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INTRODUCTION

On behalf of the Editorial Board of *Mester*, the academic journal of the graduate students of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of California, Los Angeles, I am honored to introduce its fifty-fifth issue, titled "Rewriting and Reimagining Traditions."

Mester LV invited submissions exploring the phenomenon of rewriting, the intricate dialogues between different works of art, and the motivations driving artists and writers to revisit, reinterpret, and reimagine existing texts, canons, historical events, as well as Afro-descendant and Indigenous traditions, literature, visual arts, and oral narratives. We sought to examine how engaging with prior traditions through contemporary frameworks gives rise to new creative, critical, and cultural practices across Iberian, Latin American, Brazilian, Luso-African, Latinx, and Chicanx contexts.

This volume opens with Rachel C. Williams's article, "El gran secreto del arte': Aesthetic Considerations in the *refundiciones* of José Fernández Guerra." Williams examines nineteenth-century Spanish *refundiciones*—the recasting and updating of Golden Age comedias. Focusing on Fernández Guerra's *Ir contra el viento* (a rewriting of Agustín Moreto's *Yo por vos y vos por otro*), the essay analyzes how neo-Aristotelian principles of verisimilitude, moral order, and nationalistic motives were deployed to reshape classic texts, negotiating the tensions between Baroque heritage and the rise of European Romanticism.

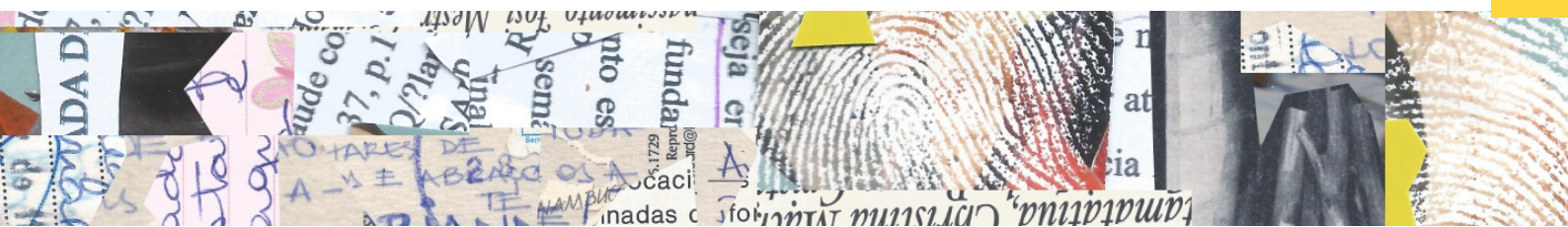
Bridging classical European canons with contemporary decolonial interventions, Lei Edmonds's article, "Afro-ascendencia: Visual Reclamation and Liberatory Futurities," investigates how contemporary Afro-diasporic women artists—Harmonia Rosales, Fabiola Jean-Louis, and Firelei Báez—reclaim historical, canonical, and cartographic archives. Edmonds proposes the framework of *Afro-ascendencia* to analyze how these artists invert Eurocentric visual

regimes, transform trauma through creative labor, and construct liberatory, regenerative cosmologies for Black and Brown subjectivities.

This dialogue on Afro-diasporic aesthetics and Glissantian thought extends into the third article, "A Opacidade da Obra e o Desvio da Vida em 'Na Ópera de Wifredo Lam' (2023), de Edmilson de Almeida Pereira: por uma Estética da Relação." The study explores how Edmilson de Almeida Pereira's poetry engages with the visual and biographical trajectory of Afro-Cuban painter Wifredo Lam. Drawing on Édouard Glissant's concepts of opacity, *détour* (deviation), and relation, the essay demonstrates how Pereira's poetry translates the ambiguities of Lam's paintings (such as *La Jungla* and *Le Sombre Malembo, Dieu du Carrefour*) into an opaque, multi-voiced aesthetic that challenges linear readings and definitive conclusions.

The Glissantian constellation continues in the fourth article, now intertwined with the rewriting of Western myths in "Archipelagic Rewriting and Postcolonial Reframing of the Epic in Jorge de Lima's *Invenção de Orfeu*." Reading Glissant's concepts of opacity and relation alongside Antonio Cornejo Polar's notion of heterogeneity, the study demonstrates how Lima's epic reinterprets classical mythological structures through a postcolonial, archipelagic lens to desacralize literary traditions and unsettle colonial imaginaries.

Expanding the boundaries of textuality and material signs, the fifth article, "Drawing Logistics: Writing, Images, and Vibrant Matter in Luiza Crosman," concludes the scholarly research section of this volume. Analyzing Crosman's *Drawing Logistics* series through Jane Bennett's concept of vibrant matter alongside Derridean grammatology, the study explores how diagrammatic collages integrate verbal language with logistical artifacts like packaging, labels, and barcodes. By repositioning these materials from inert



supports into active actants, the essay reveals a politics of matter wherein meaning emerges from unstable relations between signs and substrates.

To conclude this volume, *Mester LV* features an interview conducted by Isabel Ibáñez de la Calle with Ecuadorian writer Yuliana Ortiz Ruano. In this dialogue, Ortiz Ruano reflects on her artistic formation, childhood as a political space, literature as a community-building practice, and her celebrated debut novel, *Fiebre de carnaval* (2022).

I would like to thank all the authors for their contributions to this volume. I am deeply grateful for the dedication of our Editorial Board—comprised of Adela McKay, Adriana Rojas, Ana Arreguin, Andrew Edwards, Bianca Mayer, Camila Lee, Candela Perichon, Fernanda Mora Triay, Gabriela Cruz, Ícaro Carvalho, Jacob Chan, Nickolas Barba, Rebecca Benitez, Saraí Jaramillo, and Xana Furtado—as well as our guest contributing editors, Mara G. Uriol-Garate and Marco Antonio Sánchez-Cano. I wish to express my appreciation to the editorial designer of this edition, Marianna Tórgo. I would also like to give special thanks to our past Editor-in-Chief, Ícaro Carvalho, for his continued guidance. Finally, I am deeply thankful to Mester LV's Faculty Advisor, Professor Patrícia Lino, as well as to the Chair of the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, Professor Jorge Marturano, and the Vice Chair for Graduate Studies, Professor Patricia Arroyo Calderón for their ongoing support.

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