UNI003 (Spring 2003)
World Cultures-Language Option/Activities Lab

For students enrolled in the following Spanish Language and Culture courses:
HU2292 (M. Britz), HU2293 (M. Anderson), HU3292 (S. Boschetto Sandoval and C. Sandoval),
and HU3295 (C. Sandoval)

Language Event/Film sections: Dow 641, Tuesdays 7:05-8:55, Wednesdays 7:05-8:55, or
section “by arrangement” [See Dr. Dieter Adolphs]

Required activities for UNI003
Students will be expected to:
- attend a brief orientation to UNI003 on January 14/15
- attend a Spanish Language event on April 8/9
- view two required Spanish language/culture films: “El norte” January 28/29 and “La
  lengua de las mariposas” (“Butterfly”) March 11/12

Select four additional activities from either the following films or performances. Read the
introduction and accompanying information in World Cultures: Course Activity Guide and
Narratives (required, 2003 edition, at bookstore)

Dates

1/14-15 Orientation to UNI003
1/21-22 Before the Rain (UK/ France/ Republic of Macedonia), Milcho Manchevski, 1994
1/25 Porgy and Bess (Rosza)
1/28-29 El norte (Guatemala/ USA), Gregory Nava, (1983)
2/4-5 French Cultural Event Round Table with Francophone Students
2/11-12 West Beirut (Lebanon), Ziad Doueiri, 1998
2/14-17 Tibetan Book of the Dead (Rosza)
2/18-19 Sugar Cane Alley (Martinique) Euzhan Palcy, 1983
2/25-26 German Cultural Event: Karneval Fasching
3/11-12 La lengua de las mariposas (Spain), José Luis Cuerda, 1999
3/18-19 Harmonists (Germany), Joseph Vilsmaier, 1998
3/25-26 Black Robe (Canada), Bruce Beresford, 1991
4/1-2 Silences of the Palace (Tunisia), Moufida Tiatli, 1994
4/14 Lâghbîjâ (Rosza)
4/8-9 Spanish Cultural Event: Andean Landscapes (Sites and Sounds)
4/15-16 Promise (Germany), Margarethe von Trotta, 1994
4/22-23 Black Orpheus (Brazil), Marcel Camus, 1959
4/29-30 Shower (China) Zhang Yang, 1999

Assignments and Grading for UNI003
- One short (1 page) reaction paper (for the Spanish Cultural Event)
- Two short (1-2 page) response/reflection papers (one for each Spanish film)
- Four short (1 page) reaction papers (one for each of the other films viewed or
  performances attended)

Grading criteria:
Grading of papers is on the basis of four criteria: evidence of careful cultural analysis,
organization and clarity, originality and creativity, and mechanics (grammar, spelling). Each of
these criteria will be scored separately; with the final grade averaged among the four separate
scores. [All papers are double spaced, typed or written in ink]
**UN1003, Spring 2003**

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Week 2  21/22 January

**Before the Rain** (1994) Director: Milcho Manchevski  
Cast: Katrin Cartlidge, Rade Serbedzija, Grégoire Colin (more)  
Categories: Drama, War  
Running Time: 115 minutes

**Synopsis:** Milcho Manchevski's first feature film is a three-part story of the violence and political chaos tearing apart the newly independent nation of Macedonia (former Yugoslavia). In part one, Kiril (Grégoire Colin), a Greek Orthodox monk, encounters Zamira (Labina Mitevska), a Muslim from Albania. Zamira is frightened and has nowhere to go, so Kiril lets her stay in his cell, knowing that if the authorities find her, his peaceful life will be shattered. The second segment, set in London, concerns Anne (Katrin Cartlidge), married to stable but boring Nick (Jay Villiers) but enjoying an affair with Macedonian photographer Aleksander (Rade Serbedzija); Anne is trying to decide if she should stay with Nick or leave with Aleksander, before unexpected events make the decision for her. The conclusion follows Aleksander back to Macedonia; while he's tired of photographing war, he finds no sanctuary in his home town, as Christians and Muslims wage war and he accidentally causes the death of innocent bystanders. Before the Rain received an 1995 Academy Award nomination as Best Foreign Language Film. (Mark Deming, All Movie Guide)

See also: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 39-42

Week 2  25 January

**Porgy and Bess** (Rozsa; 2 p.m.)  
See: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 77-80

Week 3  28/29 January

**El Norte** (1984) Director: Gregory Nava  
Cast: Zaide Silvia Gutierrez, David Villalpando (more)  
Categories:  
Rated: R  
Running Time: 115 minutes

**Synopsis:** In the aftermath of their father's death at the hands of the military, Rosa and Enrique flee their remote Mayan village in Guatemala. They head "north" to the United States in search of a better and more secure life. During the decade of the 80s in Guatemala military atrocities were committed against indigenous communities. This was in part justified through the Guatemalan government's "scorched earth" policy of ridding itself of what it termed "communist subversives." The army was responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of inhabitants, for the exile of as many more, and for the destruction of some 400 indigenous villages. *El norte* is Gregory Nava's first feature film. Nava was born in San Diego, of Mexican and Basque descent. He is also known as the director of *My Family/Mi familia* (1995, Jimmy Smits, Jennifer Lopez), *Selena* (1997, Jennifer Lopez) and *Why Do Fools Fall in Love* (1998). The script of *El norte*, co-authored by the director and his wife, Anna Thomas, was nominated in 1985 for an Oscar and the Writers Guild of America Screen Award as best original script. Nava was awarded the *Gran Prix des Amériques* in Montreal in 1984. In 1995 *El norte* was included in the prestigious National Film Registry and designated as an "American Classic" by the United States Congress (from "Cinema for Spanish Conversation")

Week 4  4/5 February  
French Cultural Event: Roundtable with Francophone Students
Week 5  11/12 February
West Beyrouth (West Beirut) (1998) Director: Ziad Doueiri
Cast: Rami Doueiri, Mohamad Chamas, Rola Al Amin (more)
Categories: Drama
Running Time: 109 minutes
Synopsis  Lebanese writer Ziad Dolueiri made his directorial debut with this French-Lebanese-Belgian-Norwegian co-production, an autobiographical drama with Arabic and French dialogue. In 1975, after self-confident Tarek (Rami Doueiri, the director’s brother) witnesses the start of civil war, he and his pal Omar (Mohamad Chamas) are picked up by Tarek’s mother Hala (Carmen Lebbos), a lawyer married to Riad (Josef Bou Nasser). The next day, Hala is ready to flee, but Riad refuses. With school closed, Tarek and Omar are free to roam about, and they’re joined by their new neighbor, May (Rola Al Amin). However, the reality of the war soon intrudes. Shown in the Directors Fortnight section at the 1998 Cannes Film Festival. (Bhob Stewart, All Movie Guide)
See also: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 103-106

Week 5  14-17 February
Tibetan Book of the Dead (Rozsa)
See: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 91-94

Week 6  18/19 February
Rue Cases Negres (Sugar Cane Alley) (1983) Director: Euzhan Palcy
Cast: Garry Cadenat, Darling Legitimus, Douta Seck (more)
Categories: Drama, Historical Film
Running Time: 106 minutes
Synopsis  The teenage life and adventures of young José who lives in a shanty-town on Martinique in the mid-‘30s comprise the body of this well-wrought film on how to enjoy what you have. José lives with his grandmother and is well aware of the French colonial presence but they are far away from his world. He gets into mischief, learns valuable lessons on living from an old former slave, drinks too much one time, and even sets fire to one of the run-down shanties. Regardless of his pranks, José never lets up on his studies and in the end, his diligence pays off. Darling Legitimus won the Best Actress award at the 1983 Venice Film Festival for her role as the grandmother in this film, and Rue Case Negres won the 1983 Cesar for Best First Film for director Euzhan Paley. (Eleanor Mannikka, All Movie Guide)
See also: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 85-90

Week 7  25/26 February
German Cultural Event: Karneval/Fasching

Week 8  11/12 March
La Lengua De Las Mariposas (Butterfly) (1999) Director: José Luis Cuerda
Cast: Fernando Fernán Gómez, Manuel Lozano, Uxia Blanco (more)
Categories: Drama
Rated: R
Running Time: 95 minutes
Synopsis  Veteran director José Luis Cuerda delivered this sensitive portrait of a child coming of age during a tense political situation just before the Spanish Civil War. On his first day of school, frail eight-year-old Moncho (Manuel Lozano) is so terrified by the imposing figure of his teacher Don Gregorio (Fernando Fernan Gomez) that he flees into the nearby woods. In spite of his authoritarian appearance, the schoolmaster proves to be a kind, free-thinking Republican who teaches Moncho the virtues of being good.
The boy is soon spending much of his time with the elderly Gregorio in the Galician countryside, admiring such wonders of nature as the tongue of a butterfly. Other people in young Moncho’s world include his down-to-earth mother (Uxia Blanco), his Republican father, and his older brother, who plays the saxophone with a group of local musicians. However, when the Fascists roll into town, the boy’s life changes forever. La Lengua de las Mariposas was screened at the 1999 San Sebastian Film Festival. (Jonathan Crow, All Movie Guide)

**Week 9** 18/19 March

**Comedian Harmonists (Harmonists)** (1998) Director: Joseph Vilsmaier  
Cast: Ben Becker, Heino Ferch, Ulrich Noethen (more)  
Categories: Drama  
Rated: R (Nudity, Adult Situations)  
Running Time: 124 minutes  
Synopsis: Joseph Vilsmaier (Stalingrad and Brother of Sleep) directed this fact-based German musical drama about a popular barbershop sextet in Nazi Germany of the ‘30s. In 1927, musician Harry Frommermann (Ulrich Noethen), attracted to music-shop assistant Erna (Meret Becker), joins ambitious vocalist Robert Biberti (Ben Becker) in forming a vocal group with arranger Erwin (Kai Wiesinger) and Bulgarian cafe-singer Ari (Max Tidof). As their fame increases, the authorities, who object to the Jews in the group, pressure them to perform National Socialist material. Traveling to New York, they eventually must decide whether to remain in the U.S. or return to Germany. The musical numbers use digitally remastered recordings by the real-life group, and computer graphics were employed to re-create a 1934 concert aboard an aircraft carrier in New York harbor. Barry Manilow’s stage musical Harmony is based on this same music group. Shown at the 1998 Berlin Film Festival. (Bhob Stewart, All Movie Guide)

**Week 10** 25/26 March

**Black Robe** (1991) Director: Bruce Beresford  
Cast: Lothaire Bluteau, Aden Young, Sandrine Holt (more)  
Categories: Drama, Historical Film  
Running Time: 101 minutes  
Synopsis: Adapted by Brian Moore from his own novel, The Black Robe is a sprawling recreation of a turbulent period in Canadian history. In 1634, Jesuit missionary Father Laforgue (Lothair Bluteau) arrives in the New World, hoping to convert the Huron Indian tribe to Catholicism-and, incidentally, to expedite the French colonization of Quebec. Laforgue is regarded with a combination of warmth and wariness by the natives, who refer to Laforgue and his fellow priests as “black robes”. Offering his services as both guide and friend is Algonquin chief Chomina (August Schellenberg). The by-the-book Laforgue does little to endear himself to the Indians—one of whom, a holy man, labels the priest as a demon who will bring nothing but death and destruction. The one who suffers most is Chomina, the man who most desires peaceful coexistence. In an ironic coda, we learn that the “black robes” have set into motion the fall of the Hurons, simply by imposing their Christian values upon them. Black Robe has been compared to Dances with Wolves, but the films do not share the same philosophy: while the idealistic hero of Wolves strives to understand and appreciate his new Indian comrades, the pious protagonist of Black Robe has only subjugation in mind. (Hal Erickson, All Movie Guide)  
See also: **UN1002/1003 Activities Guide**, pp. 47-50

**Week 11** 1 and 2 April

**Les Silences du Palais (Silences of the Palace)** (1994) Director: Moufida Tlatli  
Cast: Amel Hedhili, Hend Sabri, Najia Ouerghi (more)  
Categories: Drama  
Running Time: 128 minutes  
Synopsis: The pain of servitude, the power of music, and the need for women to stick together provide the underlying themes for this Tunisian-French drama set in the ruling king’s compound the night...
before Tunisia declared its independence. The story reflects the reminiscence of Alia, a 25 year old woman who was raised in the royal palace with her mother, Khedija, a lifelong servant there. One of Khedija’s more odious tasks was to have sex with her masters. Alia has no idea who her father was. In the present Alia has an appointment for yet another abortion as requested by Lofti her boyfriend. When she hears that Prince Sid Ali died, she returns to the palace she ran away from 10 years ago. The palace is aging badly. As she returns, she finds herself confronted with all the memories she worked so hard to bury. She thinks about her unborn baby and begins to understand why her mother did not want her to become a servant. (Sandra Brennan, All Movie Guide)

Week 11
3 April Lágbájá (Rozsa; 8 p.m.)
See also: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 69-70

Week 12 8/9 April
Spanish Cultural Event: Andean Landscape (Sites and Sounds)

Week 13 15/16 April
Das Versprechen (Promise) (1994)
Director: Margarethe von Trotta
Cast: Corinna Harfouch, Meret Becker, August Zirner (more)
Categories: Drama
Rated: R
Running Time: 115 minutes
Synopsis: Two star-crossed lovers, separated by the Berlin wall for thirty years are reunited. The major events in their separate lives become the focus in this German political drama. The story begins in August 1961 as the Wall is being built. In Eastern Berlin a group of young adults plans their escape. Included in the group are Konrad and Sophie who has an aunt on the other side. It is the aunt who will sponsor the escapees. Escape will be the only way Konrad and Sophie will be able to stay together. Konrad is involved in a mishap en route and must remain in East Berlin. In 1968, the lovers at last get a chance to briefly meet in Prague. There they express their frustration and pain. At least there, in Prague they can find occasional happiness. Suddenly Russian tanks appear and destroy their new dream. 1980 comes. Sophie and Konrad have since married other people. Their next meeting is bittersweet as they look back upon their promise which was broken by circumstance, and by the decisions each lover had to make. (Sandra Brennan, All Movie Guide)

Week 14 22/23 April
Black Orpheus (1959) Director: Marcel Camus
Cast: Breno Mello, Marpessa Dawn, Lea Garcia (more)
Categories: Fantasy, Romance
Running Time: 120 minutes
Synopsis Black Orpheus (Orfeu Negro) is literally what its title suggests: a retelling of the “Orpheus and Eurydice” legend enacted by black performers. This time the setting is the annual Carnival in Rio de Janeiro. Orpheus (Breno Mello) is a streetcar conductor; Eurydice (Marpessa Dawn), has just jilted her lover and is attempting to escape his wrath. Orpheus himself falls in love with Eurydice, whereupon her ex-lover, disguised as the Angel of Death (it is Carnaval time, after all), shows up and kills Eurydice. To reclaim his lost love, Orpheus enters “Hell” (the Rio morgue) and uses supernatural methods to revive the
dead girl. A multi-award winner on the international film scene, Black Orpheus avoids the pitfalls of pretension thanks to the engaging performances by the leading characters. The film's dull spots are glossed over by the driving samba musical score by Luiz Bonfa and Antonio Carlos Jobim. (al Erickson, All Movie Guide)

See also: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 43-46

Week 15 29/30 April
Shower (1999) Director: Zhang Yang
Cast: Zhu Xu, Jiang Wu, Jiang Wu (more)
Categories: Comedy Drama
Running Time: 95 minutes
Synopsis  A family's differences are reflected in the changing face of China near the turn of the millennium in this drama. In a decaying neighborhood in Beijing, a local bathhouse serves as a meeting place for the elderly men of the community; the house is run by Liu (Zhu Xu), assisted by his son Erming (Jiang Wu), who is mildly retarded and tends to live in a world of his own. Liu's other son, Daming (Pu Cunxin), who now lives in the Southern Chinese city of Shenzhen, arrives for a visit after hearing that Liu had died. Daming is happy to hear that the news of his father's death was greatly exaggerated, but as part of a younger generation that has adopted a Western-influenced lifestyle and business sense (including favoring showers over baths), he feels out of place in his father's world and there's a great emotional distance between the two. But when Erming disappears, the crisis brings Liu and Daming closer together, and Daming decides to extend his visit when he and Liu get word that the bathhouse is scheduled to be torn down in a few weeks. Veteran Chinese actor Feng Shun made his final screen appearance as a man who trains fighting crickets. (Mark Deming, All Movie Guide)

See also: UN1002/1003 Activities Guide, pp. 81-84