ALALS INITIATIVE EVENTS

SPRING 2020
Featured Scholar Lecture by Dr. Vanessa Valdés
February 14, 2020, 12:15 pm
Wesley W. Posvar Hall, Room 4130

This lecture features the interdisciplinary scholarship of Dr. Vanessa Valdés, the Director of the Black Studies Program and Associate Professor of Spanish and Portuguese at The City College of New York-CUNY. Her research specialization focuses on comparative studies of Black cultural productions throughout the Americas, including the Caribbean, Brazil, and the U.S. She is the author of the critically acclaimed Diasporic Blackness: The Life and Times of Arturo Alfonso Schomburg (2017), in which she analyzed Schomburg’s engagement with the vibrant, ethnically diverse, and racially charged world of early twentieth-century New York City. As an historian, writer, activist and collector, Schomburg’s personal library served as the basis of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at the New York Public Library. In addition to her public talk, Dr. Valdés will also speak with students enrolled in a class on Afro-Hispanic writers in the Department of Hispanic Languages and Literatures.

FALL 2019
Afro-Latinx Perspectives on Race, Representation, and Society Student Research Exhibit and Reception
Tuesday, December 3, 2019, 6:00 -7:30pm
Global Hub, Wesley W. Posvar Hall, First Floor

This event showcases student research from the upper division undergraduate course, “Afro-Latinos in the U.S.” The twenty-one participants will provide visual and textual iterations of the experiences of Afro-Latinxs in regional and transnational contexts. Based on a range of primary sources, including memoirs, historic newspapers, interviews, and social media, this exhibition will present a powerful narrative of the struggles and achievements of Afro-Latinxs. Examples include the racial acculturation of Cubans and Puerto Ricans who migrated in the early twentieth century; racism encountered by sports figures, such as Roberto Clemente (baseball) and Herbert Lewis Hardwick (boxing); Afro-Latinas’ resistance to colorism and sexism; the invisibility of Afro-Latinxs in media and film; and broader efforts to counter injustice and prejudice.
AFRO-LATINX PERSPECTIVES: RACE, REPRESENTATION, AND SOCIETY
STUDENT RESEARCH POSTER EXHIBIT AND RECEPTION

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3RD, 2019
6-7:30PM, GLOBAL HUB, POSVAR HALL

Join us for an exhibition of student research on the challenges and achievements of the Afro-Latinx population in the U.S.

Hillman Library, Eduardo Lozano Latin American Collection and African American Collection University Archives and Special Collections

CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
Talk by Tianna Paschel
Rethinking Black Mobilization in Latin America: Lessons from Brazil
Monday, November 18, 2019, 4:00 pm
Room 4130, Wesley W. Posvar Hall
Co-sponsored by the ALALS Initiative

Professor Tianna Paschel
Associate Professor of African American Studies and Sociology, University of California, Berkeley

"RETHINKING BLACK MOBILIZATION IN LATIN AMERICA: LESSONS FROM BRAZIL"

Black mobilization in Latin America has long been cast as a story of absence. Both scholars who saw the region as a kind of racial paradise and those that challenged such characterizations agreed that effective black mobilization was not likely. In this talk, I deploy examples of recent mobilization by Brazil's black movement to rethink the nature, challenges and outcomes of black mobilization in this region. I suggest that even while there have been many impediments to successful mobilization, black movements have reconfigured their respective states and societies in both expected and unexpected ways.

Monday, November 18th
4pm • 4130 WWPH

CENTER FOR LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES
Afro-Latin American and Afro-Latinx Studies Initiative
PAST EVENTS

Roundtable and Poetry Recitation by Cristiane Sobral
Celebrating Female Black and Indigenous Voices in Latin American Poetry
November 8, 2019, 6:00 pm
Global Hub, Wesley W. Posvar Hall, First Floor
Co-sponsored by the ALALS Initiative
Representations of Afrolatinidad Conference
April 11-13, 2019
University of Pittsburgh

This event featured 16 speakers, including two keynote addresses by Juliet Hooker, Professor of Political Science at Brown University; and Nancy Mirabal, Associate Professor, American Studies, Director of the US Latina/o Studies Program, University of Maryland-College Park. In addition, the panel sessions explored the
following themes: the historical roots of Afro-Latin America, negotiating blackness and anti-blackness, popular and visual cultures, and curriculum and community. The cumulative audience of over 180 people included scholars, staff, students, teachers, and community members. Positive feedback included common descriptors on social media such as “amazing,” “fabulous,” and “energizing.” Throughout the conference, and especially at concluding roundtable, attendees praised the event for being “motivating, “well-conceived,” “lovingly and obviously curated,” and conceptually strong.”
The Initiative launched the Afro-Latin American Studies Graduate Seminar Abroad program in Cuba. This one-credit course provided graduate students in art and art history, linguistics, and history with a first-hand experience in understanding the historical, social, and cultural legacies of Afro-Latin America. The course focused on the history and legacy of Cuba’s African roots and utilized a combination of scholarly texts, films, discussions, essays, and field excursions to address the topics of enslavement, syncretism, resistance, and agency, especially as found in Cuban history, African-derived music, religions, literature, and art; and issues of race and gender in revolutionary society. Four students participated in the pilot program hailed from diverse ethnic, racial, and national backgrounds. They praised the program for being an “amazing trip” which they described as a “deeply enriching” and “positive” experience.