

Fall 2009

Issue 14



LATIN AMERICAN AND LATINO STUDIES AT UOFL

# Caminos

## LALS Fall Events Relate to the 2009 Book-in-Common *The Devil's Highway*

When Luis Alberto Urrea's *The Devil's Highway* was selected as the 2009 Book-in-Common, the LALS Program was invited to collaborate in a series of activities concerning the theme of immigration, including co-sponsorship of four films and the author's campus visit. We also chose to erect an altar at the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft (KMAC) to the "Yuma 14" for the 2009 Downtown Day of the Dead Celebration, which is organized by KMAC and the UofL Arts



Mr. & Mrs. Richard and Constance Lewis at the "Yuma 14" Altar

and Culture Partnerships Initiative. Students, faculty, and staff from the LALS program and other organizations and departments volunteered to create the "Yuma 14" altar to remember the fourteen Mexicans whose tragic journey across the Arizona desert in May of 2001 is chronicled in *The Devil's Highway*. The LALS program also helped the Boys and Girls Club of Louisville erect an altar to Michael Jackson at the Muhammad Ali Center, and arranged for the Society of Physics Students to erect an altar to Galileo at the Louisville Science Center. In addition, LALS offered assistance to the staff of the Frazier International History Museum, whose altar was dedicated to WWII veteran and bandleader Tito Puente, and to Mary Carothers and her 2-D Design class, whose inspirational "Going Home" altar at 21C Museum was dedicated to the many victims who have died attempting to migrate to the U.S. One set of hands cast for this installation were those of LALS Program Assistant Janna Tajibaeva, who creates our beautiful *Caminos* newsletters!

– Rhonda Buchanan, LALS Director

### UofL Welcomes Luis Alberto Urrea,

#### Author of the National Bestseller *The Devil's Highway*



Luis Alberto Urrea

On September 24th, UofL students, staff, and members of the community welcomed Luis Alberto Urrea, the author of the 2009 Book-in-Common, *The Devil's Highway*. The award-winning poet and essayist captivated his audience with personal accounts of his childhood in Tijuana and his subsequent studies of the Mexican-American border. Prior to his visit, many LALS students had studied and discussed his book in Dr. Tricia Gray's class, and made plans to create an altar to the "Yuma 14." Although the text deals with sensitive materials, such as corruption, stereotypes associated with the border, and the death of fourteen men who attempted to cross the Arizona desert, Urrea's sense of humor and charisma made it possible to relate to the struggles of Mexican peoples, and brought about a sense of cultural awareness and understanding of other ethnicities.

– Andrea Greene, LAS Minor

## Latin American and Latino Studies Co-Sponsors a Series of Films Concerning Immigration

### Louisvillian Roy Germano Presents his Documentary “The Other Side of Immigration”



On the evening of September 10<sup>th</sup>, Floyd Theatre was standing room only, and for good reason. Roy Germano's “The Other Side of Immigration” provides a thought-provoking view into the lives of the men, women and children of a rural Mexican community. Germano focuses his lense on the perceived political apathy of the Mexican government and the positive and negative effects of undocumented immigration on the laborers who migrate North, their families, and their communities. After seeing the film and engaging in the Q&A session with the director, I walked away with a more informed view of undocumented Hispanic immigration into the U.S. Co-sponsored by Book-in-Common, LALS, and Student Activities. — *Jesse Payne, LAS Minor*

*Film Directors Roy Germano (left) and Alex Rivera Speak at UofL*

### Alex Rivera, Director of “Sleep Dealer” and “The Sixth Section” Visits UofL

Filmmaker Alex Rivera visited UofL on October 15<sup>th</sup> to screen his documentary, “The Sixth Section,” and his first feature-length film, “Sleep Dealer.” Both films treat problems of the Latino community, namely those concerning the present and future of immigration. “The Sixth Section” focuses on a group of men from the Mexican town of Boquerón, Puebla, who migrated to Newburgh, New York, where they organized to rebuild and develop their home community that had been neglected by their own government. In the Q&A session, Rivera discussed the increasing number of “Hometown Associations” in the U.S. and their positive impact on rural Mexican communities. In his science fiction film “Sleep Dealer,” Rivera explores the problems of immigration from a futuristic perspective. Instead of immigrating in search of employment, workers control robots over the internet from their countries of origin. In the Q&A session, Rivera discussed topics he explores in his work, such as the globalization of information through the internet and the globalization of families, and communities through mass migration. Co-sponsored by the Commonwealth Center for the Humanities and Society, LALS, the Louisville Film Society, the Speed Art Museum, and the Book-in-Common Program. — *Cynthia Martínez, LALS Graduate Certificate Student*

### “Señorita Extraviada: Missing Young Women” by Documentary Film Director Lourdes Portillo, Exposes the Tragedy of the *Víctimas de Juárez*

On September 14<sup>th</sup>, “Señorita Extraviada”, a powerful documentary that tells the stories of the more than 200 young women murdered in Ciudad Juárez in Mexico and the families they left behind, was presented in the Elaine Chao Auditorium. The murders first came to light in 1993, and to this day young women continue to disappear with little hope of bringing the perpetrators to justice. Following the documentary, Dr. Gabriela Nuñez and Sharon LaRue led a discussion of common themes found in the film and *The Devil's Highway* by Luis Alberto Urrea. This screening was co-sponsored by PEACC, LALS, and the Book-in-Common Program. — *Natalie Schuetz, Latino Studies Minor*

### “The Women of Michoacán: Art and Artists” Exhibit Tours Kentucky

From October 15<sup>th</sup> to November 8<sup>th</sup>, the Hite Art Galleries and LALS hosted the exhibit “Las mujeres de Michoacán Arte y artistas,” which displayed the works of six artists from the state of Michoacán, Mexico. On October 29<sup>th</sup>, the LALS program co-hosted a reception with delicious food prepared by “Zapata's Corner,” a new Mexican restaurant in Middletown (12003 Shelbyville Rd.), whose owners are from Michoacán. The exhibit was truly captivating and included paintings, ceramic pieces, sculptures, and photographs. Each piece focused on an aspect of life in Michoacán as it pertained to local women. The works elicited joy and poignancy, practicality and grace, but overall a sense of hope and pride in the culture and people they represented. Many thanks to all those who made the exhibition such a success! Co-sponsored by KIIS and the Ministry of Culture of Michoacán, the Hite Art Institute, and LALS. — *Jordan Andrew, LAS Minor*

## Latin American and Latino Studies Co-Sponsored Events

### Dr. Luis Felipe Guerrero Agripino, Rector of the Universidad de Guanajuato Visits UofL



On October 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>, Dr. Luis Felipe Guerrero Agripino, Rector of the Guanajuato Campus, met with UofL administrators to initiate collaborations between UofL and UG. Plans are in the works to establish collaborations with the LALS program, the Hite Art Institute, the History Department, the Department of Classical and Modern Languages, and the Brandeis School of Law. During his visit, Dr. Guerrero Agripino, who is also a professor of law, a lawyer, and former judge, spoke to students of Dr. Rhonda

Buchanan's Spanish 355 class (pictured above) about studying at UG, and presented a lecture to Dr. Enid Trucios-Haynes' International Law class. We hope to send students to UG and to welcome faculty and artists from Guanajuato very soon! Co-sponsored by CML's Modern Languages Fund, LALS, and the Brandeis School of Law.

### The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual LALS Heritage Lecture Focuses on the Caribbean

On October 7<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Lancelot Cowie, Founding Director of the Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean at the University of the West Indies, gave a lecture on "Sociocultural Issues in Inter-Caribbean Migration," highlighting cultural and social strains of the African ethnic populations of the region in the last century. Born and raised on the island of Trinidad and Tobago, Cowie presented audiences in the Chao Auditorium and students in Dr. Tricia Gray's LAS 310 class with an illustrative presentation of the migratory patterns of the region's populations as the islands faced economic struggles following the break-down of their colonial-based agricultural economies at the turn of the century. Cowie further narrowed the scope of the lecture to the controversial construction of the Panama Canal, where more than 40,000 jobless Caribbeans relocated in hopes of finding employment and establishing a financial network to support families at home. He enriched his lecture by entertaining audiences with Calypso music and dance that would have been practiced by the emigrants, and has since seen a recent revival as islanders have sought to reestablish oral traditions. Co-sponsored by the Anne Braden Institute for Social Justice Research, Cultural Center, LALS, PAS Department and Caribbean Studies, and the Department of Sociology. – *Steven McDonald, LAS Minor*



*Dr. Lancelot Cowie*

### LALS Students Volunteer during Fall Break at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Latino/Multicultural College Fair



*Promesa Mentor Jesse Payne, LAS Minor*

More than 800 Latino and ESL middle and high school students, representatives from Kentucky universities, and dynamic Latino activists descended upon the SAC on October 12<sup>th</sup> for the Latino/Multicultural College Fair. Training and volunteering with LALS and other students as a Promesa Mentor was one of the most informative and interactive experiences I've had at UofL. I talked with students from around the world about their goals for the future. Some discussed their dreams of being doctors, nurses, writers and authors, and others just needed to know their options for education as an undocumented student. This was a vibrant opportunity, not only to practice Spanish and brush up on legislation, such as the DREAM Act, but to lend a hand towards building a socially just society. *¡Sí, se puede!* Co-sponsored by LALS, Cultural Center, KSU, Bluegrass Community and Technical College,

among others. – *Jenna Williams, Latino Studies Minor*

## Apply Now for the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual UofL Study Abroad Program in May 2010!

The Panama Program, which is sponsored by LALS and the Communication Department, begins May 3, 2010 with classes on Belknap campus on May 3, 4, and 5, 2010. We travel to Panama on May 6, 2010 and return on May 28, 2010. Dr. Rhonda Buchanan will direct the 2010 program and will be joined by Dr. Frank Nuessel, Professor of Spanish and Dr. Al Futrell, Chair of the Communication Department. Students may earn up to 6 credit hours, taking courses in Spanish language, Communication (taught in English, CD2), and Panamanian Culture (taught in English, CD1). The program cost of \$3500 includes 6 credit hours of tuition, round-trip airfare to Panama, all ground transportation expenses for excursions and transportation to and from the airport in Panama, housing at a centrally-located hotel in Panama City, and organized excursions to the Panama Canal, El Casco Viejo and the Presidential Palace in the colonial part of the city, the Causeway in the Canal Zone, the Emberá Indigenous Community in the Gamboa Rainforest, and much more. For applications and information about scholarship opportunities, please visit our webpage.

*Desde los Cuatro Caminos*



*From the Crossroads*

¡Saludos amigos!

The summer and fall months have been filled with exciting community engagement projects, events, and initiatives for the LALS program. Many of these are highlighted in this issue of our *Caminos* newsletter, but I would like to mention a few others. I'm pleased to report that we were able to assist the Louisville Firefighters in their efforts to implement a summer Spanish language program for First Responders for their 2009 Rookie class. LALS continues to participate in the Cross-Cultural Connections: African-American and Hispanic/Latino Relations Initiative, organized by the Louisville Metro Humans Relations Commission, by participating on the Education Committee. Our efforts for this ongoing project coincide with the mission of the UofL Hispanic Student Initiative, organized by Dean Mordean Taylor-Archer to provide more opportunities to Latino students. This semester LALS co-sponsored the "Let's Talk Lunches: A Colloquium on Diversity, Over Lunch" at the Cultural Center, organized by our former LALS Program Coordinator Laine López. We wish Laine well in her new position and hope to hire a new LALS Program Coordinator soon. This summer, opportunities arose for new study abroad and internship ventures in Bocas del Toro, Panama and Guanajuato, Mexico. Arrangements are underway for UofL students to serve as volunteers for the 2010 Impacto Project, an educational program that teaches photography skills to children and culminates in a local exhibit that will travel to Louisville. LALS students will complete an internship under the directorship of Panamanian film director Anayansi Prado and Fine Arts Professor Mary Carothers. In June, I had the opportunity to meet Dr. Luis Felipe Guerrero Agripino, Rector of the Universidad de Guanajuato's campus in the city of Guanajuato. That meeting led to an invitation to Louisville and the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between UofL and UG, which will result in numerous future collaborations, including more opportunities for our students to study abroad and conduct internships in Guanajuato. In the early months of the spring semester, LALS began to plan for the Downtown Celebration of the Day of the Dead, partnering again with the Kentucky Museum of Art and Craft. This year LALS assisted five museums with their altar installations and invited students from other organizations and programs to volunteer and collaborate with the Arts and Culture Partnerships Initiative. I invite everyone to visit our webpage to see photos and articles related to this year's grand celebration. ¡Felices fiestas!

Rhonda Buchanan, Director of Latin American and Latino Studies

*Happy Thanksgiving!*



Latin American and Latino Studies  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Humanities 329C  
University of Louisville  
Louisville, KY 40292

Phone (502) 852-2034  
Fax (502) 852-6888  
rhondabuchanan@louisville.edu  
<http://louisville.edu/latinamericanstudies>



*Latin American & Latino Studies*

**Our New LALS Logo!!!**

Created by  
Adolfo (Ben) Ruiz of Adhawks Advertising &  
Public Relations, Inc.