she mocks the weird madness of the same.

Some say that she is crazy; others that she is half crazy, and some assure that she is totally crazy. No matter what, on Sundays, crazy Lucero shows up dressed in knee-high bombacho breeches, a very wide red skirt, green blouse and a crimson wig.

Those who knew her say that she was an out-of-range black, that is to say, very beautiful and that her white patrona did sorcery to her. Suddenly, Lucero felt bad. For her, it was a torment and a conflict to tell the truth because Rogelia diverted money from the company for gambling and began to trace her, it was a torment and a conflict to tell the truth because Rogelia diverted money from the company for gambling and began to trace her, it was a torment and a conflict to tell the truth because Rogelia diverted money from the company for gambling and began to trace her, it was a torment and a conflict to tell the truth because Rogelia diverted money from the company for gambling and began to trace her.

On Sundays Lucero walks streets and squares singing and dancing merengue and salsa. People surround around to see her dance, applauding and throwing coins for her. Other times she believes she is Angela Davis then gives speech and recites.

One Sunday, Lucero’s older sister shows up, takes off her wig and embarks her in a taxi, heading for a shaman, because this disease is not cured by doctors, but by a specialist in witchcraft. The shaman gives her to drink, for three months, a cup of consommé of the head of a dove; He says that it is very good to recover her memory that has been drained.

Days later Lucero returns, this time to work in her campaign because she is candidate to Assemblywoman and the public, her public screaming: – Long Live Lucero! Lucero Assemblywoman! It was easy for her to win. When she arrives at the Assembly she is astonished that her comrades were fist fighting, shouting, insulting, cursing. Definitely she does not understand the world of sane people. She begins to miss her previous life, the happy days of her madness.

Author: Luz Argentina Chiriboga, Quito, Ecuador. English translation, Niza Fabre

Haiku
Youngsters take delight
In swinging high on the swing
Hearing church bells ring.


Alan Britt, professor of English and creative writing, Towson University.

Birds of Smoke
A smooth fern curls
Above your cabernet
Behind you a faded tapestry
practices falconry
outside the oblivious forest.

The Queen’s arm extends
toward heaven.
A domesticated falcon
her torch.

The waiter arrives,
glides over your perfumed shoulder,
reveals to glistening eyes
a glazed duck beneath silver.

From your coy lips
trail birds of smoke


Valentin
(Dia del amor y la Amistad en USA
14 de febrero de 2017)

No habrá ningún ser
Que desprecie el amor.

Los valientes y certeros poetas
saben mejor que todos amar,
y están entusiastados
por tener un día especial
para celebrarlo con chocolates
versos, abrazos y besos
que son equipos del amor;
el día de San Valentín.
Que tu día sea lleno de AMOR


Valentine 2017
It will never exist someone
who despises love.
But brave and well-aimed poets, know best how
to love all beings
with enthusiasm
in having a special day
celebrating with chocolates,

verses, hugs and kisses
of which are the equipment
of LOVE

Happy Valentine’s Day!

El embrujo del amor

Según podemos leer en el diccionario de la Real Academia Española de la Lengua, “amor es ese sentimiento intenso del ser humano que, partiendo de su propia insuficiencia, necesita y busca el encuentro y unión con otro ser”. Efectivamente, ese sentimiento veheemente, vivo y profundo, que posee cada persona, es único, aunque conlleva distintas connotaciones respecto a quién o a quién va dirigido. Asimismo, dice Santa Teresa de Calcuta que “el amor es el único lenguaje que todos entendemos”, pero, por desgracia, en todas las épocas, incluida la presente, un sinnúmero de personas no comprende ni siquiera superficialmente dicho idioma universal. Es evidente que mucho se ha escrito sobre el amor, noble sentimiento, como ya expresé, que nos hace dar por los entresijos de lo onírico, para despertar los más sublimes anhelos. Palpitaciones encendidas que alientan los sentidos y ensalzan la belleza de todo cuanto tocan con su sutil fragancia. Veheemente fuego de pasiones encendidas, exaltadas, sublime goce, que con tan solo una mirada alumbra los corazones.

¿Cuántas veces la luna ha sido carabina expectante de tal alucinación, de amores imposibles, de encuentros fugitivos? ¿Por qué los amores inalcanzables suscitan tanta agonía y servidumbre, donde los ríos de tinta de los poetas se derraman igual que cascadas de lágrimas? ¿Qué embrujo despliega para que todos los poetas lo ensalcen o giman ante la innegable pérdida? Sólo San Valentín conoce la primera palabra secreta, que en los corazones aviva reflejando. Susurros que el viento lleva a su anhelo y, de nuevo, vuelve a renacer cuando el alma más desprevenida se halla, para llevarla al más recóndito infinito. El sol resplandece en eterna primavera y a hurtadillas las estrellas contemplan su grandeza. “El afán ciego de sentido de todos los enamorados, refiere Octavio Paz, y el tema de reconocimiento de la persona querida. El reconocimiento aspira a la reciprocidad, pero es independiente de ella. Es una apuesta que nadie está seguro de ganar porque es una apuesta que depende de la libertad del otro. El origen del amor es la búsqueda de la reciprocidad libremente otorgada. La paradoja del amor único reside en el misterio de la persona que, sin saber nunca exactamente la razón, se siente invenciblemente atraída por otra persona, con exclusión de las demás. El amor es, pues, atracción involuntaria hacia una persona y voluntaria aceptación de esa atracción.”

Obviamente, el amor es el motor de la vida, de cada persona, de cada acción, de cada paso… Si este motor deja de funcionar, que no lo hará nunca, la vida humana perdería su razón de ser, de existir, es decir, la vida sin amor no tendría sentido alguno. Por consiguiente, ésta se marchitaría como cualquier flor. “Un hombre sin amor, manifiesta Carlos Benítez Villosladas, es un cadáver que muere a cada paso”, pues tendremos siempre presente que el amor es ese manantial de energía vital que nos permite seguir viviendo. Y, ciertamente, el mundo sin amor caminaría, por la misma causa, hacia su total desaparición.

Author: Lola Benítez Molina, Málaga, España.  (English Translation on p. 30)

Photo: Courtesy of Lola Benítez Molina

Love’s Enchantment
(El embrujo del amor. Translation)

According to what one can read in the dictionary of the Spanish Royal Academy of Language: “Love is this intense feeling of the human being that, as a consequence of its own inadequacy, yearns for and seeks out the coupling and union with another being.” Effectively, this fervent feeling, vibrant and profound, which possesses each person, is unique. Although it holds distinct connotations for those to whom it is directed. It is for this reason that St Teresa of Calcutta is quoted to have said: “Love is the language that we all understand.” And yet unfortunately, in every era including the present, an innumerable amount of people lack an even rudimentary understanding of this supposed universal language.

It’s true that much has been written about love, a noble feeling, as I have already expressed, that takes us on a meandering path through our dreams, to awaken the most sublime yearning. Electrifying palpitations which rouse the senses and intensely the beauty of all they touch with their subtle fragrance. A raging fire of burning passion, exaltation, sublime joy, which with just one glance can ignite hearts.

How many times has the moon waxed and waned in anticipation of such delirium, of impossible love, of illicit rendezvous? Why does unattainable love provoke such sweet agony and servitude, where rivers of ink from the poet’s pen cascade like a waterfall of tears? What enchantment is unfurled that poets so laud and glorify it in the face of irrefutable loss?

Only St Valentine knows the first secret word to rouse and kindle hearts. Whispers on the wind arouse cravings which again, are reignited when the most unforeseen soul presents itself, to whisk one away to unfathomable depths.

The sun shines in eternal spring and the stealthy stars contemplate its greatness.

“The constant desire of all lovers, quotes Octavio Paz, and the subject of our great novelists and poets has always been the same: The desire for recognition from the loved-one. Recognition aspires for reciprocity but is distinct. Love is a game that nobody is sure of winning as it is dependent on the liberty of another. The origin of love is the search for mutual affection freely bestowed. The paradox of monogamous love resides in the enigma of the individual who, without ever knowing why, feels an overwhelming attraction to another, to the exclusion of all others. Love is thus, an involuntary attraction to another individual and the voluntary acceptance of this attraction.”

Clearly love is the engine of life, of every person, of each action, of every step… If this engine were to break down, which it never will, the human race would lose all reason for being, of existence, or rather, life without love would have no meaning. And yet, love withers like any other flower: “A man without love, quotes Carlos Benítez Villosladas, is a corpse which dies with each step.” Thus we are aware that love is this spring of vital energy that allows us to continue living. Unquestionably, a world without love would, for this very reason, be destined for total annihilation.


Joni Mitchell
Joni Mitchell sings, textured as magnolia buds
In February.
Tight, leathery, Olive.
Her twisted black branches, iconoclastic right down to their chilly roots.

Mario Andino,
Author and poet.

Gone Sister
Ruth, at thirty years of your embarking, oak leaves plagiarize your hair. Place your tired hand against these leaves: you will see your fingers marked down against that color. They are like a soul that accompanies you, as a loyal little animal (which is) out of season, warming you far beyond, like flower flourishing. Every cypress encourages its green and black, to form a bland ellipsis surrounding you. Ruth, the sun embraces you like an evangelist, it presses each vegetal hand as being your signature, adorned by a meaningful stone with your name.

Hermana ida
(Para mi hermana Ruth Ester)
Ruth, a seis lustros de tu embarque, / la hoja del arce plagia tus cabellos. / Posa tu mano gastada contra las hojas: / verás tus dedos marcados en su color. / Son como un alma que te acompaña / cual fiel animalillo fuera de estación, que entibia el más allá, en floraciones. / Cada ciprés insta en verde negras ramos / que harán ellipsis blandas a tu derredor. / Ruth, el sol te abarca como un evangelista, / imprime cada mano vegetal cual tu firma, / Que ornamenta piedra señera con tu nombre.


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The Years It’s Been
I may not find in this icy window
one uncorrupted face,
one clear passage from image to architect
standing apart
from eye to mouth.
It was surely an exaggeration on my part
and yet
since I have known you,
for a second, a minute, an hour.
Your lifetime makes no excuses,
merely peers unstained
out at an impure world.
I look at you here,
always in isolation,
ever to be doubted,
like spring foliage
or the honing of a silvery sea rock.
Even doing nothing more
than making your own image,
you thrive.
For your world’s an accidental mirror.
Time floats in and out.

John Grey, RI., USA

Nostalgic
Over there, the land of José Martí.
Oh Hatuey, and his Valley of Yumuri.
I was born over there not far from here.
Merely ninety miles away from this pier.
I made the trip by ferry over there.
To the Golden Cup, a pearl with flare.
I long for Varadero, the Clup Tropicana.
The fruits of El Caney, the randy cubana.
La Palma Real is more beautiful over there.
Where people used to leg-pulling don’t care.
But, I won’t go back there, not now.
A consciousness to democracy must be plow.

† G. Amado Bastos. Through The Rhythm of Love. Quebradillas,

Yellow Tile
Surrounded by walls
of yellow tile.
A hive.
Paper echoes.
Am I inside
or out?

Alan Britt. Vermillion. Fayetteville, N.Y: The Bitter Oleander Press,
2006, p. 20.

RAMAPO COLLEGE
Spring 2017
CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

African Ancestry Month, February 2
Event: Opening and proclamation ceremony
Activity: Performance and introduction to the theme
Sponsor: The African Ancestry Month Committee

Real Men Real Talk, February 9
Theme: Masculinity, men’s issues
Activity: Biweekly meeting about what it is being a man on campus
Sponsor: The Women Center

Annual Fashion Show, February 23
Theme: Coming to America
Event: Performances by special guests
Sponsor: Equity and Diversity Programs

Photo Exhibit, March 1
Event: India Photo Exhibit
Theme: “You & Me” by Michael Pacheco
Sponsor: The Roukema Center for International Education

Student Union Banquet, March 21
Introduction: Welcome remarks
Activity: Annual Black Student Union Banquet
Sponsor: The Black Student Union

Tomamos la Palabra, April 3
Speakers: Margarita Drago and Juana M. Ramos
Theme: Testimonies of women who fought in the Civil War
Sponsor: Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies

Annual World Expo, April 19
Activities: Cultural performances
Other Activities: Prizes, free t-shirt
Sponsor: The Roukema Center

Maya Cosmovision, April 24
Speaker: Caryn Maxim
Theme: Indigenous Worldview and Resilience
Sponsor: Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies

Culture Club End of Semester Party, April 27
Speaker: Andrew Herrera
Activity: Graduating e-board members recognition
Sponsor: The Culture Club

Senior Dinner, May 1
Activity: Dinner for graduating seniors
Vendor: Sodexo
Sponsor: Ramapo College

Baquiana, Revista Literaria. Director Ejecutivo: Patricio E. Palacios.
Directora de Redacción: Maricel Mayor Marsán. Ediciones Baquiana,
P.O. Box 521108. Miami, Florida, 33152-1108, info@baquiana.com
Recipe

Home Made Zeppoles

Ingredients:
2 cups flour
2 Tsp sugar
1 tsp baking soda
5 eggs
1 pound cottage cheese

Instructions:
In a bowl, mix the flour, sugar, baking soda, eggs, cottage cheese. Heat corn oil in a large frying pan. Add tablespoon drops of dough in oil. Fry until brown. Drain on paper towel. Sprinkle with powdered sugar.

Makes 36 zeppoles.

Lauren Deo, Literature major, class 2018

Books and Magazines Received

Good Medicine, Winter 2017.
Philological Sciences at MGIMO (U) Philologicheskiye nauki v MGIMO (U) No.3 (76).
Ramapo College Magazine, Summer 2017.

Animal Corner

Carter Mack is a 2.5 year-old, 19 pound mix of Chihuahua, Pekingese, Pomeranian, and Schipperke. He is inquisitive, smart, and a snuggle bug. Carter loves to play fetch and to sleep under the covers in bed.

Honey Bee

Honey Bee extracted nectar from a flower as pollen grains stuck to its body in the Surroundings of the Spiritual Center grounds, at Ramapo College, Summer 2016.
Animal Corner

Fifi

Fifi’s first 30 years of life were spent at a roadside zoo in Pennsylvania, where the Syrian brown bear was forced to stand on her hind legs and perform tricks to entertain visitors for years. When the zoo finally closed down in 1995, she and three other bears were simply warehoused in cramped cages. Two decades later, PETA learned of their plight and arranged for them to be retired to the Wild Animal Sanctuary in Colorado. Fifi was severely underweight and suffering from arthritis in her rear legs. Her coat was thin and Unkempt, and her eyes were sunken. But after just a few months, she was a different bear. Today her legs are stronger, her eyes are bright, and her coat has become thick and shiny.

Published with permission of PETA, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals.

Sparky

Sparky is a Brittany rescue who was adopted when he was one-year-old. He is now three years old and likes to spend his time running, napping, playing with toys, and eating treats. He is always excited to see people and has earned the nickname “Wiggles” because of the way he shakes his body when he sees someone. Like other dogs of his breed, he is very energetic and can often be found at Ramapo Reservation and at the dog’s park in Ridgewood, NJ.

Photo: Julianne De Lisi ’17, literature major


World Expo Fills the Grove with the international Music and Activities. For the fifth year Ramapo College held Annual World Expo event this spring 2017. The World Expo is an event that showcases multiple cultures. It is designed to commemorate the diversity represented on campus. World Expo encourages students to experience other cultures. This event took place on April 19, 2017, it was sponsored by the Roukema Center.