Moving Images - Static Spaces: Architectures, Art, Media, Film, Digital Art and Design

• Paper / Proposal Title:

Paradoxes of Appropriation and Nationalism of Functionalistic Architecture in Mexico in Film.

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• Presentation Method. I would like to:

  i. Present via pre-recorded film (with/without a written paper)

• Abstract (300 words):

Mexican cinema has showcased modernist architecture in different films, especially in the period known The Golden Age of Mexican Cinema (1940s-1960s). In this period, there seems to be an ideological synchronicity between the Mexican government’s nationalistic aesthetic and some of the important filmmakers as Emilio Fernández. In contrast, in the realm of housing politics, the government’s claim a nationalistic inclination, but the preferred architectural style was the international, functionalistic. Beginning in the 1930s, with the president Lázaro Cárdenas, the works of architects such as Juan O’Gorman and Mario Pani became an analogy for nationalism. O’Gorman is known for his exemplary international style in a variety of constructions: from his own house from 1929 --heavily influenced by the Bauhaus-- to public schools commissioned by President Cárdenas, to the emblematical joint houses owned by the artists Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera (1933), where the monochromatic color palette of the German school
was transformed into scandalous shades of cobalt blue and scarlet. The Hollywood melodrama *Frida* (2003) was filmed inside these twin houses, leading the viewer to imagine the way in which space was inhabited by these painters.

Likewise, the work of the architect Mario Pani was displayed in some Mexican films. With the *Existenzminimum* in mind, he is known for the apartment complexes in the style of Modernist architecture. Again, these are telling of this symbolic fusion of International style as a synonym of Mexican nationalism. Several films display his actual buildings: *La bienamada* (1951); *Where our children go to?* (1958) and *Duck Season* (2006).

This paper will analyze the symbolic interactions of the cinematic narratives and space in the process of articulating modernity in Mexico. We will also explore the ways of inhabiting these cubic shaped constructions.

• Author(s) Biography (200 words each):

Earned an MA in Film studies at Ohio University (Athens), and a Ph.D. in Latin American Studies at the Ohio State University (Columbus). She is a specialist in Mexican Cinema. She teaches topics related to the study of cinema and the city to graduate students at the Universidad de Guadalajara (México). She is the author of the books María Félix en Imágenes (2001); ¿Verdad o ilusión? El cine fantástico y los géneros (2002); and Familia y Estado: visiones desde el cine mexicano (2015).