

SPAN590A. Narrativa Sonora: Sound and Literature  
in Contemporary Latin American Fiction  
Winter Term 1, Thurs. 3:00-6:00PM  
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This is a partial syllabus to provide reading information to students. A full syllabus will be provided on Canvas before our first class meeting.

### Course Description

Latin America has a rich and complex tradition of orality, both aural and textual. This course reads narrative fiction of the past three decades in relation to that tradition, considering how contemporary works build on and (perhaps more importantly) diverge from, oral practices that have been the ground of storytelling, memory making, and political interventions in the region. Throughout the semester, we will attend closely to how contemporary aural novels grapple with and contextualize important sociohistorical, political, and economic realities, such as gendered and cartel violence, ingrained corruption by political figures, disability, increased (forced) migration through and to North America, and ecological disasters that are increasing in frequency and severity due to climate change. In particular, our conversations will inquire into how narrative texts invoke or represent sound, aurality, and silence both thematically and formally—through literary devices and formal structure—as a means of indexing, critiquing, and deconstructing structures of power. We will read critical texts from literary sound studies and philosophy to account for how narrative aurality is deployed as a means of perceiving alternative epistemologies and responding to precarity, inequality, and violence of the globalized present.

### Readings:

- Novels: I strongly prefer that students purchase physical copies of books for various reasons, among these:
  1. so that we can more easily discuss texts with reference to page numbers;
  2. studies show that physical books deliver information more effectively and are more easily remembered than their digital counterparts;
  3. handling a physical book is a multisensorial experience that allows for convenient notetaking and is untainted by the distractions that can accompany electronic books.

To this end, I have ordered copies of novels for the UBC Bookstore, or you may purchase them on Amazon, etc. However, I have also provided links to ebooks of the assigned novels if you want to begin reading before your physical copy arrives or if you want to save money by reading an ebook rather than physical text. If you choose to read an ebook, it will be your responsibility to take good notes and to navigate and direct us to relevant pages of the ebook effectively while we discuss works in class.

- Selections: Any critical or literary text marked with “selection” will be provided as a PDF on Canvas.

Selections of critical texts TBA. All critical readings will be provided in PDF on Canvas.

Semana 1 (September 8): “The Sonic [Turn](#)”, Tom McEnaney. Ana María Ochoa Gautier, [Aurality](#) (selection). Úrsula de Jesús, *Las [almas](#) del purgatorio* (selection)

Semana 2 (Sept 15): Leonora Carrington, *La [trompetilla](#) acústica* (1974, novela surrealista). Jonathan Sterne, *The Audible Past* (selection).

Semana 3 (Sept 22): Rigoberta Menchú, “Intro” + “Prólogo” de [Me llamo...](#), Horacio Castellanos Moya, [Insensatez](#) (2004). Alberto Moreiras, “The [Aura](#) of *Testimonio*”  
Lectura sugerida: Tom McEnaney, “[Rigoberta’s Listener](#)”

Semana 4 (Sept 29): Juan Villoro (2012), [Arrecife](#). Nixon, [Slow Violence](#) (selections).

Semana 5 (Oct 6): Jorge Comensal, *Las [mutaciones](#)* (2016). Serenella Iovino, *Italo Calvino’s [Animals](#)* (selections).  
Lectura sugerida: Macarena Gómez-Barris, *The Extractive Zone*.

Semana 6 (Oct 13): [REH Conference](#). Read one of works to be discussed at conference + Participate in relevant session + blog post. I encourage you to attend more/all sessions!

Semana 7 (Oct 20): Rodrigo Rey Rosa, *Los [sordos](#)* (2012). Jonathan Sterne, [Diminished Faculties](#) (selection).  
Lecturas sugeridas: Marilia Librandi, *Writing by Ear*. Brandon LaBelle, *Acoustic Justice*. Jennifer Esmail, *Reading Victorian Deafness*.

Semana 8 (Oct 27): Guadalupe Nettel, *El [huésped](#)* (2006). Rancière, [Politics of Aesthetics](#).  
Lectura sugerida: Serres, *The Parasite*

Semana 9 (Nov 3): Rita Indiana, [Papi](#) (+ video musical), Werner Wolf (selections).  
Lecturas sugeridas: Salvador Mercado Rodríguez, *Novelas bolero*; Sara Ahmed, “Toward a [Queer](#) Phenomenology”

Semana 10 (Nov 10): MIDTERM BREAK

Semana 11 (Nov 17): Emiliano Monge, *Las tierras [arrasadas](#)* (2015). Cristina Rivera Garza, *Los muertos [indóviles](#)* (selection).

Semana 12 (Nov 24): Valeria Luiselli, *Lost Children [Archive](#)* (2019) / *Desierto sonoro* (2020)  
McEnaney, [Acoustic Properties](#) (selection). + “[Echo](#), or On Resonance” Cavarero  
Lectura sugerida: Adriana Cavarero, *For More than One Voice*

Semana 13 (Dec 1): No class. Work on final paper. Optional meetings on Zoom by appointment.  
For additional sources for final paper, see Sound Studies [Bib](#).

Syllabus or readings may be adjusted by professor. Advanced notice will be provided to students.