

About

The twentieth century was the century of the refugee. In 1999, the UN reported that one in 214 people on the planet—50 million in total—had been forced to flee violence and persecution.

The massive displacement of 500,000 Spanish Republicans in 1939, spurring years' worth of intense relief work by Lincoln vets and other Republican sympathizers, was the first major refugee crisis in the world to be widely covered by the visual media. The heart-wrenching images first delivered to the Western public by Capa, Seymour, LeChanois, and others have by now become all too familiar.

But the questions they raised then have remained. How should we read images of suffering? Should refugees be portrayed as innocent victims or political actors? What should be done to help them? And is it possible to distinguish between humanitarian relief and political work?

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE ARCHIVES



Documenting Displacement

Images of Spanish Civil War Refugees:
A Symposium



Photo by Walter Rosenblum

May 1, 2009

3 to 9 PM

King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center, NYU

Documenting Displacement: A Symposium

Francie Cate-Arries

Dr. Cate-Arries is a professor of Hispanic Studies at the College of William and Mary. Her courses there include "Memory Works: Words and Images of the Spanish Civil War" and "Spain (Un)Censored: Spanish Cinema Under Franco." Cate-Arries wrote *Spanish Culture behind Barbed-Wire: Memory and Representation of the French Concentration Camps, 1939-1945* (Bucknell UP, 2004).

Soledad Fox

Dr. Fox is Associate Professor of Romance Languages at Williams College. She is the author of *Constancia de la Mora in War and Exile: International Voice of the Spanish Republic* (Sussex Academic Press, 2006). She researches Spanish Civil War women in twentieth century Spain, exile, autobiography and memory as well as comparative studies of the Holocaust and the Spanish Civil War.

Sebastiaan Faber

Dr. Faber is Professor and Chair of the Department of Hispanic Studies at Oberlin College. He is the author of *Exile and Cultural Hegemony: Spanish Exiles in Mexico* (Vanderbilt, 2002), and *Anglo-American Hispanists and the Spanish Civil War* (Palgrave, 2008). He curated *Scenes of Bravery and Determination: Walter Rosenblum's Homage to the Spanish Republicans* on view at the King Juan Carlos Center.

Gina Herrmann

Dr. Herrmann is Associate Professor of Spanish Literature and Culture at the University of Oregon. She is the author of articles on Spanish political culture, particularly communist literature and history, and is an oral historian. Her first book, *Written in Red: The Communist Memoir in Spain*, will be published by the University of Illinois Press in 2009.

Geoff Pingree

Dr. Pingree is an independent writer and photographer, an Emmy-winning documentary filmmaker, and an associate professor of Cinema Studies at Oberlin College. A specialist in the documentary of the Spanish Republic and Civil War, he writes frequently about Spanish culture and politics and is editor, with Lisa Gitelman, of *New Media, 1740-1915* (MIT, 2003).

Trisha Ziff

Ms. Ziff, a Guggenheim scholar, is a Mexico-City-based curator and filmmaker. Her exhibits include *Bloody Sunday*, and *Che Guevara, Revolutionary and Icon*. She co-directed the documentary *Chevolution* (2008), and was instrumental in the recovery of the "Mexican Suitcase" negatives, about which she is currently preparing a documentary, *La Maleta Mexicana*, which will go into production in 2010.

Cynthia Young

Ms. Young is an Assistant Curator at the International Center of Photography in charge of the Robert Capa and Cornell Capa Archive. She organized *This Is War! Robert Capa at Work* with Richard Whelan in 2007.

Jo Labanyi, host

Dr. Labanyi is Professor of Spanish at NYU, where she directs the King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center. She has published widely on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Spanish culture and has a particular interest in the memory of the Spanish Civil War, on which she has published several articles, and in the early Franco Dictatorship.

3:00p Opening remarks by Jo Labanyi and Sebastiaan Faber

3:15 Panel 1: The Visual Politics of Refugee Aid, 1939-1965

3:15 Ione Robinson's Portraits of War and Exile: Barcelona 1938, Argeles 1939—*Francie Cate-Arries*

3:35 Moving the Public: the Politics of Spanish Refugee Aid—*Soledad Fox*

3:55 Walter Rosenblum and the Unitarians (1946)—*Sebastiaan Faber*

4:15 Screening of *Spain in Exile* (Zúñiga/Falkenberg, 1946, 15')

4:30 Screening of *Land of Exile* (Nicholas MacDonald, 1965, 20')

4:50 Q&A

5:05 break

5:20 Panel 2: The Politics of Refugee Film, 1939-2001

5:20 Introduction to *Refuge* (Sebastiaan Faber)

5:30 Screening of *Refuge* (J.P. LeChanois, 1939, 30')

6:00 The Visual Politics of *Refuge*—*Gina Herrmann*

6:20 Vision, Politics, and Displacement, 70 Years Hence: *Los niños de Rusia* (Jaime Camino, 2001)—*Geoff Pingree*

6:45 Q&A

7:00 break

7:30 Panel 3: Displaced Archives, Images without a Biography: The "Mexican Suitcase" and the Recuperation of Visual Memory

7:30 Introduction (Sebastiaan Faber)

7:35 The Lost Suitcase: France, Spain, Mexico: Exploring Memory, Myth, Diaspora and Return on Film—*Trisha Ziff*

7:55 Capa in the French Camps—*Cynthia Young*

8:15 Q&A

8:30 Reception

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA) is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to promoting public awareness, research, and discussion about the Spanish Civil War and the American volunteers who risked their lives to fight fascism in Spain. Using its continually expanding archival collections in exhibitions, publications, performances, and educational programs, ALBA preserves the legacy of progressive activism and commitment of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade as an inspiration for present and future generations.