DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES AT THE CITY COLLEGE OF NEW YORK

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2014

FACULTY NOTES

Professor Maxime Blanchard gave an invited lecture titled «Louis Cyr, l’homme le plus fort du monde: A Strong Man for a Weak Nation» at the NYU Skyrball Center for The Performing Arts. At the SAMLA in Atlanta, he gave a talk titled «Admiration of a Hero: Film Adaptations of Jean Moulin’s Life». He also chaired a panel on «Monumental Projects» at the CUNY Comparative Literature Conference held at the Graduate Center. Finally, he published in Présence Francophone an analysis of political alienation in Françoise Durocher, waitress, a film by André Brassard.

Professor Regina Castro McGowan has had her article “João Baptista Lavanha ‘cronista mor do reyno’ e a historiografia sebástica do século XVII” included in the book Representações do Mito na História e na Literatura, published in Portugal by the University of Évora. Prof. Castro McGowan has also become the faculty adviser for the CCNY Capoeira Club. Capoeira is a Brazilian martial arts that combines Afro-Brazilian music and dance. The club meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm in front of the faculty lounge.

Professor Richard Calichman's book manuscript 'Abe Kobo: Time, Writing, Community' is currently under review at Stanford University Press. His essay "Subjectivity and Binding; The Question of
Japanese Fascist Aesthetics" will be included in the upcoming special issue on Japanese Fascism in the journal *Positions: East Asia Culture Critique.* Finally, Prof. Calichman served as a discussant in October at the Korea Colloquium, Columbia University.

**Chair and Professor Carlos Riobó** won the Latin American Studies Association’s (LASA) Sylvia Molloy award in May, 2014 for the best peer-reviewed article published in 2013, “Raiding the *Anales* of the Empire: Sarduy’s Subversions of the Latin American Boom,” *Hispanic Review.* 81.3 (2013): 331-352. That same month, he presented the talk, “Manuel Puig’s Archive: Language and Longing in *El beso de la mujer araña,*” at LASA in Chicago. He was also a discussant on the panel, “Literature as Memorialization of the Past,” at LASA. In September, Professor Riobó opened The Dominican Studies Institute of CUNY’s “The Specter of Trujillo” panel with a talk on counter archives in the Caribbean. In October, he gave the welcome at the inaugural *cursillo* for the Catedra Vargas Llosa at CCNY as well as the welcome at the Catedra's inaugural lecture, given by the Spanish novelist Juan Jesús Armas Marcelo. That same month, he gave the invited lecture, “Public Squares, Private Spheres: Five-Hundred Years of Havana’s Built Environment,” at CUNY’s Bildner Center for Western Hemispheric Studies. In November, Professor Riobó gave an Invited lecturer at New York University: “Whose Canon is it anyway? The Problem in Defining Contemporary Cuban Writers” for the Cuban Arts and Culture series. Also in November, he participated in the visit of Mo Yan to give a lecture and receive an honorary degree at CCNY, which Riobó co-organized. A few days later, he participated in the visit by the Argentine-Spanish writer Andrés Neuman to CCNY, which Riobó also Co-organized. In the middle of November, he reviewed two books: *Dreaming in Russian: The Cuban Soviet Imaginary,* by Jacqueline Loss, for *Revista Canadiense de Estudios Hispánicos* and *Ideas and Practices of Revolution in Cuba,* by Marina Gold, for Palgrave Macmillan. At the end of November, Professor Riobó gave the talk, “Archival Challenges: Latin American Strategies for Addressing Cultural and Literary Studies,” at the Interdisciplinary Conference of the Association of History, Literature, Science and Technology (AHLiST) in Cartagena, Colombia.

**Professor Amr Kamal** has worked on designing and establishing a minor in Arabic Language and Cultures at City College. In February, he was invited to give a talk at Cornell University entitled “Tracing the Saint-Simonian Mediterranean Dream in the Life and Work of Huda Sharaawi.” In October, he was invited to give a talk at the Middle Eastern and the Middle Eastern American Center (MEMEAC) at the Graduate Center entitled “Becoming Levantine: Egypt through the Lens of the Department Store in Jacqueline Kahanoff’s Novel *Jacob’s Ladder.*” He was also a respondent to a talk at MEMEAC by Professor Suha Kudsieh, from the College of Staten Island. The event’s title was “Re-examining Al-Jabarti’s Accounts about the French Campaign in Egypt.” In March, Professor Kamal led a workshop for the Mellon Mays and CCNY fellows at CCNY on the different registers of academic language, and another workshop on the job market for the graduate students of French at the Graduate Center.

**Professor Jennifer Roberts’** review of Debra Hamel's *Reading Herodotus: A Guided Tour through the Wild Boars, Dancing Suitors, and Crazy Tyrants of The History* appeared in *Classical World* 107 (Summer, 2014), 558-559. Professor Jennifer Roberts was granted a Latin ovation at the fall, 2014 meeting of the Classical Association of the Atlantic States in Washington, D. C. on October 11. These ovations are granted annually to three individuals who have achieved distinction in the profession for scholarship and/or service. The other recipients this year were Daniel Tompkins of Temple University and Carl Rubino of Hamilton College.

**Professor Araceli Tinajero** published the book *Handbook on Cuban History, Literature, and the Arts: New Perspectives on Historical and Contemporary Social Change*
This summer, Professor Vanessa Valdés was named Book Review Editor of *sx salon: a small axe literary platform* (http://www.smallaxe.net/sxsalon). *sx salon* provides open access to literary discussions, interviews with Caribbean writers, reviews of new publications, and poetry and short prose written by up-and-coming and well-established Caribbean writers. Her review of Kal Wagenheim and Olga Jiménez de Wagenheim’s, *The Puerto Ricans: A Documentary History* appeared in *sx salon* 17. (http://smallaxe.net/wordpress3/reviews/2014/10/22/an-unknown-history/) On September 30, 2014, Professor Valdés led a discussion on “Latinos in Social Media and Internalized Oppression” as part of Latino Heritage Month Diversity Talks here at City College. On January 2, 2015, her third book, *Oshun’s Daughters: The Search for Womanhood in the Americas* will be released in paperback.

**ALUMNI**

Mariana Romo-Carmona, MA 2014, was awarded the Isaías Lerner Memorial Scholarship for the Spring semester. She was a Spanish writing tutor in the newly created Spanish Writing Center of the Department of Foreign Languages. In the Fall, she will attend the Graduate Center, CUNY, for her doctoral studies and join the department of Luso-Brazilian Languages and Culture. She was also awarded the Jacoff Scholarship for Graduate Study from City College and the Dean K. Harrison Fellowship from the Graduate Center. Her article, “No se puede ser cubano en cualquier parte: la metáfora del derrumbe en *La fiesta vigilada y Cien botellas en una pared*,” was published in the Winter 2013 Issue of the peer review journal, *Crítica Hispánica.*

**BEYOND THE CLASSROOM**

**A NEW CLUB at FLL**

The Department now has a new club, The Classics Club. The club’s advisor is Tristan Husby; David Cruz the president, Erica Zayas the vice-president, and Manuel Gonzalez the club’s secretary. All have been working hard to make this new venture a success.

**Seminar on Vargas Llosa’s Fiction meets at Instituto Cervantes (211 East 49th St.)**

During the Fall semester the Cátedra Mario Vargas Llosa offered its inaugural seminar on the fiction of 2010 Nobel Prize winner, Mario Vargas Llosa. The intensive classes were taught by the acclaimed novelist and critic J. J. Armas Marcelo with Distinguished Professor Raquel Chang-Rodríguez. They meet at CCNY and at the Instituto Cervantes. At the IC the students were welcomed by its Director, Mr. Ignacio Olmos, and were feted with a reception in which there was much conversation and interaction. The beautiful setting of the IC was an ideal place to award the Certificates of Achievement and close the seminar with “broche de oro.”
AN ENGAGING AND CREATIVE LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Professor Araceli Tinajero took her Spanish 352, Spanish 451, and Spanish 452 students to the many cultural and educational places in New York, such as:

- The Americas Society – October 6, 2014
- Feria del Libro Hispana/Latina de Nueva York – October 10, 2014
- The Graduate Center – November 12, 2014

Prof. Tinajero’s students at the Feria del Libro Hispana/Latina de Nueva York, Oct. 10, 2014

Photograph by student Robinson Sosa.

THE MAJORS JAMBOREE

This year’s majors Jamboree was held at Shephard Hall. Many members from the faculty were present to advise the students who attended the event. The faculty presented the various majors and minors, including the recently added the minor for Arabic Language and Cultures (Photos by Miguel Agostini).

For more information about the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures
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http://www.ccny.cuny.edu/fll