The Cultural Journal
Fall 2016

The Culture Club, BMAD 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.
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President Peter P. Mercer’s Message to Campus

Dear Students, Colleagues, and Friends:

Individuals, departments, and organizations across the country and across our campus are engaging in dialogue centered around the presidential election. For those of you participating in these discussions, thank you. And, for those of you who may feel anxious, discouraged, or even dispassionate about the societal impact of this election cycle, I encourage you to reject the false comfort of isolation and instead to engage with your peers, colleagues, faculty, and staff in ways that promote mutual understanding and respect. We all, always, have something to learn and something to share.

Today is Veteran’s Day. After a tumultuous week, it is fitting to reflect more deeply on its historical significance. On November 11, 1918 fighting between the allied nations and Germany ceased on the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The resolution passed by the United States Congress in 1926 which established Veteran’s Day includes, in pertinent

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Dr. Stephen P. Rice, Dean of SSHGS

Letter from the Dean

The spring semester was another one filled with activity here in Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies. I hope you enjoy reading this newsletter and learning more about the great work of our faculty and students. Here, I want to highlight just a couple of things. First, two of our colleagues who were founding members of the Ramapo faculty, Donald Fucci and Anthony Padovano, retired at the end of the 2016 spring semester. Dr. Fucci, who served as professor of literature, taught a whole range of courses in our literature program, was a driving force behind the College’s Critical Reading and writing program and served for many years as the academic convener of the summer Educational Opportunity Fund (EOP) program, where he also taught since 1971. Dr. Padovano was a distinguished professor of literature and philosophy whose Bible as literature courses were mainstays of the literature course offerings. He was one of the College’s founders and for many years the director of the College’s first graduate program in liberal studies. He was a prolific scholar, having published more than 20 books and delivering lectures all over the world (including the commencement address at the 2016 graduation ceremony). Don and Anthony inspired generations of Ramapo students, and they modeled a spirit of service and collegiality for the faculty who followed. They will be missed, but they are leaving a lasting legacy. For the complete “Letter from the Dean” go to the Fall 2016 SSHGS Perspective, The newsletter of the Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, pp. 1-2.

Abdulai Swaray ’17

Year of Sub Saharan Opening Celebration, Abdulai Swaray ’17, Information technology Mgmt. major, made a presentation on

My Life Story

Once upon a time, a child was born into a Muslim family during a civil war in his country. His mama fled with him into a jungle where they lived for six years. As the little boy started to grow, he was curious to know the reason why they were living in the jungle. One day his mama told him the answer. She said, “I am living here to save your life. If I stay in the town, the rebels or soldiers will take you away from me, and I will never see you again.” The rebels finally attacked the jungle where this little boy and his mama were hiding, and they got separated from each other. The little boy followed a convoy that lead to the city, and he ended up in the city alone, without his mama. The little boy struggled in the streets. He had nobody to cry to and no one to feed him, so he entered into child labor. He began sleeping on the street and living off the food he found there. One night, a group of missionaries was searching for street kids, and they came across this little Muslim boy, a little after midnight and in the pouring rain. When he saw the missionaries, he ran away, but one of the missionary men followed him and told him the reason they want to rescue him. After that, they took him to an orphanage home called Child Rescue Center. They clothed him and provided him food and shelter. I was that boy.

Living in this beautiful orphanage home, I started to develop a different lifestyle, and I was always curious to learn about what it meant to be a human. I devoted my time and happy hour to studying some of the most influential human beings who have ever lived on the planet earth: Jesus, my savior, Nelson Mandela, Mother Theresa, and others. All of these people did great feats in their lives and left a mark on this world that continues into the twenty-first century. There were forty of us living in this orphanage home, sixteen boys and twenty-four girls. We grew up to become brothers and sisters. Every six months, a group of missionaries would visit us from the United States. During their visits, we did many activities, and they organized vocational bible school for us. I started to take an interest in their love, care, and concern for us. One year, they brought us special T-shirts that had “I am a special child” printed on them. I kept that T-shirt for a very long time, and every time I looked at it, I asked myself, “What makes me special? What can I do to be special among my brothers and sisters?” I started to think about how I can be a special child in the lives of others. I reflected on all of the blessings I had received and the opportunities and experiences I had. During my second year of high school, I told myself that it would be time for me to be a special child to other people. For me, being a special child means doing a little bit of kindness to those who are in need. This idea evolved in me during high school. I helped my friends with math problems and joined peer health.
My Life Story

educational groups and other organizations in my school to help the impoverished people in our community.

In 2008, I went to my home village after being away for seventeen years. I was in search of my mother, but I learned that I would not see her again. When I looked around the village, there weren’t any good houses. The entire village was burned down during the Blood Diamond War. I decided to sleep in the village as a way to experience something that would give me a clearer understanding of the situation so that I could make changes. I did not sleep that night. At midnight, I took a pen and drafted a two-year plan to restore the village. I returned to my orphanage home, and I met a missionary named Alan Chorus. I explained to him all that I saw during my visit to my home and the plans that I had to change the situation. Alan embraced my ideas and restoration plans and took them with him for his return to the United States. As I waited for Alan, I started to save my daily lunch money from the orphanage home, and every six months, I bought some treats and sent them to children in the village. They told me how much they appreciated it. Alan finally appealed to his church and Thaakat Foundation, and they were able to raise funds for the first phase of the restoration project. With these funds, we restored the village, built a drinking water well, and sponsored five kids to school. Through the Thakaat Foundation, we launched a free Maternity Health Center in 2013 that has a twenty-four hour solar power light that continues to serve fifteen village towns. In 2014, we raised $12,000 to help Benmat Primary School in Bo, the second capital city of Sierra Leone. We are currently sponsoring 150 kids for school, along with three high school kids in Christ the King College.

My compassion for others is continually flourishing, and I help create awareness about the impoverished. I do not want anyone to experience what I had experienced. The goal for Young Vision Africa is to empower the impoverished to become future leaders in their communities. The world could be a better place if we all shared kindness with one another. Take this from me; whatever bit of kindness you do to the least of your brethren, it will come back to you or your generation. This project has been a personal blessing to me. I once was an orphan, but today I am no longer that orphan child who used to sleep on the street. The Lord has blessed me with a lovely wife and child. My Mom, Carolyn Herrings, adopted me in 2012, and she has been like a real mother to me. I also have other families here in the States who love and care about my family and me. I have received a scholarship from Ramapo College of New Jersey through the help of the three mothers in New Jersey: Carolyn Herrings, Dr. Kathleen Burke, and Dr. Elaine Patterson. These people and the Stenger family have been a blessing to me in my college life.

My last adventure was in May 2014, when I heard about the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. This adventure was a huge sacrifice for me because that was a time when nobody wanted to go to the places affected by Ebola. I went to Sierra Leone and created a campaign group to educate the native people about Ebola. Through this campaign, we successfully eradicated Ebola in Pujehun, the first district that was declared Ebola free in Sierra Leone. I want to be a blessing in the lives of others in my generation. However, I cannot do this alone. Come join this noble and rewarding cause! Abdulai Swaray’s, “My Life Story” was presented at The Year of Sub-Saharan Africa Celebration, September 21, 2016. It was sponsored by The Roukema Center.

Haiku

“three shots of brandy and the world is different,”
a drunken moon sings

It’s winter, Bah! Ha!
Icicles cling to rooftops;
Snow and cold wind blow.


Dr. Karl Johnson, associate professor of African American Studies, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, made a presentation on

“Dakar, Senegal: An African City of Religious Tolerance & Progress”


Religion. Languages and ethnicity:

Languages: French (official); Wolof, Pulaar, Jola, Mandinka. Ethnicity/race: Wolof 43.3%, Pulaar 23.8%, Serer 14.7%, Jola 3.7%, Mandinka 3%, Soninke 1%, European and Lebanese 1%, other 9.4%. Religions: Islam 94%, Christian 5% (mostly Roman Catholic); indigenous 1%. Literacy rate: 49.7% (2009 est.).

Economic summary:


Communications:

Telephones: main lines in use: 338,200 (2012); mobile cellular: 11.47 million. This activity took place on October 24, 2016. It was sponsored by The Culture Club. Brothers Making a Difference and Africana Studies. (Continued on next page).


Transportation:


International disputes:

The Gambia and Guinea-Bissau attempt to stem separatist violence, cross border raids, and arms smuggling into their countries from southern Senegal's Casamance region.

What Make Dakar so tolerant & progressive,

First President Léopold Sédar Senghor (9 October 1906 – 20 December 2001) was Roman Catholic a Senegalese poet, politician, and cultural theorist who for two decades served as the first president of Senegal (1960–80). Senghor was the first African elected as a member of the Académie Française. Before independence, he founded the political party called the Senegalese Democratic Bloc. He is regarded by many as one of the most important African intellectuals of the 20th century.

Women are not veiled. Modern Muslim & African styles allowed for women-no face veil. They are free to work in media Dakar TV show and have influence in society even in religion. Women can participate in business and have the children there too. Women are running business all by themselves. This is progressive and goes against the Middle East stereotype of what Muslim women can and should do. Women sell beauty and image products on WALT TV. Oprah style TV shows allowed that cater to women. Furthermore, women, young and adult, have a choice in styles they wear in public.

Middle East stereotype of what Muslim women can and should do. Women sell beauty and image products on WALT TV. Oprah style TV shows allowed that cater to women. Furthermore, women, young and adult, have a choice in styles they wear in public. Young people are able to watch Western videos. Media is not restricted Notice.

Western style pop culture is not banned. Mix of traditional and modern culture is acceptable. Women can attend, unveiled, a Muslim game show next to men. This would not happen in a stricter nation. Modern infrastructure is being built. Heavy traffic and traffic jams are common in Central Dakar.

This activity took place on October 24, 2016. It was sponsored by The Culture Club, Brothers Making a Difference, and Africana Studies.

Left to right: Dr. Karl Johnson, Troy Reyes Caldwell ’17, Deirdre B. Foreman, Collin Brence ’18, Brittany Jordan ’17, Austin Lasko ’19, Niza Fabre, Manuel Barreto ’15, Larry Griffin ’17, attended Dr. Karl Johnson’s presentation on “Dakar, Senegal: An African City of Religious Tolerance & Progress,” on October 24, 2016, sponsored by the Culture Club, Brothers Making a Difference, and Africana Studies.

“Dakar, Senegal: An African City of Religious Tolerance & Progress”

Continued from p. 6).
La vida pesa
Para Patricio

Pesan los años trancurridos en soledad, pesa el instante de algún error cometido en el camino.

Pesan las dudas y los recuerdos, pesa el vacío de lo que pudo ser y no fue.

Pesan los años que no pasamos juntos, pesa el no haberte conocido mucho antes.


Life Weighs
To Patricio

Weigh the years spent in solitude, it weighs the instant of some mistakes committed on the road.

Weigh the doubts and the remembrances, it weighs the emptiness of what it could have been and it was not.

Weigh the years that we were not together, it weighs not having met you much sooner.

Nicola Tanelli

(1963-2013)

Nicola Tanelli, son of Dr. Orazio Tanelli. Dr. Tanelli, professor of Italian, founder and director of *Il Ponte italo-Americano* International Magazine of art, poetry and culture.

* The Town I Call Home

This town should be full of shame
Its only desire is to preserve its precious name.
The children are misguided by fear,
The elders think that wrongs will just disappear.
This town should be allowed to fall.
Its saving grace
Is that it’s the town I call home.

This town should be full of shame.
Its only desire is to preserve its precious name.
The children are divorced from their dreams.
The elders think that any change
Is a decadent scheme.
This town should be allowed to fall.
Its saving grace
Is that it’s the town I call home.

Nicola Tanelli

* Murder in New York

Disheveled, unshaved and pale
I wiped the blood from my dirty hair
I had been brawling
With someone bigger than me,
With a knife and the scars of his history
And how I daydream
Clean cut, a tie and alive
Everybody in the city is staring at me
Could I be next?
Is this the test?
Add to the stats
Watch my back
Please let my mother know
If I die.

Nicola Tanelli

* Il Ponte italo-Americano. 26th Anniversary, Anno XXVII No. 2, Fall 2016, p. 20.

Mrs. Franca Tanelli and Dr. Orazio Tanelli. Professor Tanelli, author and poet, displays the Oscar for Literature Prize recently received from the “Ruggero II” Academy, Palermo, Sicily.


Photo: Courtesy of Orazio Tanelli

Photo: Courtesy of Mattia Cipriano
Happy Birthday, Colleague Orazio

For another flower
on your tree of life.
I hope you will be full of flowers
Like this country tree,
and that you may keep
the potency of happiness,
a shining look at the future
and fire in your heart to love.
May the real flowers around you
give fragrance to your personality,
so each day ahead,
your words become
an elixir of hope to all of us
who love you.

Teresinka Pereira. Il Ponte italo-Americano.

Painting by
Prince
Cav.
Mattia
Cipriano,
Byzantine
Order of
the Holy
Sepulcher,
Knight of
Grand
Cross-
Malta,
Priory
of
Westchester,
New York.

Katherine
McGee,
Director
Title IX,
ADA,
Compliance
Training,
posed with
her son at
“The
Students,
Faculty,
and
Staff of
Color
Welcome
Back Kick-
Off.” This
event took
place on
September
14, 2016.

It was
sponsored
by The
Equity and
Diversity
Programs.

Left: Tamika
Quick,
assistant
director
Equity and
Diversity.
Right: Karl
Johnson,
associate
professor of
African
American
Studies,
posed at
“The
Students,
Faculty, and
Staff of Color
Welcome
Back Kick-
Off.” This
event took
place on
September 14, 2016.

It was sponsored by The Equity and Diversity Programs.

Photo: Niza Fabre
Fragment

Quilobas: the harsh sanctuary streaked with neon
Mulata I have you on the floor
You pray for thick blue snakes there arrive on your chest
You will take women for the pardo, and he was dark
And slice the skin but death is not yet easy for thick black skin

My hymn is to the virgin as the sun shits blue
Sonny Chiba arrives: gyras, chicken, ludes
Why are you treating me so bad:
God, Allah, and mother goose cut these mofo&?# . down on Forty Deuce
I see you there exposed beneath umbrellas and loud thick radios
Minas where the milk drips where rape and black skulled babies lived
The white minds searching for germs and cold; the swords
Blunted my quick black spirits: They prayed in the mountains
and they bathed in the fire beneath their skin, eating the feathers of birds
and stripping the bark with broken white teeth, the men without white
mothers burning the land and eating dogs Minas; cold flat blue beauty
of sky and night lip the nipples of the moon
Nago, nago plant the slit blooding sole and let the insects
fed on the black warm tissue
Nago, nago turn your back to the sun and your eyes to the moon
Break the air and pound down: thick, slow strokes
Black, blue, holding the breath swollen the narrow tongues of
frighten men. You samba, tou touc, boom tou tou.
Arabs, Germans
and Lebanese got caught in African seas. Their quick children found
new god. Give me the service of god: make the wise cows
And slow white beasts. These gods have no blood. They heal
themselves nago nago. The roe-
rest takes the sperm of your feet
In this chain and in this line oh, oh find the breathe
Beatuing the claws of sound through the flash of blood and suddenly
You know that clouds and good god all fold.

Oh my king, I am ready, I am on my knees, I, I, I am ready
The earth has my water and the earth has my blood;
The shit is on and I am down. I am down like a mofo&?#
I am clean I offer you kola, and then I place my gift at your feet
Rescue me from the jaws of dogs, I have my music of sticks and rattles.

Joseph Johnson, associate professor of literature, Salameno School
of Humanities and Global Studies, author and poet.

Joséito Fernández

Una luz como un brillante
Llegó por el mar un día
Y esa luz nos prometía
Ser la estrella del diamante.
Era carisma y bondad,
Empeño, valor, tesón,
Heroismo y humildad
Y un enorme corazón.
Ser humano sin igual
Con su perenne sonrisa
Que era cual soplo de brisa
Cual caricia y madrigal.
Por su vida de cometa
Hoy nos queda la tristeza
Y yo humilde poeta
quiero exaltar su grandeza.
Y sin tener duda alguna
Porque era muy especial
El jugará con la Luna
Junto a un coro Celestial.
Blanca Segarra, Miami, Florida.

Translation, Niza Fabre

Something Magical

There was something magical
In the air.
Snowflakes falling everywhere.

Dr. Erin Augis, Professor Sociology, School of Social Science and Human Services, gave a talk on “Youth and Neoliberalism in West Africa.” Year of Sub-Saharan Africa: Opening Reception, September 21, 2016.

Dr. David Colman, associate professor of African American history, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, made a presentation on “Africa is Everywhere,” at the “Year of Sub-Saharan Africa: Opening Reception,” September 21, 2016.
Ramapo has maintained a partnership with Knust since 2001 and has been strengthening ever since. This event took place on September 21, 2016. It was part of Ramapo’s year of Sub-Saharan Africa, sponsored by the Roukema Center.

Left: Dr. Martha Ecker, professor of sociology, SSHS. Right: Dr. Susan Hangan, professor of Anthropology and International Studies, SSHGS, posed at the “Opening Lunch with Knust,” on September 21, 2016.

René León

Historian, author, poet, and editor of Pensamiento Digital literary Magazine.

Photo: Courtesy of René León

My First Poem

My first poem I dedicated to a caramel-color eyes child, with thick eyebrows and long braided hair, who lived near my parents’ home. I saw her every day on her way to school. Always with a smile on her lips and her caramel-color eyes.

I found her in my dreams, laughing, jumping, and I lost my way on unknown paths, with my esconced poem as things are cloaked, at the first glance of love.

That first poem I dedicated to her. Sometimes I think of the melancholy, and the sad nights. everything throbs around me, and the night is my companion.

Her name, I have forgotten her name, but I go on writing her the poem, and I pray to forgetfulness. I collect a kiss in any stare. I also find nourishment from other things, from the memory of yesterday and reach out to her with a gaze.

Mi primer poema

Mi primer poema lo dediqué a una niña, de ojos color caramelo, cejas espesas, pelo largo y trenzado, que vivía cerca de la casa de mis padres.

La veía todos los días cuando iba para la escuela. Siempre con la sonrisa en sus labios y sus ojos color caramelo.

En mis sueños me la encontraba, riendo, saltando, y yo me perdía por caminos desconocidos, con mi poema oculto, como se esconden las cosas, en la primera mirada de amor.

Aquél primer poema se lo dediqué a ella. A veces pienso en la melancolía, y en las noches tristes, y todo late alrededor mío, y la noche es mi compañera.

Su nombre; me he olvidado de su nombre, pero le sigo escribiendo el poema, y rezo al olvido.

Recojo besos en cualquier mirada, También vivo de otras cosas, del recuerdo del ayer, y salir a su encuentro con una mirada.
The Relief of Night

Night came to the San Fernando Valley, and all you could hear was the whisper of cars from the 170 Hollywood Freeway.

A tight row of palm trees swayed back and forth, like metronomes on a low setting, too sun-drunk to do much more.

The sky sketched itself in purples and grays, never darker than that, as if the city couldn't bear to lose its postcard optimism and bright promise.

A coyote, all ribs and mange and teeth, came down from the hills, exploring, making his way onto someone's front lawn. He stared at the plastic flamingos for a while, before deciding this other world was too absurd.

But he knew, like the rest of us, that the night was safe. Night was an apology for the day, for all of its crimes and disappointments. It was the big, heavy blanket, the refuge, the shield of blotted-out stars, under which all of us could rest, and heal, and forget. So we listened to the freeway traffic like a distant lullaby. We watched the palm trees guiding us to sleep. We wondered why the sky never dimmed. And we dreamed of coyotes and plastic lawn ornaments, only to wake up, and laugh.

Jarrod García ’19, literature major, concentration, creative writing, Ramapo College.

Deadlock

A likely impossibility is always preferable to an unconvincing possibly.

- Aristotle

You said: “that's the way I am” yet, demanding indulgence catechized confessions Being neither oracle nor antecedent, I spurn my shoulder Abstruse it is, but I prefer to bed With a good lie

You said: “that's the way I am” Sincerity, enduringly overrated won’t grant you passage through my substance Master your guilt and absorb your punishment


The Spirit Endures

Black night descends
With angel wings
Singing sighs of brilliance
In the twilight.

You are no longer here.
You have moved on;
Yet, I feel your spirit
 apiing in the stars at night.

There was a smile
In your voice
There was a smile in your eyes

Dr. Michael Edelstein, professor and director of the Institute for Environmental Studies School of Social Science and Human Services, impersonated Benjamin Franklin in celebration of the Constitution of The United States of America. This picture was taken on September 14, 2016.

Transference
Psychodynamic transference
Echoes personal reference
Obscuring our difference
Vibrating as our resonance
Encountering transferential reverence
Undoing experiential severance
Overcoming the despair of indifference
Embracing our communal reconnaissance
Now leads us to discover the essence
Of knowing the truth of each one’s presence.

Do I Matter?

Do I matter when I put a do-rag on. Do I matter if I go to class. Who would care if I never mattered? My family, friends, a stranger on the street. Senseless killings that could have been me. I can go the fed up route and resort to blowing up but instead raise ya voice make them scared of the come up. We winners kings, queens and princes, but they only cared when we did s**t. The positivity you think will clear shit but nah. They want a war they want us dead, chalk mark the floor. But, we fight the way momma taught us how you are strong my child. Don’t let them break you down. They not crazy; they just see ya potential so stop the force early don’t let it gain momentum that’s what they think, that’s how they move. Move stronger young bro what you have to lose. Ya life you may think and that’s a burden to bear but only way to stop the bully is to show them you aren’t scared. Rise keep ya head held high. Smile they have to break you first; don’t give up hope, don’t frown. So tell me does my life matter now?

Brandon Petty ’20, sociology major, concentration public sociology, president of Brothers Making a Difference, a student organization that aims to promote upward mobility for blacks and Latino males.

La caída

Al caer quedé inconciente. En este mundo existe sabia que no cesa de correr. Me detengo en la sombra, en el mismo tiempo inmortal. En aquel vacio no me siento la misma, estoy viviendo otra vida, una más rica, como si hubiera sido transportada a otra atmósfera, donde el amor se advierte tan poderoso, tan tierno y sonrio deslumbrada en aquel mundo. Creci en un ambiente en el que todo era engaño. Mi madre, consagrada al hogar solo vivia para mi padre, él la acompañaba a misa los domingos, demostraba fe. Estaba segura que papá la engañaba con otras mujeres, pero, se acostumbró a mirar sin ver, semejaba haber entrado en un mundo de tinieblas. Con tantos años de casada, sin sentir realmente amor. La pareja cumplía los deberes de la Iglesia, temiendo siempre el que dirían. Bajo aquel temor me edúque fingiendo ser feliz, siempre pendiente de la crítica.

Papá con sus principios sobre la mujer y mamá silenciaba, él era parte de ella, en esa mezcla, a lo que más le temían era al comentario del grupo social al que pertenecían. No quiero engrosar la lista de las divorciadas. ¡Divorciada jamás! Me sentiría rechazada por la sociedad. Y me fui acostumbrando al sufrimiento, al maltrato por falta de coraje, reconoció el sueño, sucedo lo que suceda. Prometi estar casada hasta la muerte. La agresión que recibo, se convirtió en un secreto. Un secreto de confesión, que guardo siempre en silencio y apenas sentiré dolor luego de la muerte. La pareja me golpea. Temblando de miedo, sé y siento que mi deber es divorciarme, de minuto a minuto viene a mi memoria el recuerdo de mamá y se debilita el propósito de separarme de mi marido. El temor al que dirán, mis padres, mis amigos, mis compañeras maestras del colegio y del club. Lo más importante, no podría comulgar, recibiría el castigo de mi marido. El temor al que dirán, mis padres, mis amigos, mis compañeras maestras del colegio y del club. Lo más importante, no podría comulgar, recibiría el castigo de Dios.

Aimio temores, angustias, no quiero regresar. Lentamente volvío al reino de los vivos; escuchó a Roberto, mi marido, en el colmo de la desesperación, llora, grita, se lamenta, cree que mi muerte es impostergable, siento que me mira con sus ojos de gato. Lo odio en silencio. Odio aquella voz. Lo odio por su actitud felina, sus gestos orgullosos; le tengo miedo, miedo sudoroso apretándome la garganta, miedo que me impide gritar. Tiempo cuando está borracho; es entonces que arrastro sin piedad mis palabras, siento las lágrimas fluir incontenibles ardiéndome los ojos. Angustia que amenaza enloquecerme. Lo odio por ese gesto audaz y ese brillo afilibrado de sus ojos.

Ahora está disfrazado de caballero. Bajo su silueta civilizada de profesor universitario, tiene actitudes falsas; luego, olvidándose de su elegante porte se convierte en un diablo blanco. No quiero hablar. Decido continuar en el embrollo de esta sombra, lo impalpable; hay en mí algo que no puedo identificar con el amor y la crueldad a la vez. Surge desde el fondo de mí misma una violenta duda.

Despierto sin abrir los ojos. Glorita, te amo, no te mueras. ¡Te juro que te amo! Abro los ojos. Nos besamos.

Luz Argentina Chiriboga

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 “Matilde Hidalgo de Procer Medal of Honor,” the highest distinction delivered by the Asamblea Nacional.

Luz Argentina Chiriboga, Quito, Ecuador. (English Translation on p.27)
The Fall

When I fell, I lost consciousness. In this world there is a sap of life that doesn't stop circulating. I stay in the shadow, in the immortal time. I do not feel the same in that emptiness. I am living another life, a much richer life, as if I had been transported into another atmosphere, where love is sensed so powerful, so tender, and I smile astonished in that world.

I grew up in an environment in which everything was deceit. My mother, consecrated to home, she only lived for my father; he went with her to mass on Sundays, he showed he had faith. She was sure that father cheated on her with other women, but, she got used to look without seeing, as if she had entered in a world of darkness. So many years was being married, without really feeling any love. The couple fulfilled the duties of the Church, always fearing what people would say. Under that fear I was educated pretending to be happy, always aware of people's criticism.

Father with his values about women, and mother in silence; he was part of her, in that mix, what they feared most was to the comment of the social group to which they belonged.

I do not want to swell the list of divorced women. Divorced, never! I will be rejected by society. And I was getting use to suffering and mistreatment. For lack of courage, I went to sleep, no matter what happen. I promised to be married until death. The aggression that I receive, became a secret. A secret of confession, that I always keep in silence, pretending to be happy.

I struggle with that tendency when Robert hits me. Trembling of fear, I know and feel that my duty is to divorce him. Every minute I remember the image of my mother, and the purpose of separating from my husband becomes weak. The fear of what people will say, my parents, my friends, my colleagues teachers of the school and of the club. More importantly, i could not receive communion. I would receive punishment from God.

I feel fear and anxiety. I don't want to return, but I slowly return to the realm of the living; I listen to Robert, my husband, in despair. He cries, screams, and regrets. He believes that my death is inevitable. I sense that he is looking at me with his cat's eyes. I hate him in silence. I hate that voice. I hate him for his feline attitude, his proud gestures. I fear him. I feel a sweaty fear squeezing my throat, It is a fear that prevents me from screaming. I tremble when he is drunk; it is then when I drag my words without mercy. I feel my tears running uncontrollable, burning my eyes. It is a distress that threatens to make me go crazy. I hate him for that bold gesture and that feverish glare of his eyes.

Now he is disguised as a gentleman. Under his sophisticated personality of a University Professor, he is a fake. Forgetting his elegant bearing, he turns into a white demon. I don't want to talk. I decide to continue in the spell of this shadow, the impalpable; There is something in me that I can't identify with love and cruelty at the same time. It arises from my inner self a violent doubt.

I awake without opening my eyes.
-Glorita, I love you, don't die. I swear that I love you!
I open my eyes. We kissed.

Luz Argentina Chiriboga, Quito, Ecuador. Original in Spanish.
English translation, Niza fabr

A Woman Enters a Room

Verbs fall from her hair through a vapor of cognac

Existential birds escape from her eyes smashing opinions & blue wolves of superstition.

Her shoulders balance two herbal witches dragged from a smoking Puritan altar.

Her hips grace the horizon.


Green Mask

My hands appear to be wearing
The green mask of a Buddha.

Palms reflect a friendly smile.

I would like the key, I say. She tells me that I already have it.

Lenin Veras '17, posed at work in the Residence Life Mail Room. Summer 2016.

A Question of Survival

I think I'm cheating or something
Otherwise, why do the gunmen
mow down the innocent in northern Kenya
and not here.
My life is like answers written
on the back of my hand.
Floods, earthquakes, riots in the streets - no.
It says right here on my knuckles:
eat tasty dinner, watch TV,
go to bed and sleep deep.

Even when the violence is close,
there's a piece of paper
hidden in my pocket
that I can refer to.

Drug deal gone wrong?
No, it clearly states,
kiss on the cheek,
arm around the shoulder.
Three car pile-up on 295?
The missive declares,
drive on, go to your destination,
you're not involved.

I read the newspaper in the morning:
Kidnappings, muggings,
landslides and always more massacres.
Nothing in those pages indicates
that these or any other
cries, wars and disasters,
can be avoided.

Not even the obituaries.
But the ones pictured
are always someone else.
If I knew my secret
believe me I'd share it
with all the ones.
who don't know their secret.

John Grey, RI., USA

Lecuona's Music

From Havana to Hollywood via Europe
The Lecuona's Cuban Boys were amazing,
Playing the Afro-Cuban new rumba swing,
An exciting music, sensuous, exotic.
Dancers everywhere couldn't be static.

Before there was a Tito Puente band,
The "cazuela" voices of Desy Arnaz's clan,
Josephine Baker, Tito Rossi, Dick Haymes
Were amongst the international names
Lecuona presented in his legendary band.

Nicholas Incorvala ‘16

$22,00, a Pair of Shoes and a Dream

With the election and all the talk of immigration I cannot help but think of the times I spoke to my friend’s father, Dr. Alejandro Benjamin. Dr. Benjamin came from a small town of Barahona in the Dominican Republic. He and his family did not have much growing up in the Dominican Republic, but what they did have was a dream to come to America. Dr. Benjamin was an amazing baseball player and at the young age of 14 he was picked up by a team and sent to an academy for baseball training. Eventually, as he got older, he got better in baseball and obtained his ticket to his dream. Dr. Benjamin was able to get a visa to the United States of America through baseball.

When Dr. Benjamin got here he only had $22 and a pair of extra shoes to his name. Coming to America with family or friends can be a scary thing in itself, but Dr. Benjamin came here by himself, with the goal of bringing his entire family to America. Dr. Benjamin was never played or practiced baseball on the visa after coming to America. For a very long time he worked in a mattress factory and lived in the factory too he did not have his own home. Dr. Benjamin knew that the key to getting his family here was his education. When he got to America he did not speak much English and because of this and his complexion faced a lot of racism. He was even refused service at a local restaurant. The transition to America was definitely not an easy one for Dr. Benjamin, but he is definitely not the type man to give up.

Dr. Benjamin was able to get accepted into Rutgers and get his degree. Eventually he was able to bring over his entire family into the United States. Dr. Benjamin was even given an honorary doctorate from Rutgers University. Dr. Benjamin is a bishop at a local church and oversees other throughout New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and is also a professor at a local community college. Dr. Benjamin’s story has always been one that has touched me because although he has faced so much resistance in his life and had next to nothing coming over, he never gave up and is one of the most optimistic men I have ever met in my life. Some may ask why I chose to write about Dr. Benjamin and I will simply answer that I hope other immigrants and people can read his story and be inspired to never give up on their dreams. So for that I thank Dr. Benjamin for being the man he is today.

Nicholas Incorvala ‘16, history major. Ramapo College

Poetry Today

Eventually,
All poets pass away;
But while we’re alive
Let us enjoy
Some poetry today.
The spirit of the tree
Flowing into me
A spirit of light.


Mario Andino, author and poet

Tracing Sorrows

The anguishes’ trampling leads to a place where sorrow lives, next to the cypresses which, along with the myrrh, make the ambiance where pain resides. There is no worse pain than remembering those happier days, under misery. Do not cry, do not sigh or comfort yourselves with the sweetest rains that can also dismember violets which will not be fresh anymore nor will they bud again. I request of one of the most pretense stars, a devotion for something very far from the sorrow’s sphere. When suffering may be asleep, don’t wake it because pain is only good for sinning. A pure and complete gloom is as impossible as an eternal happiness.

The region of suffering and its mourning shows are where peace will be able to survive. Shake the dust from daring, and your boldness, because man could be lower than sands. Minor anguish talks (to us), the sharpest one in silent. Let us consider that sorrow doesn’t pay the bills – moreover is crueler than a spider web.


La huella del dolor

El camino de la angustia lleva al lugar que habitan congojas, junto a los cipreses y el mirto; es el ambiente donde radica. No hay pena más grande que la de recordar, en la miseria, los días más felices. No lloréis, ni suspiréis ni tampoco se solacen con las lluvias más dulces que también desmiembran violetas, las que ya no serán tan frescas, otra vez. Pido a una de las estrellas más pretéritas, la devoción por algo muy lejos de la esfera del dolor. Cuando el pesar esté adormecido, no lo desértéis; el dolor es sólo bueno para pecar. La congoja plena y completa, es tan imposible como la eterna felicidad. La región de la angustia y su sombra de duelo, está donde la paz nunca podrá revivir . . .

Sacudid el polvo de osadías y tu atrevimiento porque el hombre puede ser más bajo que arena. Las penas menores se comunican: las más grandes, silenciosas. Consideréis que el sufrir no paga deudas, mas es cual una aviesa telaraña.

Left to right: Brandon Petty ’17, sociology major, Manuel Barreto ’15, history major, Troy Reyes Caldwell ’17, contemporary arts major, represented Brothers Making a Difference at the Student Involvement fair, September 7, 2016.

Audrea Leiva ’17, visual arts major, made a presentation on “Why Do You Call Yourself Latino If You Are Black.” This activity took place on September 20, 2016. It was sponsored by OLU (Organization of Latino Unity).

Photo: Austin Lasko

Photo: Niza Fabre

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RAMAPO COLLEGE
FALL 2016
CULTURAL AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

Pop Songs, September 24
Activity: Century Old Melodies with Contemporary Pop artists
Performers: A New York City-based string quartet
Sponsor: The Berrie Center

In Their Shoes, September 28
Event: Bringing Attention to Number of Students Suicides
Activity: Shoe display and quotes from young adults
Host: Attitudes in Reverse Organization

Hindu Festival, October 17
Celebration: Major Hindu Diwali Lights Up
Speaker: Pritha Aggarwal
Sponsor: The South Asians of Ramapo organization

Clothesline Project, October 19
Theme: Support Survivors of Sexual Assault.
Sponsors: The Women center and Bergen County Healing Space

Women In the Middle Ages, October 27
Speaker: Federico Canaccini
Theme: Vision of Women in the Middle Ages
Sponsor: The Italian Club

Post-Election, “I Feel,” November 17
Themes: Concerns related to the presidential Election
Speaker: Rick Brown, director CSI
Sponsor: The Women center, The Counseling center, CSI

Native American Heritage, November 30
Theme: Native American Cultural past and present Display
Speaker: Ramapough Lunaape Nation
Sponsor: Students of an anthropology class and the Cajola Group

Culture Club, End of Semester Party, December 5
Event: End of Semester Celebration. Food and refreshments
Activities: Audiovisuals of Flamenco Dance and Sevillanas
Sponsor: The Culture Club

First Responders Club, End of Semester Party, December 8
Event: End of Semester celebration
Activity: Final Meeting and Festivity
Sponsor: First Responders Club

Cup Cakes and Crystals, December 8
Event: Viewing of Swarovski Crystals.
Activity: Enjoying Delicious Cup Cakes
Sponsor: Ebony Women for Social Change
Grandmother’s Peruvian Recipe

Sopa a la Minuta

Ingredients:
- 1/2 lb London broil cut into small cubes
- 1 whole tomato cut into small cubes
- 1 cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 small yellow onion, minced
- 2 cloves of garlic, minced
- Pepper, salt, paprika to taste
- Angel hair noodles (one quarter pound)
- Corn oil
- 4 cups of water

Instructions:
In a bowl, mix the cut meat with the spices. Heat oil in a pot until hot, add meat mix. Cook the meat all the way through. Lower heat. Add the tomato and mix until it is fully incorporated. Add water and noodle; bring the water to a simmer, then cook the noodle for 15 minutes. Once the noodle is cooked, mix in the eggs and add the milk. Stir until everything is fully incorporated. Serves four.

Ian Godfrey ’15, major political science

Books and Magazines Received

Defenders of Wild Life, Summer 2016.
Philological Sciences at MGIMO (U) Philologicheskiye nauki v MGIMO (U) No. 56 (701), p. 166.
Ramapo College Magazine. Summer, Fall 2016.
SSHGS Perspectives, Fall 2016.
Sanctuary, Spring and Summer, Fall and Winter 2016.
Animal Corner

Goober

Goober is a six month-old wolf sable Pomeranian. He visited Ramapo Campus for the “In Their Shoes Exhibit” displayed by the Grove. Goober attracted the attention of animal lovers on campus. His good behavior allowed his parents to coordinate the event with no interruptions. “In Their Shoes Exhibit” took place on September 28, 2016. It was sponsored by the Women Center.

Photo: Niza Fabre

A Visitor at the Courtyard

Photo: Angel: R. Otero Jr. Crew Supervisor / Locksmith RCNJ.

A visitor chipmunk invited himself to the bird food tray at home, summer 2016.

Welcome Back Celebration event with “Live original Rock Music played by Zach Bressler and his band.” Left to right: Sean O’Neill ’18, electric guitar; Paul Iannelli ‘18, drums; Zach Bressler ’07, vocal and guitar; Zach Henderson ’18, base. This event took place on September 29, 2016. It was sponsored by The Culture Club.

Photo: Courtesy of Zach Bressler

The Culture Club celebrated the End of Semester Party with audiovisuals of Flamenco and Sevillana dances and a demonstration on how to use the castanets. This event took place on December 5, 2016. It was sponsored by The Culture Club.

Photo: Jarrod Garcia ’19, literature major