

The Aesthetics of Caribbean In/Hospitality
Professor Natalie L. Belisle
Fall 2023
Tuesday 2:00 – 4:50 pm

This interdisciplinary graduate seminar examines aesthetic and critical responses to the historic, legal, and ecological constitution of the Caribbean as a zone of “hospitality”—a region “naturally” receptive to foreign peoples and ideas. Emerging from the violent convergence of racially, geographically, and linguistically disparate peoples, the Caribbean has been theorized as a “laboratory” and “experiment”. This laboratory birthed key cultural concepts—such as, creolization *mestizaje*, *transculturación*, and *métissage*—that have often been uncritically heralded as evidence of a harmonious and cosmopolitan hospitality that is particular to the to Latin America and the Caribbean. In this seminar we will revisit and trouble these seminal cultural concepts through readings of Caribbean literature, visual culture, and media that examine the displacement Caribbean subjects from their homes and their estrangement from one another. The course will pay particular attention to the shaping of the Caribbean’s human and natural ecologies in the three key moments of in/hospitality: colonial expansion and travel, neocolonial occupation, neoliberal tourism, and ecological disaster. The course will engage primary texts from the Spanish, French, and English Caribbean alongside thought by Kamau Brathwaite, Colin Dayan, Jacques Derrida, Frantz Fanon, Immanuel Kant, Édouard Glissant, Krista Thompson Sylvia Wynter, among other theorists. Work for this course will be conducted primarily in Spanish. Students working in tracks and departments may complete the coursework in English.

Required Texts

Literature

Achy Obejas, “The Tower of the Antilles” and “The Collector”

Alejo Carpentier, *Los pasos perdidos*

Cristobal Colón, “Diario del primer viaje” and “Relación del tercer viaje”

Mayra Santos Febres, *Boat People*

Jamaica Kincaid, *A Small Place*

Yoss, *Se alquila un planeta* (selections)

Ana Lydia Vega, “Encancaranublado y otros cuentos de naufragio” and “Jamaica Farewell”

René Philoctète, *Massacre River*

Visual Art and Film

Yiyo Rivera, *Caribe hostil*

Annalee Davis, *On the Map*

Criticism, Theory, and Philosophy

Édouard Glissant, *El discurso antillano*

Antonio Benítez Rojo, *La isla que se repite*

Lisa Lowe, *The Intimacies of Four Continents*

Jacques Derrida, *Of Hospitality*

Jacques Derrida, *The Politics of Friendship* (selections)

Kant, *Perpetual Peace* (selections)

Mimi Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*

A final syllabus will be available two weeks before the start of the Fall 2023 semester.