The Cultural Journal
Fall 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.
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President
Peter P. Mercer
On October 11, 2017, President Mercer delivered his State of the College Address.

Below is a Summary of that Address

Over these years, the addresses have been shaped, in part, by the political and economic climate. The Newfoundland phrase “stunned as me arse” is used by my fellow Newfies to imply incredible stupidity or foolishness. While the expression is apropos of nothing in particular, it is interestingly being used more frequently these days. Over the course of the last decade, we have made considerable progress on several of our goals while remaining true to our liberal arts mission. For example:

Enrollment

In undergraduate enrollment, this year’s freshmen class is 41% non-white.

2007 Total Headcount/% Non-white  2017 Total Headcount/% Non-white
5393/20.2% 5618/31%

In graduate enrollment, we have also made tremendous strides.

2007 Total headcount %  2017 total %
Non-white 309 / 11%  502 / 23.8%

Endowment

Our endowment has nearly tripled during the last decade. Our endowment is small in light of our youth, but in 2007 it was valued at $6.5 million, now it is $18.2 million and our scholarship program continues to grow as a result of excellent investment returns and new endowment gifts. Our endowment supports 424 scholarships and awards this year. Students, get your scholarship applications in by the deadline of November 6th. Also, the Ramapo College Campaign for the Learning Commons continues to advance as a result of the generosity of our Board Members and Alumni. The most recent gift of $750,000 from alumnae, Marilyn J. Clark, brings the current total to just over $7 million. There is an additional $2.3 million in pending gifts. The Case Statement for the Learning Commons Campaign will be available in November and will allow us to reach more constituents to secure their support.

Value of Liberal Arts

It is difficult these days to hear such scrutiny of our sector and of our mission. But it is so satisfying when prominent people counter that narrative. For example, Guy Berger, a LinkedIn economist said, “There is a real concern that these labor-market-oriented degrees that focus on specific technical skills are not (as) durable.” Quartz magazine reported that Berger believes that “cross-functional skills” like management and analytical know-how are more adaptable across a range of work environments. As technology changes the nature of work across nearly every industry, it’s important to have a wide range of such talents, rather than a narrow subset applied only to a particular sector that may not look the same in the near future (or, indeed, exist at all).

For the complete College Address go to: Ramapo Web/ Administration/office of the president/ President’s Post #120
Dr. Susan Hangen, Dean of SSHGS

Dr. Susan Hangen, interim dean, Salameno School of Humanities & Global Studies Fall 2017. Dr. Hangen, professor of anthropology & international studies, is committed to increase enrollment in the unit as well as to develop new academic programs. Dr. Hangen has extensive administrative experience as well as strong academic background. She has several publications, books and articles in her field of anthropology and international studies.

Dr. Stephen Rice

Dr. Stephen Rice, 2013-2017 dean of Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies. Professor of American studies, Steve will return to faculty in Spring 2018. Dr. Rice has several publications in his field of American studies, such as Nineteenth-century American Society and Culture, American Labor History, Cultural History of Technology in America, to mention a few.

Dr. Oscar Montero

In his talk, Dr. Montero contrasted the widely distributed images of American automobiles from the 1950s in Havana with historical and cultural realities from that same decade that receive little attention today. He pointed out that paradoxically, Cuba’s Revolution, whose central goal was to do away with class distinctions, today resurrects the old cars to appeal to tourists, who may pay for hotels costing for one day what many Cubans earn in a year. Dr. Montero also commented on Eduardo Chibás, a largely forgotten but popular politician of the pre-revolutionary era whose motto was “integrity vs. money,” but whose career ended with his suicide in 1951 in the wake of a political scandal. Following Dr. Montero’s talk, there was a lively discussion on Cuba’s history and on its current situation, particularly the uncertainty of its relationship with the United States. This event took place on September 25, 2017. It was sponsored by The Culture Club and Latino Heritage Month Committee.

Left: José Hernández. Graphic Artist, Communications and Public Relations, Ramapo College.

Right: Dr. Oscar Montero, professor emeritus Graduate Center and Lehman College, (CUNY) made a presentation on, “From Chibás to Chevys: Notes on the Cuban Saga.” An independent researcher, translator and writer from Cuba, now living in New York, Dr. Montero has taught at Lehman College, the Graduate Center, CUNY; SUNY Stony Brook, and Princeton.

Photo: Carolyn Herring

Photo: Angelica Pasqualli ‘19

Photo: Niza Fabre
Dr. Todd Barnes

Dr. Todd Barnes, associate professor of literature, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies, was the recipient of the Annual College’s Henry Bischoff Award for Teaching Excellence. The award was presented by Provost Beth Barnett and last year’s Award winner, Professor Donald Fucci, emeritus of literature, Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies. Henry Bischoff, one of the College’s early founders, taught history and urban studies at Ramapo for 25 years. The award is given annually to professors who have “displayed an exemplary passion and skill in teaching their subject matter.” Further, it awards professors who leave a lasting impact on their students’ lives by stressing a focus on learning inside and outside of the classroom.” Professor Barnes is also the Program Coordinator for the Critical Reading and Writing Program, and he serves each summer as the Education Opportunity Fund (EOF) Writing and Humanities Coordinator. In his talk, Professor Barnes told the story of how he became a teacher 2 years ago, and he outlined what he calls the “Six Pillars of Non-Critical Thinking.”

This event took place on October 18th, 2017. It was sponsored by the Annual College’s Henry Bischoff Award for Teaching Excellence Committee.

Dr. Karl Johnson & Andrew Herrera ‘18

Left: Dr. Karl Johnson, associate professor, African American Studies, SSHGS. Right: Andrew Herrera ‘18, environmental studies major, Culture Club president. Dr. Karl Johnson made a presentation on “Liberia: An African Nation of Wonder and Promise.” Monrovia, the capital, and its landscape look like a vacation postcard. The blue/green Atlantic Ocean seems to come right on top of the city on a sunny day. Liberians look like African Americans in their features and body built. The American dollar is the main currency. ATMs dispense American dollars only and not local currency. For the complete presentation contact Dr. Karl Johnson at kjohnson@ramapo.edu.

This event took place on October 23, 2017. It was sponsored by the Culture Club and Africana Studies in Salameno School of Humanities and Global Studies.

Left to right: Dr. George Gonpu assistant professor of economics, Dr. Karl Johnson, Alisha Grant ’17, American Studies major with a Gerontology and Africana Studies double minor, Dr. Kofi Owusu Daaku, KNUST professor of Biology and Ramapo College adjunct professor. They posed after Dr. Johnson’s presentation on Liberia: an African Nation of Wonder and Promise.
Photo: Niza Fabre
Left: Dr. Peter P. Mercer, Ramapo College president. Right: Linda Díaz, director of Residence Life, posed at Linda’s retirement party. This event took place on July 11, 2017. It was sponsored by Residence Life, Linda’s friends and coworkers.

This e event took place on July 11, 2017. It was sponsored by Residence Life, Linda’s friends and coworkers.

Photo: Courtesy of Filis Sulejmani ‘21
Sveti Naum began as a monastery. Over time, the beauty of the location attracted immense tourists and it became a hotspot for visitors. Built on the original location, there are restaurants, peacocks, and swimming beaches. There are no hotels on site, but maybe a room or two for backpackers. People come from all over and it’s common for brides from the city to take their wedding photos here. It’s located on the border of Macedonia and Albania.

Filis Sulejmani ‘21, nursing major, made a presentation on her Summer 2017 trip to Macedonia. She shared photos and her experiences during her visit to Macedonia. Her presentation was enhanced with audiovisuals of geographic sites and historic buildings. This talk took place on October 9, 2017. It was sponsored by the Culture Club.

Photo: Niza Fabre
Cake in honor of Linda Díaz’s at the reception for her retirement.

Photo: Web Free Pictures
Sveti Naum
Me pierdo en un pequeño entramado urbano y recorro las mismas calles de siempre con su apariencia del village neoyorquino, casi europeo y de pretensiones bohemias, con sus locales caros y muy a la moda. En su mayoría, los rostros que se pasean o se solean en los cafés al aire libre responden a un idioma que ya pocos hablan en la ciudad.

Me gusta escuchar sus voces y reafirmar que todavía habito en Miami.


Coconut Grove

“Give me the splendid silent sun . . .”
Leaves of Grass – Walt Whitman

I loose myself in a little urban framework and I always go through the same streets with its appearance of New York Village, almost European and of bohemian pretensions, with its expensive and very trendy stores. Most of the faces that take a walk or sunbathe themselves in the outdoor cafes answer to a language that only a few speak in the city. I like to listen to their voices and reaffirm that I still live in Miami.

Sebastian Cole Jackson

Sebastian Cole Jackson was born October 16, 2017, in Mountain Side Hospital, Montclair, NJ. He was 8 pound, 22 ½ inches long. Currently, he is 7-weeks old, 11 pounds. Sebastian is the son of Rodney Jackson ’01 and Ruxandra Tirisi ’05. Sebastian’s parents in the picture below.

Photo: Rodney Jackson ’01

Rodney Jackson ’01 and Ruxandra Tirisi ’05

Rodney graduated from Ramapo in 2001 with a major in international business, and a concentration in information technology, and a Spanish minor. Ruxandra graduated from Ramapo in 2005, with a major in international business, and a concentration in accounting. They are the happy parents of Sebastian.

Photo Selfie: Rodney Jackson ’01

Sebastian Cole Jackson

Before Christmas 2015, Dr. Orazio Tanelli and cav. Mattia Cipriano, not in picture, delivered Il Ponte Cultural Award to the author Sonia Etete, not in picture. During the presentation of her new book on sociology, The Wings of Fear. Dr. Tanelli entertained the audience with his accordion and popular Italian songs. This event took place in December 2015. It was sponsored by The Italian Culture Association.

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Photo Selfie: Rodney Jackson ’01
Bagpipes
Song of Scotland
in the torment
of melancholy notes
in the sigh of time.
Song of bagpipes
In the valleys, lowlands, toward the sea
of nostalgic notes
in the wind of regret.
Song of Scotland
in the fearless legends
of brave notes
in the glorious symphony
songs of pipes
in the tracks of the Centuries
of the rebellious notes
in the brotherly embrace of blood.
Song of Scotland
in the yellowed pages
of immortal notes
they inebriated him and they dissolved themselves
in the moan of history...

Valentine
Dia do amor e amizade
em USA
13 de fevereiro, 2017
Não ha nenhum ser
que desprecie o amor,
mas os valentes e certeiros poetas
sabem amar melhor que todos,
e estão entusiasmados por ter um dia especial
para celebrá-lo com chocolates,
versos, abraços beijos
que são a equipagem do amor:
VIVA O DIA DE SÃO VALENTIM!

Haiku
It rained all day long
so I drank tea, and then wine
a good day to sleep


On the end of the branch, a hive dangled and bled radio static. Underneath, a bear was flailing its paws while it swayed over dead leaves, lacking a novice’s fear.

From our view on the ridge the guide laughed and jabbed a thumb from his closed fist. It’s not even a bee hive, they’re hornets. The bear became more badass and commendable to me. But they’re built for this line of work, they were born possessing all the required credentials to kill and exist.

On the floor of dirt and brush it lazily ate the brood: hornets and larvae– eliminating generations and microcosms of civilization, dethroning the matriarch in one of those bites– the static grew fainter.

I couldn’t help but think of an anticlimactic end for Aliens, where Ripley is a colossal figure walking the world in strides and crushing the whole swarm of xenomorphs with her hand, as she testing the fluff of a down comforter, losing character development and the sympathy of a camera angle, just towering over a predictably indented earth.

As it sauntered away from remains, the guide said that the bear will only feel stings on its face and ears, the rest of its coat impenetrable to the desperate stabs of those black little specks. Even to no avail or guarantee of Revenge or a home, they insisted on following the bear, just haunting out of hate of existing as leftovers of a great thing, now broken and gutted.

Nelson Potter ’18, major literature, concentration creative writing

Two Buddhas
I
Let us embrace
go down the stream
happy memories
like bubbles
and be happy
in a dream
we have them.
like two Buddhas
We held incense
The shadow world
sticks together
can be a beautiful world
and watched the smoke
It is beautiful here.

Dr. Susan Hangen at the “Year of Europe Exhibit.” Susan chatted with Andrew Herrera. In the background audiovisuals of Flamenco dance. This activity took place on December 4, 2017 in celebration of the end of the semester. It was sponsored by the Culture Club.

Year of Europe Exhibit

Spain’s artifacts on display. Artifacts from Italy, Dr. Rosetta D’Angelo (SSHGS), Denmark, Dr. William Frech, (ASB), and London Robyn Perricelli, (FA). This event took place on December 4, 2017. It was sponsored by the Culture Club.

Blanca Segarra, writer, author, and poet.

Quién lo diría

Como Dios Griego por tu hermosura,
perfil, fuerza, poderio
eres el hombre más atractivo
que he conocido.
¡Y que locura!
Estaban ciegos
mis ojos y no sabían
que tus desvelos y aquel anhelo
¡Te consumían!
Eras tan mío ¡Quien lo diría!.
Tu boca codiciada y tan sumisa,
se desbocaba ante mi sonrisa.
Todo TU “Incomparable”
Tu juventud hacía palpable
la diferencia
mas tu inconsciencia
hecha pasión
encadenaba tu corazón.
Y Dios no quiso
que se rompiera aquel hechizo
ni que sufrieras la decepción
Sin una cana ni una arruga
sin causa alguna
que motivara desilusión
me trajo lejos
sin empañarte nunca el espejo
donde reflejas aun la ilusión.

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

Por Neruda

Neruda speaks for me. He speaks the language of poetry. He wrote his songs by the sea. Come; listen to the sea with me.

Richard Brown, director of the Center for Student Involvement, posed at the celebration of Diwali Food festival, on October 18, 2017.

Left: Joseph Noun ’19, history major. Right: William Hooper ’19, Culture Club treasurer, political science major, posed at the celebration of Diwali Food festival, on October 18, 2017.

President Mercer, the Board of Trustees, and the Student Government Association, together with students, faculty, staff and retirees, celebrated the College’s 48th birthday! Festivities included a photo booth, a caricaturist, tie dye t-shirts, games, and music. The annual ceremonial cake presentation took place at 1:30 p.m. Lots of food and refreshments were served. This event took place on November 8, 2017.

Dr. Edward I. Saiff - School of Theoretical and Applied Science, (TAS), professor of biology, dean, School of Theoretical and Applied Science. Dr. Saiff joined RCNJ: in 1972. He was present at Founders’ Day Celebration.
President Mercer

Founders’ Day Speech.
“I’d like to thank the Student Government for its enthusiastic support,” said President Peter P. Mercer, who also acknowledged several of the founding faculty members who are still with the College: Paul Elovitz (associate professor of history, psychohistory and Interdisciplinary studies), Michael Fluhr (associate professor of politics and social processes), and Edward Saiff, (Interim dean, School of Theoretical and Applied Science). Also in attendance was Board of Trustees Chair William F. Dator, who also has been actively involved with the College since its founding.

Michael Savianeso, assistant manager of Academic Media Services, among other chores, he tested the microphone at Founders’ Day celebration.

Center: Angela Daidone public relations specialist.
Right: Carolyn Herring, College photographer.

Michael, Angela and Carolyn enjoyed Founders’ Day celebration.

Photo: Niza Fabre

Founders’ Day Celebration

All kinds of food, dessert, and refreshments at Founders’ Day Celebration, November 8, 2017.

Left: Shabnam Tobaccowala, (SSHS), helped serving the delicious Indian delicacies at Diwali, a Festival of Lights celebrated in South Asia. This event took place on October 18, 2017. It was sponsored by the Roukema Center for International Education and the Center for Student Involvement.

Photo: Niza Fabre
Muddy Milky Way
Randall Bembry

We are so tired
and just an aftermath
like the cosmos after the big bang.
Like a 5 year old kid
enjoying a bowl of trix
brimming with energy.
Mother intentions
were to keep things together
in a bowl but,
we are just a milky catastrophe
spread across the oak plain.
We are the crumbs of fiber.
Lost in the insignificant crevices
consumed by lesser beings.
These weren't mother's intentions,
but her reality.
A lack of sensation in continuation.

Mariachi Night
Randall Bembry

I
A mariachi band
appear from nowhere,
strike up a bolero,
cast shadow on the table
where you sit sipping
a glass of wine,
while being attentive
to your lovely date
in a Mexican restaurant
on the outskirts of L.A.
A squat, mustachioed man
strums a vihuela,
his tall, thin compadre
plucks a guitarron.
while trumpeters blast melodies
that you can almost name.
Your ear borrows Latin songs
of death, betrayal,
revolutionary heroes
so your face can mimic
American romance.
It's working.
the music forms a barrier
between the two of you
and all the other diners.
For every moment
she turns to the player
smiles her admiration
she beams at you,
triple-fold.

II
The night is warm.
The wine, the food
The band blows and strums and plucks
and occasionally yips like puppies
One tips a spangled black hat toward you.
You toss a ten dollar note its way.
Then you look in her eyes.
That's where the money lands.

The Mariel Experience
To Carlos Victoria

With a strange kind of love I kissed this land
but a piece of my soul I had left behind . . .
Leonora Acuña de Marmolejo

April 1, 1980: Six Cubans crash a bus
through the gated Peruvian Embassy in
Havana while trying to gain freedom. April
6:10,856 Cubans follow the Original six jam —
conservatively speaking — the embassy.
May 5: President Jimmy Carter announces the
U.S. will open its doors and hearts to the refugees.
July 25: Tent City is set up in Miami. Sept. 25: Cuba
ends the boatlift; many are left behind. Sept. 30:
Tent City closes. In a few months 125, 266
Cubans arrive in Miami. Writers, painters, sculptors, journalists,
dancers, actors, doctors, white and blue collar workers, children. Also, large numbers
of homosexuals and a high percentage of blacks are found among the boat-people.
From high above its enclave and through his binoculars, Castro is very pleased
to see them leave.


Dr. Daniel Jean

Dr. Daniel Jean,
EOF Alumnus Class
of 1997 has started
an EOF scholarship
program for Newark
and Paterson
residents. He worked
at Ramapo in various
positions from 1999
to 2011. Presently,
Dr. Jean is the EOF
Executive director
at Montclair State
University.

Photo: Courtesy of Daniel Jea

Photo: Niza Fabre

John Grey, RI., U.S.

At the Foot of the Falls
Sometimes, I forget
how much I love this life
but when I am with you
I remember

John C. Kenselaar. Poetry Today. Monroe, NY/ Mahwah, NJ:
Shannon Crosson ’19, history major. After graduation, Shannon will pursue graduate work, aiming to earn a Ph.D in history.

Michael Svechin ’18, music performance major, class 2018. Michael is an experienced piano player and vocalist. His repertoire consists of traditional songs of Frank Sinatra, Engelbert Humperdink, Johnny Mathis, Elvis Presley, Tom Jones, etc. He sings in English, Russian, and Spanish. While pursuing his undergraduate degree, he performed at several Ramapo College’s event organized by The Culture Club, Literature Club, and the Italian Club. He also performed off campus for private organizations. Michael will attend graduate School in his field.

Haiku
The forsythia
blooms brightly by the roadside,
promising the Spring

A performance gospel concert at the Praise Party with special guest The Stella, award winning artist, the Group Fire. There were Music, dancing, refreshments in celebration of Black Solidarity Week. This event took place on November 12, 2017. It was sponsored by the Black Student Union.

Photo: Niza Fabre

Thereta Mac Coy ’19, psychology major, president of Black Student Union, addressed the audience at the Praise Party, a gospel concert in celebration of Black Solidarity Week. This event took place on November 12, 2017. It was sponsored by the Black Student Union.

Photo: Niza Fabre

**Shining Distraction**

The air should complement the sun and pass by me like a warm breeze. It should feel soft with the glow of the sun, it should smell fresh in the morning hours of the day. But instead it leaves my hands cold, it burns my cheeks and smells like nothing more than my ash tray. A simple jacket would change the prickle in my skin, but I don’t plan on going back inside for it. Not yet. Every inch of the house is draped in my life – our life together, creating this bubble of comfortable security that has recently started to close in on me.

I should be happy with how things have turned out for us. I should bask in the shine of his smile that I get to see every day. I should enjoy the way he laughs at his own jokes and goes out of his way to laugh at mine. From when I wake up in the morning to when I lie next to him at night, I should revel in his pure hearted love. But I’ve begun to feel sick. This bitter taste in my mouth isn’t from my constant stream of cigarettes, but from this consuming thought that our bubble of bliss has trapped him inside a loop of impossible kindness. This doesn’t feel real anymore.

Right now I can hear him moving around in the kitchen behind me. His muffled voice is singing a song and the thought of him dancing with the cat makes me smile. I flick the bud of my cigarette off the railing, watch it fall, then reach for another. I want to light it, feel the first inhale, the searing on the roof of my mouth, the cooling in my chest and lungs. I want to hold my breath. And sometimes he’ll let me. When my shoulders are tense and my hands won’t stop shaking, we’ll share a stick on the couch and he won’t nag me about cancer. When the days are long and he’s missed every bus to work, I’ll buy him lilies for the kitchen. But I can’t keep him all to myself. He should be out, living for the day, making bad jokes and smiling like it’s the only thing he knows how to do. There’s a knock on the window behind me and I turn to see his wonky smile through the glass. “Hey Rhys…” he knocks again, trying to keep my attention, but I wave him off. I make a show of killing the unlit cigarette and slouching over the railing. His face falls, but I don’t answer his unasked question. The longer I look at him, the more distracted I get.

The phone rings. I climb back inside and stand for a moment in the middle of the kitchen. It smells like warm coffee and our breakfast dishes are still on the table. His coffee mug sits on the counter, open sugar packets are scattered around with rings of mocha lining the inside. Drips of coffee dry on the rim and streak down the side, covering up the lopsided design. “What kind of trees grow on your hand?”

The mug was a souvenir from Florida, something to remind us of how lost we got while driving through to see his parents. We had stopped for gas when he took the time to go into the small dollar shop. When he found the mugs in the back aisle, his laugh was a shock to both of us. He looked surprised at the noise that came from his mouth, but shoved the mug in my face without hesitation. “Palm trees.” He thought it was a piece of comedic gold and said we couldn’t leave without a matching set. I swear I only laughed because he did. When I touch it now, his mug is still warm on the counter, but my feet are cold against the floor.

For a moment, I think of that trip through Florida. I remember he packed for the both of us, forgetting my swim trunks but over packing for the cat. We argued about time and how he’s easily distracted by the wind. We argued about money or the lack thereof and then he took a call from his mother where he continued to complain about our troubles on the road. And later we argued about that.

But now, looking at my matching mug from that small dollar shop, another flowerpum painted on the side, I let this memory settle in my mind. I try not to remember the look on his face whenever I took a sip from it this morning. I could practically hear his smile from across the table even though we ate breakfast in silence. I weave through forgotten cat toys on the floor, trying to get past him without being noticed. His voice echoes when he talks on the phone, taunting me and following me through the apartment. He sounds like syrup, thick and slow and

(Continued on p. 28)

**Author:** Madelyn Guerra, major creative writing, York College, Queens, New York, class 2016.
Steve Irwin, The crocodile Hunter

Crikey! She is a naughty girl, this one. But she has a right to be.

As you can see, she is just laid her eggs beneath this warm mound. Predators are everywhere so she must remain vigilant if her hatchings have any chance whatsoever of surviving.

Good girl. You're alright. Your babies are safe for now. But it's this fella over here, this large male, that she's mostly concerned with. You see, given half a chance, he'll snatch every hatchling entering the water.

He's been living in this pond longer than I've been alive.

It's okay. You're alright, mate.

I have known this croc for 44 years. He's been a very good friend . . . generally calm, at times. That's just the way he is.


Rumi Speaks

A carpet shadow resembles a tiger moth
Rumi says, It cold be the Holy One,
or it could mean that your carpet needs a good cleaning.

You decide

Alan Britt. Lost Among the Hours. New York City: Rain Mountain Press, 2014. p. 44.
Mario Benedetti, un sol inmortal

Tu Uruguay natal se engrandeció el día que te vio nacer. ¡Qué desdichada argonía tuviste que soportar para verte obligado, como tantos otros, a exiliarte a otras lejanas y desconocidas tierras! Sólo los que lo experimentan conocen la magnitud del desgarro emocional. Inquietud generadora de savia impecerecedera.

Con tu alma dolosita, dejaste un legado para deleite de los que te conocieron y te continúan ensalzando. “Que el dolor, manifiesta Benedetti, no me apague la rabia, que la alegría no desarme mi amor”. En tu obra, que toca todos los géneros con suma sapiencia se aprecia, en un primer periodo, el hondo palpitar de tus circunstancias vitales, así como los cambios sociales y políticos de Uruguay y de otros países de América Latina.

Angustia que subyuga y que te hace derramar sobre el papel lo que el corazón llora, con una literatura sumamente realista, que sólo los genios saben expresar.

“Esta actitud dio lugar a un ensayo acre y polémico: “El país de la cola de paja” (1960), y su consolidación literaria con dos novelas importantes: “La tregua” (1960) y “Gracias por el fuego” (1965), en la que refleja una crítica más mordaz de la sociedad uruguaya.

En un segundo periodo, sus obras reflejan la angustia y la esperanza de diversos sectores sociales por buscar caminos a una América Latina oprimida por represiones militares. Como consecuencia de ello, Mario Benedetti vivió en Cuba, Perú y España durante más de diez años, período en el que su literatura se hizo formalmente más enérgica. Al respecto, el escritor uruguayo refiere que “no te rindas, por favor no te obligado, como tantos otros...”.

El tema del exilio lo trató en su novela “Primavera con una esquina rota” (1982). Podemos decir que uno de sus méritos es saber reflejar los aspectos hirientes en los que a veces cae el ser humano, y que un alma blanca, como la de Benedetti, sabe dar constancia para que sea con la pluma y no con las armas como el hombre intenta solucionar las injusticias de la prepotencia y de la soberbia. Como todo exiliado que ama sus orígenes, los cuales quedan indelebles y magnificados por el sentimiento de la ausencia, Benedetti volvería a pisar su tierra amada, cuyos sentimientos y sensaciones dejaría reflejados en su novela “Andamios” (1997), marcadamente autobiográfica.

En 1999, es reconocida su valía al concedérselle el VIII Premio de Poesía Iberoamericana “Reina Sofía”. En marzo de 2001, recibió el Premio Iberoamericano “José Martí” en reconocimiento a toda su obra.

Desde 2009, resplandece, en el espíritu de Montevideo y del universo, una luz constante e impecerecedera.

Autora: Lola Benítez Molina, Málaga, España. (English translation on p. 31)

Haiku

The old gardener
bows before a great display
of chrysanthemum!


Lola Benítez Molina

Poema por la Paz

Las palomas han hechó nido en los cascos de los soldados / y el hombre vive en paz solo en el espacio y en los mares, / no así en la tierra. La paz debe ser sostenida por el hombre porque comienza en el hogar. / La paz más inconveniente supera la Guerra, nada se obtiene de aquellos en amigos sin fe. Después de todo, la paz tiene victorias renombradas cual la Guerra. / Jamás hubo Guerra Buena y mala paz, que es mejor que Victoria anticipada. / La Guerra perfecta es un mundo oscuro. / La Paloma de la paz parece ahora un pájaro solo del paraíso/ porque la paz de Dios sobrepasa toda razón, aun si los locos/ devienen en sabiduría al aceptar que la paz no se obtiene/ solo por la fuerza sino por comprensión entre relaciones y gentes. / La paz de nuestro Señor llega solo al alzar su rostro divino! Pensamiento, Vol. XIII, 1, January 2007, p. 2.

Poem for peace

The pigeons have nested in the helmets of the soldiers. / and man lives in peace only in space and in the seas, / not on earth. Peace must be sustained by man because it begins at home. / The most inconvenient peace overcomes War. nothing is obtained from those friends without faith. / After all, peace has renowned victories like War. / There never was Good war and bad peace, which is better than anticipated victory. / The Perfect War is a dark world. / The pigeon of peace now seems a bird only from paradise / because the peace of God surpasses all reason, even if madmen / show wisdom accepting that peace is not obtained / only by force but by comprehension between relationships and people. The peace of our Lord is attained only when his divine face rises!

Translation: Niza Fabre

Photo: Courtesy of Lola Benítez Molina

Mario Andino, author and poet

Photo: Mario Andino

Left: Andrew Herrera ‘18, environmental studies major, Culture Club president.
Center: Negin Kholdi ‘19, accounting major, Culture Club vice president, Andrew and Negin represented their club, at the Involvement Fair on September 13, 2017. This event was organized by the Office of Student Involvement.
Mario Benedetti, An Immortal Sun

Your native Uruguay was honored the day you were born. How unfortunate an agony you must bear, to be forced along with others to be exiled to a foreign land! Only those who experience it would know the magnitude of such an emotional tear. An uncase that generates enduring energy.

With a heavy heart, you left your legacy for others to enjoy even to this very present day. ‘Pain won’t put out my rage’, Benedetti says, ‘and joy won’t disarm my love…’. In your first works that touched all genres, we can widely appreciate your early life and circumstances as well as the social and political changes in Uruguay and other Latin American countries.

Distress that subjugates you, and makes you spill on paper what your heart cries out, with details only a genius can express.

This attitude gave place to a harsh and polemic essay: “The country of a straw tail” (1960) and your literary consolidation with two important novels: “The Truce” (1960) and “Thanks for the fire” (1965), both in which, criticize with sarcasm, the Uruguayan society.

Later on, his works reflect the distress and hope from other social areas for finding solutions to a military oppressed Latin America. As a consequence, Mario Benedetti lived in Cuba, Peru and Spain for more than ten years, which is when his literature formally became more energetic. “Do not give up, please do not give in, even if the cold burns or your fears bite or the sun hides and the wind stays still, there is still fire in your soul and life in your dreams” were his words during these times.

His exile was covered in his novel “Spring with a broken corner” (1982). We can say that one of his merits is knowing how to reflect the harmful aspects in which human beings sometimes fall and, a white soul such as Benedetti portrays via his writings, instead of the weapons, that mankind tries to use in order to fix arrogance and injustice. Every exile who loves his origins, has unforgettable and magnified feelings towards their homeland due to their absence. Benedetti stepped onto his beloved homeland in March 1983, when he reflected his feelings in his novel “Scaffolding” (1997), based on his life.

In 1999, he was awarded the 8th annual Queen Sofia Latin American Poetry prize. And in March 2001, he received the Prize of South American “Jose Marti” (1997), in residence an audience.

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In 1999, he was awarded the 8th annual Queen Sofia Latin American Poetry prize. And in March 2001, he received the Prize of South American “Jose Marti” (1997), in recognition for all his work

Since 2009, a constant and everlasting light shines over Montevideo and the universe.

Author: Lola Benítez Molina, Málaga (España).
Translated into English by María Victoria Beltrán Benítez.

A musing

An audience
In residence
Intensely listening
Always acceptin
With a subtle reflection
Of linguistic inflection
Bespeaking of inner reality
Rearrangement of totality
Such a grounding work of musing
Compassionate and amusing.

©Marshall S. Harth, The Poetry of Therapy, p. 21. 30

Shining Distractions

move the plant from the shade further into the light and when he looks back at me he smiles. I feel like hiding. “You definitely can’t fit all of that into one backpack,” he hums. Watch me.” The words slip out nastier than I intended, but all he does is stand from the window and walk out. I sigh and stop shoving the clothes around. My finger tips are numb as I put on my sneakers, without socks, and in a bit he came back into the room with a large suitcase. “What are you—”

“Budge over,” he says and luges the suitcase onto the bed. He grabs one of his sweaters from the wardrobe and starts to fold it up. He places it neatly into the suitcase and he reaches for one of my shirts and does the same. “So,” he looks at me and keeps packing, “where are we going?”

I just stare at him now. He’s got a sloppy smile on while he rolls up his socks and folds some more jeans. This is what he does. He’s trying to save us, trying to make a crappy situation better and he can’t. I can’t let him try to fix this. I want to stay, but the longer I do, the harder it will be. He should want more than just this.

“No,” I tug the suitcase from him and move away. “We aren’t going anywhere, Matt. I am.”

“What’s with you?” He looks a little stumped. “You’ve been acting weird ever since your mother said—”

“I know what she said.” I cut him off. “And she was right.”

“What?” It doesn’t sound like a question when he says it. It feels venomous. “How can you agree with anything she’s said to you? She’s cruel.” His voice is deep.

“Yeah and she’s an idiot to hate you, but she wasn’t entirely wrong.” My voice starts to rise. Were we finally going to argue? “I can’t give you everything you deserve. Definitely not in this shit apartment, with little money and a temp job.”

“I don’t care—”

“Well you should!” The shout spooks the cat and she zips out of the room. “You should get out while you can. Visit all those places you talk about, maybe take some pictures that mean something.” He looks taken aback, offended, and for a moment I think this is good. If he wouldn’t let me go easily, then he needed to feel like I left him no choice, like I had tarnished what we had with no way of coming back from it. I take a breath and speak before he can get a word in. “Do something that makes a difference. Be a teacher and live your life—”

“Don’t insult me!” His voice cracks. “This is my life. I’m living it the way I want to, here, with you.” The breath he tries to take is shaky. “I don’t want to visit places unless I’m with you.” He walks closer to me with each thing he says, but I stay focused on something I could into my backpack. “You know my pictures are meaningful in the same way your journals are.” His voice is sharp. “And there are jobs everywhere; I can be a teacher wherever we go. So stop pulling these excuses out of your ass and talk to me, because I’ve already made my choice.”

“Then I’m changing mine.” This wasn’t playing out the way I needed it too. This was all about him, his dreams and goals that were put on hold because I had finally asked him to get out while you can. Visit all those places you talk about, maybe take some pictures that mean something.” He looks taken aback, offended, and for a moment I think this is good. If he wouldn’t let me go easily, then he needed to feel like I left him no choice, like I had tarnished what we had with no way of coming back from it. I take a breath and speak before he can get a word in. “Do something that makes a difference. Be a teacher and live your life—”

―(Continued from p. 28) ―(Continued from p. 33)"
(Continued from p, 32)

Shining Distractions

“But I love it because you’re here. That’s my point.” His voice has gotten weaker.

“Well I don’t love it.” I hope my words hurt enough that he won’t chase me down the block.

“Liar.” I stop by the front door to look at him. Yes, I was lying. If we stood here just a bit longer, would he see the lie on my face, see my heart in my throat or each of my goosebumps reach out for him? “Why are you doing this?”

I study his face and refuse to answer him. My last act of selfishness is to preserve his image right now, to help me stay away later. So I try to memorize his

“Because I know you won’t.” I say.

“Liar.”

“But I don’t want to.” Even now, he speaks through a watery smile, like this was all some sick joke I’ve played and he was waiting for us to laugh about it. But my punchlines were never any better than his; just stiff, dry humor that froze the whole room. And that’s where we were, stuck by the front door, hairs standing up on my neck and Matt shining like a perfect distraction.

I touch my face and feel that my cheeks are dry.

“Some sick joke I’ve played and he was waiting for us to laugh about it. But my punchlines were never any better than his; just stiff, dry humor that froze the whole room. And that’s where we were, stuck by the front door, hairs standing up on my neck and Matt shining like a perfect distraction.”

Author: Madelyn Guerra, York College, Queens, New York, class 2016.

Haiku

Haiku, rescue you!

wet marsh — gray sky — blue mountain
drink wine and sleep, sleep!


Books and Magazines Received


Sanctuary. Fall/Winter 2017.

Recipe

Ripe Plantain Cake

Ingredients:
5 medium ripe plantains
4 eggs
1 cup of sugar
2 heaping tablespoons of butter (measure) then melt.
1 tablespoon of flour (In case the ripe one is very soft, use heaped spoonful).
Cinnamon, to taste
1/2 cup raisins macerated in liquor
150 grams of grated cheese

Preparation:
In blender put all the ingredients in the order indicated, minus the cheese and raisins. Remove the preparation in a bowl, add the raisins and the grated cheese. Grease a mold and add some flour to it. Remove the excess and place the preparation in the mold. Put the mold in the oven at 350 degrees for 45 minutes. Insert a toothpick until it comes out dry which indicates that the cake is ready. Do not use baking powder because it sponges the cake and does not allow cohesion. The plantains must not be overripe.

Author: Maggi Albuja de Fabre. Translation: Niza Fabre

Torta de Maduro

Ingredientes:
5 plátanos maduros medianos
4 huevos
1 taza de azúcar
2 cucharadas colmadas de mantequilla (medir) luego derretir.
1 cucharada de harina (En caso que el maduro esté muy suave, usar cucharada colmada).
Canela, al gusto
1/2 taza de pasas maceradas en licor
150 gramos de queso rayado

Preparación:
En licuadora o a mano. En el vaso de la licuadora poner todos los ingredientes en el orden indicado, menos el queso ni las pasas. Sacar la preparación en un recipiente, allí agregar las pasas y el queso rayado. Engrasar un molde y enharinar sacando el excedente poner allí la preparación. Poner el horno a 400 grados por 45’. introducir un palillo hasta que salga seco lo que indica que ya está la torta. Para que no se desmorone la torta no se debe usar el polvo de hornear porque eso esponja la torta y no permite la cohesión Los maduros no deben ser demasiado maduros ni tampoco pintones.

Author: Maggi Albuja de Fabre, Guayaquil, Ecuador

Animal Corner

Ben

Ben is a Havanese and Maltese mixed dog. He was born on July, 26, 2015. He is a two year four month-old mix. Ben enjoys the outdoors and is active with other dogs on the street. Overall Ben has a lively spirit and has been a great addition to our family.

Shelby

Shelby is a white bellied cacique, and is about 15 years old. My family got her from an estate sale about five years ago. In the picture, she is in the position in order to groom her new feathers. She can't talk, but can mimic certain sounds like doors squeaking and laughing. She likes climbing the curtains, rolling over on her back and “play fight,” throwing her toy ball around, and will march in a line if you clap your hands steadily.
Bats are divided into two suborders: Megachiroptera, meaning large bat, and Microchiroptera, meaning small bat. The largest bats have a 6 foot wingspan. The bodies of the smallest bats are more than an inch long. The largest bats weight up to 3 pounds. The smallest bat weighs less than a penny. Most bats live longer than most mammals of their size. The longest known lifespan of a bat in the wild is 40 years. Bats are the only mammals capable of true flight. With extremely elongated fingers and a wing membrane stretched, he bat's wing anatomically resembles the human hand.

Published with Permission from Defenders of Wild Life.

Dragonflies are agile fliers. Many dragonflies have brilliant iridescent or metallic colors produced by structural coloration, making them conspicuous in flight. Dragonfly are predators, both in aquatic larval stage, when they are known as nymphs or naiads, and as adults. Several years of their lives are spent as nymphs living in fresh waters.

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

Vita Summers, singer and dancer, performed at Ramapo College's PRIDEFEST Day, in celebration of National Coming Out Day. This was Ramapo College's first Pride fest ever. This event took place on October 11, 2017. It was sponsored by The Student Queer Peer Services Coordinators.