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When Crime Fiction Matters

A Transborder Dialogue with Lucha Corpi, Alicia Gaspar de Alba, and Patricia Valladares

In the last twenty years, noir feminist narratives have had a steady ascent into the Latin American and U.S. Latina/o literary scene. Chicana writers Lucha Corpi, born in Veracruz, México, and Alicia Gaspar de Alba, from El Paso, Texas, are a part of a small group of U.S. Latina writers who have contributed to the noir-crime fiction genre. With their novels celebrating important literary milestones since their publications, Corpi's *Black Widow's Wardrobe* (1999) having celebrated its fifteenth anniversary, and Gaspar de Alba's *Desert Blood: The Juárez Murders* (2005), ending its first decade, the transborder issues unfolded in each novel continue to be palpable on both sides of the U.S.-Mexico border. The Chicana noir narratives are complemented by Mexican feminist writers like Mexico City-native Patricia Valladares, whose debut novel, *Tan frío como el infierno* (2014), a best-seller in Mexico, picks up the literary conversation on social, political, and economic issues currently confronted by twenty-first century women from Mexico City to Palestine. Each writer in her own way combines activism with art. The panel will bring these three noir feminist authors together for the first time for a transborder dialogue to reflect on the origins and the impact of their written work and their binational activism in an era where noir-crime fiction provides an everyday mirror to *nota roja* realities lived by women in Mexico and the United States.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2015

2:00-5:00 PM

Haines Hall 144

Chicano Studies Research Library

Book Signing and Reception After Panel !

The Writers

Lucha Corpi



Born in Jáltipan, Veracruz and raised in San Luis Potosí, Corpi migrated to the United States at the age of 19. She arrived in Oakland-Berkeley, California at the height of the nation-wide civil rights movements of the 1960s. Her first collection of poetry *Palabras de mediodía* (1980) was the emergence of a unique bilingual Mexicana-Chicana feminist voice. She is popularly known for her Chicana feminist detective novels, the Gloria Damasco series. *Eulogy for a Brown Angel* (1992) is the first of five crime novels; her narratives move fluidly across the U.S.-Mexico border with a feminist view on violence and trafficking.

Alicia Gaspar de Alba



A born and raised border-dweller, Gaspar de Alba is a native of El Paso-Juárez. As a UCLA professor of Chicana/o Studies, English, Gender, and LGBTQ Studies, she has a diverse range of academic and creative writing publications from poetry to short stories to her newest book *[Un]Framing the "Bad Woman"* (2014), a critique and meditation on Mexican culture's *la mala mujer*. One of her most well-known novels, *Desert Blood: The Juárez Murders* (2005) will be celebrating its ten-year anniversary. The novel's central subject matter on femicide continues as a prevalent issue on both sides of the border.

Patricia Valladares



Patricia Valladares, a native of Mexico City, is Professor of Clinical Psychology at UNAM's Iztacala campus in Estado de México. Since 1988, she has been Directora of Programa Interdisciplinario de Atención a la Violencia Sexual y los Estudios de Género at Iztacala. She is also a practicing clinical psychologist and for more than twenty years has been an activist on behalf of women and children, victims of violence and abuse. She is also a television commentator on Canal 11's *Diálogos en confianza*. First known as a poet, she published her first novel *Tan frío como el infierno* in May 2014, a novel of Mexico City now, on violence and the disappeared.