



# LATENT MEMORY

## Present Visions of Latin American Political Past

Friday, March 31, 2017, at 7 p.m.  
Eileen Norris Cinema Theatre  
University of Southern California

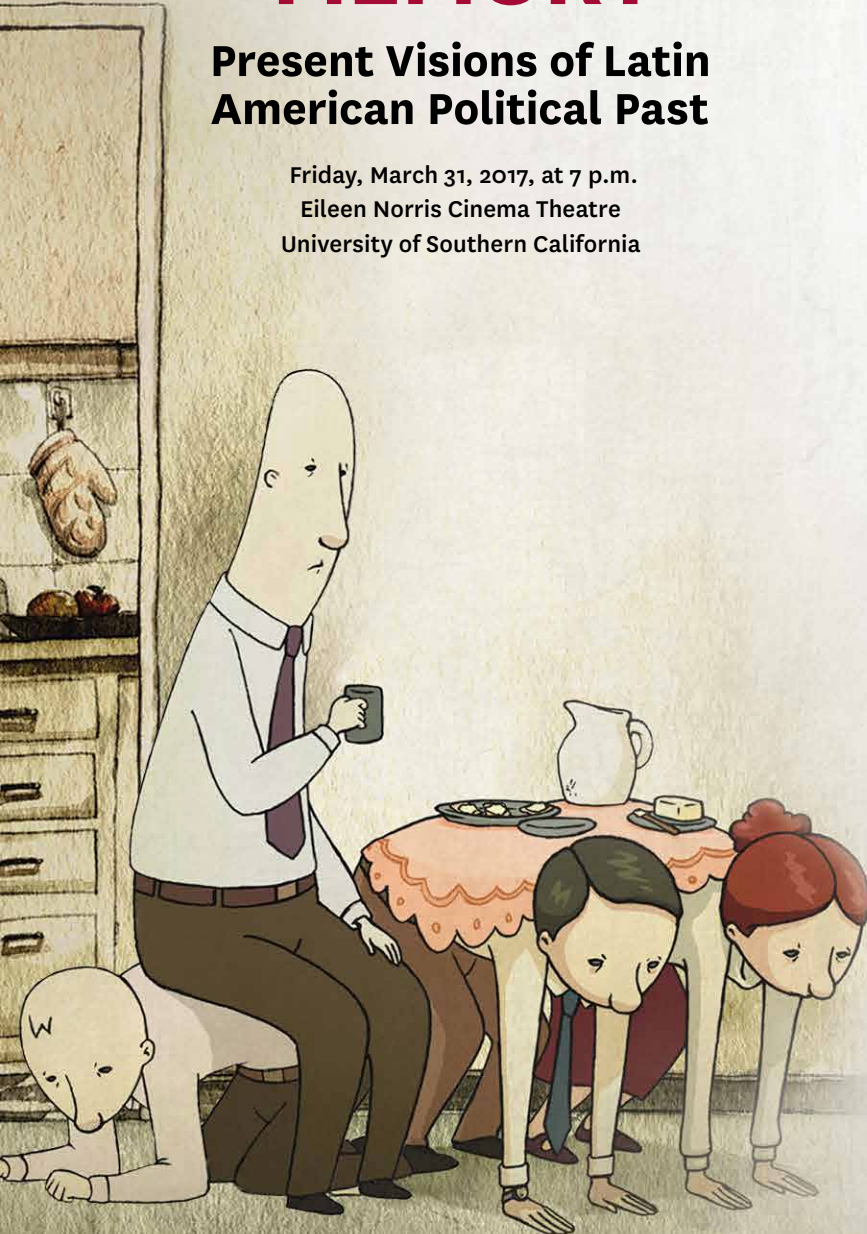


Image: Santiago Bou Grasso and Patricio Plaza, *El Empleo*, 2008

### ABOUT THE ARTISTS

- ◉ **Patricio Plaza** is one half of the award-winning Argentinian filmmaking duo Grasso & Plaza. Their hybrid fiction/documentary films focus on the violence and human tragedies that occurred as a result of the Argentinian dictatorship of the 1970s and '80s.
- ◉ **Carlos Gomez Salamanca** is a Colombian animator/filmmaker who explores his country's culture and history.
- ◉ **Juan Camilo González**, born in Colombia, works at the intersection of traditional hand-drawn animation and web technologies. He is a founding director of the group Moebius Animación, which aims to reactivate the art of cinema separate from commercial and political forces. He is an alumnus of the USC Animation MFA program.
- ◉ **Simon Wilches-Castro** is also an alumnus of the USC MFA program in Animation. His films comment on the turmoil of his home country, Colombia.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The post-colonial histories of Latin American countries have been characterized by periods of violence, censorship, discrimination, and loss of memory of the recent past. Dictatorships and military rule—and associated human-rights abuses—have been recurring features of Latin American life since the colonial period.

In Chile, the military dictatorship of General Augusto Pinochet lasted from 1973 to 1990. More than 3,000 people were killed or disappeared, and 200,000 Chileans went into exile. In Argentina, up to 30,000 people were murdered during or just prior to the “Dirty War” of 1976 to 1983, a military dictatorship against suspected left-wing opponents. Violence associated with Colombia's continued internal armed conflict has forcibly displaced more than 6.8 million Colombians. Bolivia, Brazil, Nicaragua, and other countries throughout Latin America have also suffered under periods of military and/or authoritarian rule.

This has meant extended periods when the people of numerous Latin American countries suffered violence, displacement, repression, and other traumas on a mass scale.

### U.S. SUPPORT OF AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES IN LATIN AMERICA

As part of the Cold War battle between capitalism and communism, in the 20th century the United States government supported right-wing Latin American dictatorships that fought movements it perceived as aligned with communism, including socialist and democratic socialist movements. U.S. support came in the form of financial assistance, arms, education, military training, and technical support to anti-leftist regimes.

For instance, the United States backed Pinochet’s 1973 coup in Chile, which overthrew Salvador Allende, the first Marxist elected to a chief executive office in Latin America in a free election. U.S. government and corporate interests feared Allende’s goals of agrarian reform and nationalization of industry. The United States also supported authoritarian regimes in Bolivia, Argentina, Brazil, Nicaragua, and numerous other countries.

## DEFINITIONS

**AUTHORITARIAN:** Related to a political system that concentrates power in the hands of a leader or a small autocratic elite that is not constitutionally responsible to the body of the people.

**DICTATORSHIP:** A form of government in which a dictator or small clique has absolute power without effective constitutional limitations. Some dictatorships maintain power through overwhelming military force. Others rule through the cult of personality of a strong, charismatic leader. South American dictatorships of the 20th century were exemplified by bureaucratic-authoritarian regimes like those in Chile and Argentina, which aimed to control society through heavily wielding the power of state institutions.

**LEFT WING:** In a conception of politics organized around a left-right spectrum, the left wing is generally associated with ideas such as freedom, equality, rights, progress, reform, and internationalism. Liberals, progressives, anarchists, communists, social democrats, left-libertarians, and socialists are usually considered left-wing. Pro-labor movements and movements for racial equality and racial justice are usually left-wing movements.

**MANO DURA:** A Spanish phrase meaning “strong hand.” Those who defend Latin America’s authoritarian and military regimes sometimes argue that the *mano dura* of a military dictatorship is needed to get things done in Latin America.

**POST-COLONIAL:** Relating to a period after colonial rule. In Latin America, the colonial period can be broadly described as the 15th century to the early 19th century. The post-colonial period is from about 1825 (by which time most Latin American countries had achieved their independence from colonial rule) to the present.

**RIGHT WING:** In a conception of politics organized around a left-right spectrum, the right wing is generally associated with ideas such as authority, hierarchy, order, duty, tradition, reaction, and nationalism. Conservatives, Christian democrats, right-libertarians, classical liberals, neoconservatives, reactionaries, imperialists, monarchists, fascists, and traditionalists are usually considered right-wing.

## FOR FURTHER REFLECTION

- ⦿ How did global, regional, and national history affect the lives and work of the artists in this program?
- ⦿ Do you think artists have a responsibility to address political issues in their work? Do you think doing so feels more pressing, or more avoidable, for some artists than others? Why?
- ⦿ Do you think there is a fundamental difference between left-wing and right-wing authoritarian regimes, or are they more alike than different? Is a right-wing democracy more just than a left-wing dictatorship, or vice versa?
- ⦿ How do you define freedom? Is your notion of “freedom” connected to democracy? To equal opportunity or equal access to resources? To social or economic justice? To artistic license?



Padre by Grasso & Plaza



Lupus by Carlos Gomez Salamanca



Data-Driven Animation by JuanCamilGonzalez



Business Hours by Simón Wilches-Castro



## TO LEARN MORE, EXPLORE THESE RESOURCES:

- ◉ *Latin American Dictators of the 20th Century* by Javier A. Galvan
- ◉ Patricio Plaza's demo reel on Vimeo  
<https://vimeo.com/87150812>
- ◉ Juan Camilo González's Lab  
<http://juancgonzalez.com>
- ◉ Simon Wilches-Castro's work online  
<http://www.simonwilches.com>

## DISCOVER MORE AT THE USC LIBRARIES

**ROBERT V. LABAREE** and **BARBARA ROBINSON** of the USC Libraries have selected the following resources to help you learn more about tonight's screening.

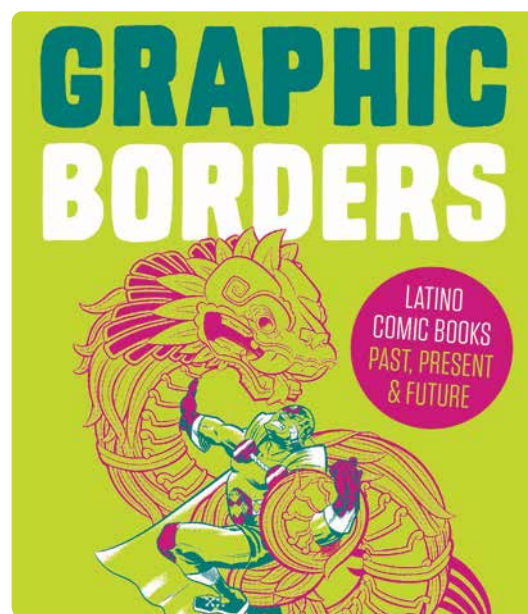
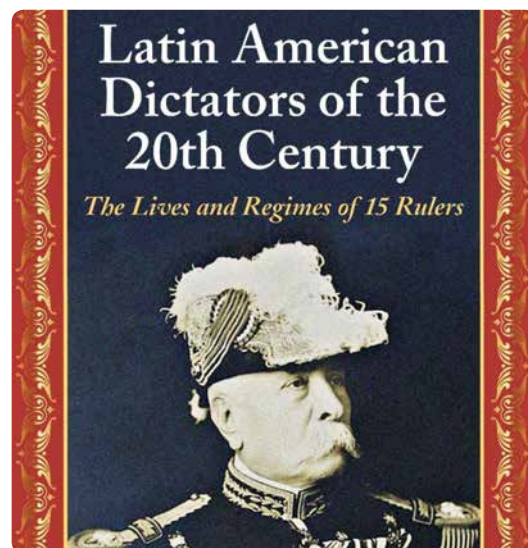
### RECOMMENDED BOOKS

- ◉ *After Human Rights: Literature, Visual Arts, and Film in Latin America, 1990–2010*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2016.  
By Fernando J. Rosenberg  
Doheny Memorial Library: NX650 .H78 R67 2016
- ◉ *After Spanish Rule: Postcolonial Predicaments of the Americas*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.  
Mark Thurner and Andrés Guerrero, editors.  
Doheny Memorial Library: F1413 .A43 2003
- ◉ *Cartooning in Latin America*. Cresskill, NJ: Hampton Press, 2005.  
John A. Lent, editor.  
Doheny Memorial Library: PN6790.S645 C37 2005
- ◉ *Colonialism and Postcolonial Development: Spanish America in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010.  
By James Mahoney  
Doheny Memorial Library: F1410 .M274 2010
- ◉ *Graphic Borders: Latino Comic Books Past, Present, and Future*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2016.  
Frederick Luis Aldama and Christopher González, editors.  
Doheny Memorial Library: PN6790.L29 G73 2016
- ◉ *Power, Place and Representation: Contested Sites of Dependence and Independence in Latin America*. New York: Peter Lang, 2012.  
Bill Richardson and Lorraine Kelly, editors.  
Doheny Memorial Library: F1414.3 .P68 2012
- ◉ *Redrawing the Nation: National Identity in Latin/o American Comics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.  
Héctor Fernández L'Hoeste and Juan Poblete, editors.  
Doheny Memorial Library: PN6790.L29 R43 2009

### RECOMMENDED DATABASES

The following databases provide access to scholarly research literature related to the post-colonial histories of Latin American countries understood through the lens of cinema and the visual arts. You can access them at [libguides.usc.edu/az.php](http://libguides.usc.edu/az.php).

- ◉ FIAF International Index to Film Periodicals Database  
Created by the International Federation of Film Archives, indexes more than 300,000 articles from 300 of the world's foremost academic and popular film journals, dating from 1972 onward.
- ◉ Hispanic American Periodicals Index  
Provides citations to the contents of scholarly journals published around the world on Latin America and the Caribbean since 1970 covering everything from political, economic, and social issues to the arts and humanities.



⦿ Historical Abstracts

Provides comprehensive indexing of historical articles from more than 1,800 journals in over forty languages from 1955 to the present.

⦿ Political Database of the Americas

Offers information about institutions and political processes, national constitutions, branches of government, elections, political constitutional studies and other subjects related to democracy in the Americas.

⦿ World Scholar: Latin America and the Caribbean

Multidisciplinary resource of contemporary and historical documents designed to reveal a true depiction of the nature, integrity and culture of Latin America, including never-before-digitized documents and scholarly journals, newspapers and periodicals.

⦿ Worldwide Political Science Abstracts

Provides citations, abstracts, and indexing of the international journal literature in political science and its complementary fields, including international relations, law, and public administration and policy.

**ADDITIONAL ELECTRONIC RESOURCES**

The following resources provide access to digitized collections that support research of Latin American politics and post-colonialism. You can access them at [libguides.usc.edu/az.php](http://libguides.usc.edu/az.php).

- ⦿ Digitalia Film Library — consists of a multilingual, multinational streaming video collection of ca. 800 feature films and documentaries, the majority in Spanish and Portuguese with English subtitles, from Spain, other European countries, U.S., and Latin America (especially Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil).
- ⦿ Digitalia Hispanica — contains approximately 16,000 full-text Spanish language electronic books, journal issues, and documents.
- ⦿ Sounds and Colours [<http://soundsandcolours.com/>] — a website and print publication focused on South American music and culture.

