



THE SPIRIT OF CLAS

“Twenty Years Now, Where’d They Go?” CLAS, Berkeley, and the Americas

By Harley Shaiken

When I first became Chair of the Center for Latin American Studies (CLAS) at UC Berkeley two decades ago, I began with grand plans and few resources. While this combination was far from ideal, I’m pleased to say it didn’t particularly slow us down.

CLAS has organized close to two thousand public programs, workshops, classes, working groups, and conferences during this time. Our speakers have ranged

from U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet to Colombian artist Fernando Botero; from Mexican statesman Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas to Chilean writer Isabel Allende; from courageous jurists under threat, such as Guatemalan Attorney General Claudia Paz y Paz (2010-2014), to undocumented migrants. We have also developed a strong online presence and have continuously published the Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies.

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Michelle Bachelet speaks at UC Berkeley, May 2010.
(Photo by Jim Block)

Scholars at CLAS have produced cutting-edge research and made important contributions to a wide variety of disciplines. Our public events program has involved UC Berkeley faculty, and in addition, we have organized “special seminars” that have been taught by respected scholars and leaders from across the Americas. They have included Governor Sergio Fajardo from Colombia, President Ricardo Lagos and Ambassador Juan Gabriel Valdés from Chile, as well as journalist Alma Guillermoprieto and scholars Denise Dresser and Lorenzo Meyer from Mexico. A graduate student summarized the feelings of many across the seminars when she said, “The seminar with President Bachelet was one of the most incredible academic opportunities I have been offered.”

Our visitors from Latin America and the world have interacted with students and have inspired masters and doctoral dissertations, aided research projects, and opened students to new vistas. Most importantly, we have contributed to building a vibrant transnational intellectual community. Our work has gone beyond the campus and the classroom and directly impacted public policy — sometimes in major ways — in the United States and throughout the Americas. The climate crisis, democratic values, social justice, and human rights have all been high priorities. This engagement has not detracted from our scholarship, but strengthened it. We are scholars, to be sure, but we have not forgotten we are also human beings and citizens from diverse countries around the globe.

All that we’ve done reflects an exceptional group of people. They include Berkeley faculty, students, a dedicated staff, and a unique, committed community throughout the

Americas, which continues to grow. On campus, we’ve brought people together from the social sciences, the humanities, the professional schools, and the sciences in exciting new ways. This diverse group is truly the spirit of CLAS and has inspired all we’ve accomplished.

This article explores what CLAS has done over the last several decades by looking at five events, with one brief digression that focuses on a single semester. I’ll start with the “Alternatives for the Americas” conference in December 1998, the year I became Chair. Next, I’ll look at the exhibit of Fernando Botero’s brilliant and haunting Abu Ghraib paintings and drawings organized by CLAS in January 2007. Third, our “Road to the Sun” initiative explores solar energy, the hydrogen economy, and the climate crisis, beginning in April 2008. Fourth, our emphasis on human rights has run through much of what we do — in fact, it’s part of our DNA — and here, we focus on journalist Daniel Coronell in 2007 and Professor Beatriz Manz in 2013. Finally, I’ll conclude with our online webinars in 2020 and their roots in CLAS coverage of the activities of the Chilean student movement almost a decade earlier in 2011. These events have tended to grow into much larger programs spanning decades. Sometimes this growth took place by design, and in other cases, it was propelled by exciting and unpredictable factors.

Critical highlights of these events and so much more have been recorded in the pages of the Berkeley Review of Latin American Studies, published by CLAS since 1998. All issues are available on our website, and we hope this article might inspire you to take a look and explore.

Beatriz Manz and Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, followed by Steve Silberstein and David Bonior, walk on UC Berkeley’s campus.



Photo by CLAS staff.
“Alternatives” 1998, from left to right: Harley Shaiken, Jaime Estévez, Nancy Pelosi, Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, Luis Maira Aguirre, Amalia García, Jorge Castañeda, David Bonior, Sherrod Brown, Vicente Fox Quesada, Roberto Mangabeira Unger and Ciro Gomes (not pictured: Xavier Becerra).

Alternatives for the Americas

The first conference I organized as Chair was “Alternatives for the Americas: A Dialogue,” which took place December 4, 1998. The opposition had unexpectedly won a majority in the Mexican Congress the year before, after many decades of being in the wilderness, and other political tremors were beginning to be felt elsewhere in Latin America. It seemed an important, even a critical, time to think through new ideas on the economy and politics, to pose defining questions, and to think strategically as to how meaningful social change might come about. How might we move in more progressive directions that would improve the lives of ordinary people? How do we achieve more productive, sustainable, and inclusive economies and more democratic societies? And we felt this discussion would be far more meaningful if it included political leaders, public intellectuals, and scholars from both Latin America and the United States.

We sought to bring together people with progressive visions and open minds, as well as new actors. We weren’t looking for a single perspective, and at times, there were significant differences among us. Almost all the participants were not well known outside their home countries — in the end, participants came from Mexico, Brazil, Chile, and the United States — but we felt they could well play important roles going forward. Berkeley faculty members and students rounded out the formal panel sessions and informal conversations.

We thought that the Berkeley campus — known as a place of groundbreaking research, intellectual openness, and free speech — would be an ideal location for these discussions. And we hoped the ideas that came out of the conference would have a real impact beyond the academy.

The world didn’t exactly cooperate. Political turmoil in Argentina and Chile caused all participants traveling from the Southern Cone to cancel at the last minute. During the week before the conference, the U.S. House of Representatives was preparing articles of impeachment against President Clinton in Washington, D.C., and several members of the U.S. Congress had to send their regrets. Overall, 40 percent of our invited speakers were forced to cancel their participation in that final week.

To further complicate matters, we didn’t have key staff in place at CLAS, so a lead organizer of the conference was an undergraduate, Joshua Bloom, now Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh. Another undergraduate volunteer provided important support: Julie Chávez Rodríguez, now Director of Intergovernmental Relations in the Biden White House. Sociology graduate student Angelina Snodgrass Godoy made a significant contribution to publications coming out of the conference. She is now Professor of International Studies and Law, Societies, and Justice and Founding Director of the Center for Human Rights at the University of Washington in Seattle.

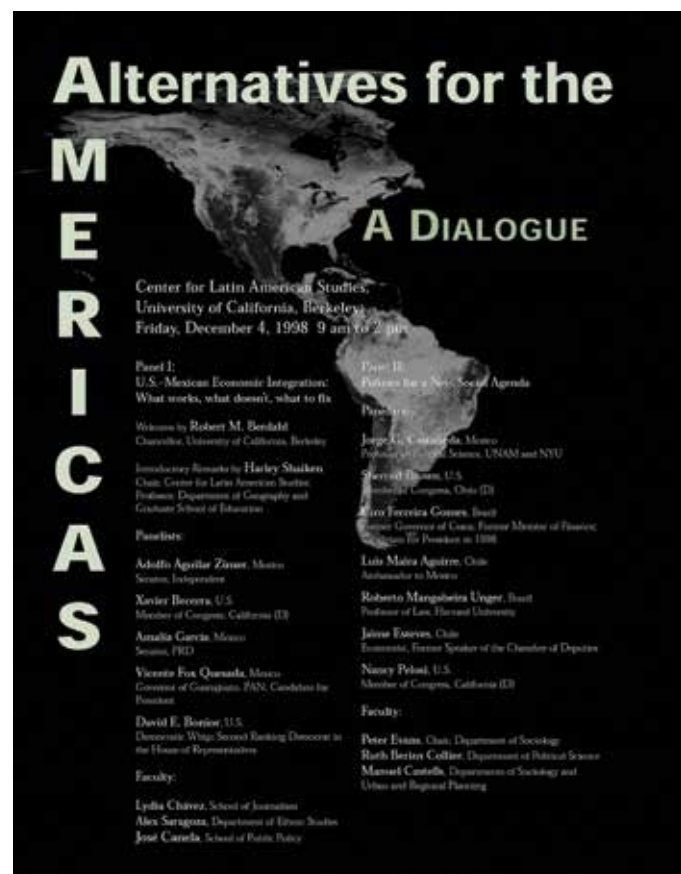
Fortunately, Representative David Bonior (D-MI), who had been invaluable in helping us invite members of Congress in the first place, stepped in to find replacements. We were also able to invite new speakers from Chile who made real last-minute sacrifices to come.

The event set out to address two major themes — economic integration and political transformation — and wound up discussing much more: from hyper-inequality, to the value of migrants, to the urgency of democratic reforms. New progressive ideas — and at times, sharp disagreements — flowed in all directions. These themes were important then and are even more vital, timely, and challenging now.

Adolfo Aguilar Zinser, an independent senator in Mexico, pointed out that “the question of immigration is the center of all of the contradictions of the relationship between Mexico and the United States.” He then memorably said, “It’s not a question of labor markets anymore. It’s a question of two societies that are overlapping already.” And he warned all too prophetically that the failure to effectively address migration would have disastrous consequences. “More people are going to die,” he predicted, “because conditions are going to be harsher and more profound.”

Representative Bonior sought to put worker rights and democratic values at the heart of discussions over trade. As Democratic Whip (second-ranking Democrat in the U.S. House), he had been a leader in the opposition to the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1993 and earlier had been a sharp and courageous critic of U.S. involvement in Central America in the 1980s. “I come here today in a spirit of hope and renewed optimism,” he said. He then reminded us, “It wasn’t so long ago [...] that people dismissed our concerns about wages, labor rights, protecting the environment, and promoting the democratic processes and freedoms. These issues are fundamental [...] to promoting broad prosperity for working families throughout the Americas and not just for the economic elite.”

Vicente Fox Quesada, Governor of Guanajuato and candidate in Mexico’s forthcoming presidential election, eloquently challenged U.S. policy on migration and drugs. Unlike the members of the long-ruling Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI, Institutional Revolutionary Party), he extolled Mexican migrants as heroes for their courage and contribution to the success of economies on both sides of the border. He was highly critical of U.S. drug policy and pointed out that “every time you consume a drug here, you corrupt a Mexican.” He was positive about NAFTA but agreed that the goal must be “to improve people’s standard of living and improve human capital in both of our countries.”



Alternatives for the Americas conference poster.

Jorge Castañeda, Professor of Political Science at UNAM and NYU (and former visiting professor at CLAS), emphasized inequality as defining for Latin America and equally troubling for the United States. “This is really the single issue,” he stated, “that is not only most common across the Americas, but that is also the single factor most negatively affecting societies within Latin America, in the United States, and between the United States and Latin America.” He was prescient then: we are now dealing with hyper-inequality and its political consequences across the hemisphere today.

Finally, three junior members of the U.S. House of Representatives — all frontline leaders today — made important contributions. Representative Xavier Becerra (D-CA) maintained that “for the most part, U.S. policy is still framed by a notion that we can stop U.S.-Mexico integration, whether it be with people or economically.” Representative Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) observed that “Pope Paul VI must have been talking about Latin America when he said, ‘If you want peace, work for justice.’” Representative Sherrod Brown (D-OH) laid out an ignored, though critical, paradox of U.S. trade policy: despite “unrelenting media and elite support for free trade [...] the American public still has major, major reservations about American trade policy.” He argued that if leaders took time to listen to workers and the U.S. public, “they might learn something

about workers’ anxieties, about [the] hopelessness with which many look to the future, and most importantly, about social justice.”

The consequences of ignoring these warnings from Brown and Bonior became dangerously apparent after the U.S. elections in 2016, when industrial workers in communities devastated by offshoring across the Midwest and elsewhere lashed out at governing elites and voted for Donald Trump.

Toward the end of the three-day conference, the speakers explored the impact of globalization on the ground during a tour of Oakland, California — a mid-sized industrial city that had been hammered by the erosion of



From left: Harley Shaikens, David Bonior, Vicente Fox, Amalia García Medina, Xavier Becerra, and Adolfo Aguilar Zinser listen to UC Berkeley’s Chancellor, Robert Berdahl, at the Alternatives for the Americas conference, 1998.

its industrial base. The conference participants had a wide-ranging, provocative discussion of the issues with our tour guide — the city’s mayor-elect, Jerry Brown — at his Oakland home before the tour. The debate continued on the tour, and we drove through the city as rain and night both began to fall.

An impromptu pizza dinner followed at my Berkeley home. Everyone pitched in, since we didn’t expect the discussion to be this engaging and we were all hungry. Mexican Senator Amalia García Medina made the salad; she would go on to be the first woman to lead a major political party in Mexico, the center-left Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD, Party of the Democratic Revolution). My wife Beatriz Manz, a noted anthropologist and professor at UC Berkeley, served the wine. Jaime Estévez, the former Socialist Speaker of the Assembly in Chile, helped me pick up the pizzas. Jerry Brown helped dish up the food and provided invaluable perspectives on politics and life in Oakland and California. The discussion went on into the early hours of the morning.

Ideas and political alliances seemed fluid in Mexico at that moment. Aguilar Zinser and Castañeda, long among the foremost scholars and public intellectuals on the left, were moving towards supporting the presidential candidacy of Vicente Fox in the Partido Acción Nacional (PAN, National Action Party), a center-right, business-oriented party. They had become convinced that Fox was the only candidate capable of defeating the PRI in the upcoming election and thought his victory was essential for a more democratic Mexico and a more progressive set of policies. Fox, in turn, was open to a number of ideas that Aguilar Zinser and Castañeda were putting forward, such as deeper economic integration of the Americas and

expanded rights for workers. Here, the voices of Bonior and Brown were invaluable in presenting new views of trade based on worker rights. And Fox’s embrace of Mexican migrants also struck a positive cord.

Eighteen months after the conference, in July 2000, Vicente Fox unexpectedly defeated the long-ruling PRI, the first such victory against the institutional party in 71 years. Mexico shifted course to a more democratic, if still deeply troubled, future. Fox appointed Castañeda Foreign Minister, and Aguilar Zinser would serve as Mexico’s Ambassador to the United Nations, holding a seat on the Security Council (2002-2003) and playing a pivotal role in opposing U.S. policy during the lead-up to the Iraq War.

As an unexpected post-script to the Alternatives conference, President Fox was invited to address a joint session of the U.S. Congress in September 2001. In the months before the address, Foreign Minister Castañeda had articulately and forcefully pressed the urgency of comprehensive immigration reform in the United States, which he famously termed the “whole enchilada.” It was a

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rare occasion when a Mexican Foreign Minister attempted to set the domestic agenda in the U.S. Congress, catching many by surprise.

Representative Bonior invited Beatriz Manz and I as his guests to hear Fox address this historic session in the House of Representatives. Afterwards, he suggested we have lunch in the House dining room. As we descended one side of a deserted V-shaped back stairway in the Capitol, we saw President Fox on the other side of the stairway with Castañeda and Aguilar Zinser. We all paused for a moment to talk and recalled the last time that we had been together was at the Alternatives for the Americas conference. When we ended that conference in Berkeley, this reunion here was unimaginable.

For a brief moment, it looked as if a breakthrough in the Mexico–U.S. relationship might be possible, though sharp opposition was certainly waiting in the wings. Nonetheless, a newly elected Republican President, George W. Bush, seemed open to immigration reform. Castañeda’s move had been so audacious the serious opposition that did exist was caught off balance, at least for a moment.

At the suggestion of the president of the Hewlett Foundation, CLAS partnered with the Instituto Tecnológico de México (ITAM, National Technological Institute of Mexico) in Mexico City to put together a new initiative, building on what we had done at Alternatives

for the Americas. The idea was to bring together a dozen political leaders from each country, along with academics and other stakeholders, for an annual conference that would alternate locations between Mexico and the United States.

Throughout the year, CLAS would put together a program on issues of importance to both Mexico and the United States as background material for the yearly conference. Some issues were already at the top of the political agenda in one or both countries, such as immigration and security, and the idea was we would seek to develop innovative new approaches. Other issues we thought were urgent, such as the climate crisis, weren’t high on the political agenda in either country, but we felt they would prove defining going forward. We called this new endeavor “The U.S.–Mexico Futures Forum.”

The road ahead looked bright, although we were well aware tough hurdles lay ahead. That bright moment would be brief. The Mexican president and his party flew home from Washington on September 8. Three days later, the world would never be the same. “Just as September 11 ravaged the landscape of Manhattan, so too did it irrevocably alter the international landscape,” graduate student Amy Lerman wrote in the *Berkeley Review* in 2003. “When the smoke cleared, the window of opportunity for Mexico had been buried at the foot of the Manhattan skyline.”

United Flight 175 hits the North Tower of the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001.



Photo by Robert J. Fisch.



Photo by Eskinder Debebe/UN Photo.

Adolfo Aguilar Zinser serving as President of the U.N. Security Council, April 2003.

The “whole enchilada” quickly became the “frozen enchilada.” Delayed by a difficult year, we went ahead with the Futures Forum meeting for the first time in Cuernavaca, Mexico, in late 2002. We felt it was more urgent than ever to begin this dialogue between Mexico and the United States. Surprisingly, this first Forum was highly successful, and we continued, at times in groundbreaking ways, with annual meetings and a robust program at Berkeley through 2017.

A year or so after the Alternatives for the Americas conference, in February 2000, CLAS organized another large international conference, “Challenges for Brazil: A Dialogue,” using a similar model. Ruth Cardoso, then a very active First Lady of Brazil, came to UC Berkeley for a month to teach a special seminar for CLAS on youth and social violence in her country. Cardoso, who had a Ph.D. in Anthropology, and her husband, President Fernando Enrique Cardoso, had both taught at Berkeley in the early 1980s when they were exiles during the military dictatorship. Conference participants ranged from Brazil’s Minister of Health José Serra to Senator Marina Silva, a passionate environmentalist who was the daughter of a rubber tapper. Both Serra and Silva would later become presidential candidates from rival perspectives and parties. And Representatives David Bonior and Nancy Pelosi both returned, among many new participants.

CLAS had a vibrant program and was conducting and supporting cutting-edge research and engaging the world.

What did that engagement mean in practice? Consider Adolfo Aguilar Zinser and David Bonior. They met at the Alternatives conference at Berkeley in 1998 and continued to interact through CLAS. On the sad occasion of the 2005 CLAS memorial for Aguilar Zinser, killed in a car accident in Mexico earlier that year, Bonior would recall that “a very hot issue at the time [I met Adolfo seven years ago] was the question of U.S. certification that Mexico was making progress fighting drug trafficking.” Aguilar Zinser’s eloquence and indignation opposing this certification process would make a deep impression on Bonior. “I left that weekend convinced that we needed to suspend our punitive policy and to engage in a partnership of trust [...] and I’m pleased to say that [the U.S. Congress] did change our policy.”

When Aguilar Zinser was appointed to be Mexico’s Ambassador to the United Nations and sat on the Security Council in the lead-up to the Iraq War, he became convinced that the U.N. inspection process was, in fact, working and no credible evidence existed that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction. He worked with Juan Gabriel Valdés, Chile’s Ambassador to the Security Council, and both statesmen were instrumental in denying U.N. endorsement to the U.S.-driven move to war. Valdés and Bonior would both speak at CLAS and teach special seminars.

During this period, while sitting on the Security Council, Aguilar Zinser made several trips to Berkeley, where he gave public talks and spoke at private briefings

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for faculty, graduate students, and close friends of CLAS about what was taking place at the United Nations. We knew at the time that these discussions were incredibly valuable and, in retrospect, feel they were truly historic.

On these trips, he would make time to speak to Mexican migrant groups in San Jose, Sacramento, and elsewhere. He would invite me to these meetings, and I would go. On one of these trips, a migrant group in San Jose rented an empty supermarket, and with only a day or two notice, it was packed with migrants anxious to hear Aguilar Zínser and speak with him. The organizers of the event had day jobs working at a car wash. We invited them to come hear him and others speak at UC Berkeley, and they came.

Adolfo Aguilar Zínser in conversation on the UC Berkeley campus.



Photo by Stefan Cohen.

In 2004, Aguilar Zínser gave a talk at a small college in Puebla, Mexico, and mentioned that the country was often treated by some in the U.S. government as its “backyard.” A single wire-service reporter was at the event and reported the remark in the press. Almost immediately, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell forcefully demanded Ambassador Aguilar Zínser’s removal from his post at the United Nations. Aguilar Zínser refused to say he was misquoted or retract his statement, which President Fox strongly encouraged him to do. The president eventually compelled him to resign, effectively firing him. We immediately invited Aguilar Zínser to come to CLAS for the 2005-2006 academic year and were very pleased when he accepted. He had spent a semester teaching at CLAS earlier, and we had already started to look for housing for him and his family again, when we received the shattering news that he had been killed in a car accident near Cuernavaca, Mexico, on June 5, 2005.

As a friend, the loss was devastating, but Aguilar Zínser was also irreplaceable as a political leader and part of the CLAS community. At the Berkeley memorial we organized in September 2005, Aryeh Neier, the founding president of both Human Rights Watch and the Open Society Institute, spoke eloquently of Aguilar Zínser’s legacy. “Among Mexico’s blessings,” he said, has been the “ability to enlist individuals with the intellectual distinction, the integrity, and the sense of public responsibility of an Octavio Paz or an Adolfo Aguilar Zínser to serve as the country’s diplomatic representatives.” Decades apart, both men would wind up resigning from their diplomatic posts in protest and both would have an affiliation with UC Berkeley. Paz came here in the 1940s as a Guggenheim Fellow for a semester, and Aguilar Zínser had taught here and was affiliated with CLAS.

“Adolfo could not change our war policy in Iraq — but nobody tried harder or exhibited such extraordinary courage,” David Bonior said at that memorial. “As a member of Congress then, I traveled to Iraq to try to prevent war, so I was one of his biggest cheerleaders as he battled for a slice of sanity at the United Nations in what I consider one of Mexico’s finest hours.”

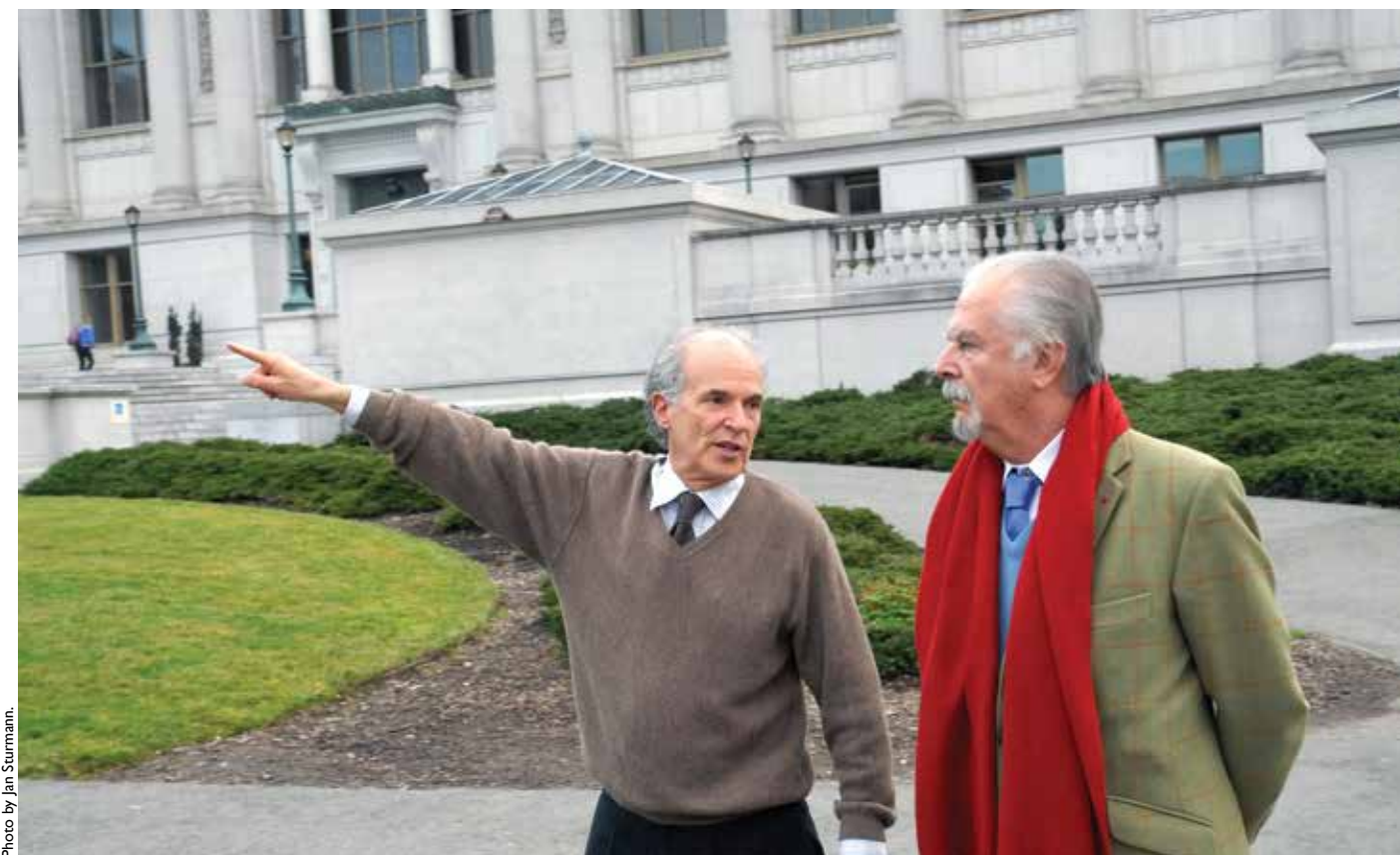


Photo by Jan Sturmman.

Harley Shaiken and Fernando Botero walk across the Berkeley campus, January 2007.

Fernando Botero: A Maestro Touches Our Soul

Despite these and other courageous efforts to prevent it, the Iraq War was to take place with disastrous consequences for the United States, Iraq, and the entire region. In 2003, the horrors of the Iraq War became perversely surreal when U.S. forces commandeered one of Saddam Hussein’s most notorious prisons and torture centers, Abu Ghraib, 20 miles from Baghdad. Under U.S. control, the prison held captured combatants, to be sure, but also prisoners whose only crime was being in the wrong place at the wrong time. Nonetheless, all the prisoners were subjected to humiliation, torture, and in some cases, death. What truly shocked a jaded world was when photos were released documenting these acts.

Among those appalled by these atrocities was one of the world’s great living artists, Colombian painter and sculptor Fernando Botero. “I read about it in the famous New Yorker article by Seymour Hersh,” Botero would later recall. “I was surprised, hurt, and angry, like everybody.” The intensity of these emotions, in part, reflected his feeling that these barbaric acts violated the ideals of “compassion and human rights” that the United States had so eloquently and frequently championed in the past.

Botero could not leave it at that. He was on an airplane traveling back to Paris, he would recall: “I took out paper and pencil and started doing some drawings. When I got to

my study in Paris I kept drawing and painting. It became like an obsession. For 14 months, I was only working on this, thinking about this.”

Art critic Roberta Smith called these riveting paintings and drawings “among Mr. Botero’s best work” in a review that appeared in *The New York Times* on November 15, 2006. “It is moving to encounter these large, unnerving images and austere compositions on American soil,” she declared.

I read her review the morning it appeared. Later the same day, I learned that no museum or gallery in the United States — save the Marlborough Gallery in New York City — would exhibit these paintings, despite the stellar reception they had already received in Europe.

The refusal to exhibit these works in the United States seemed profoundly wrong. Silencing art — particularly great art — is a troubling sign and, like burning books, is corrosive to democracy. I called the Marlborough Gallery, which frequently exhibits Botero’s work, commended them for their one-month show, then told them that CLAS would like to show these works, as well, and could they inform Mr. Botero? Realistically, I thought it was unlikely much would come from the call. After all, CLAS was not well known — or, in fact, known at all — in the art world.

To my amazement, Fernando Botero himself called back from Paris several days later. He and I discussed the

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Image courtesy of Fernando Botero.

project for an hour or so, and we agreed that in seven or eight weeks, we would mount the exhibit at UC Berkeley. He would come for the opening with his wife Sophia Vari, herself a talented artist. In the urgency of the moment, we left the “details” for later, among them exactly where we would show the art and who would pay for the exhibit.

What happened next says a lot about UC Berkeley and even more about the exceptional people at CLAS who were central to making the exhibit happen. When museums proved unavailable — including the Berkeley Art Museum, whose director did say he might consider the exhibit in three to five years — we were not about to give up. Nonetheless, the situation had become far more complex, and the clock was already ticking against an amazingly tight, if not wildly unrealistic, deadline.

Ultimately, we were to display this brilliant collection in the University’s main library. Tom Leonard, the University Librarian, and Beth Dupuis, recently named Director of the Doe/Moffitt Library — the university’s largest library — stepped up to the plate without hesitation. They reminded us why libraries are truly the cornerstones of democratic societies. In a talk

at the time, I remarked that libraries had been housing controversial material for centuries, but the original contribution we were now making put the controversial ideas on the walls rather than the shelves. Christopher Edley, Dean of the UC Berkeley School of Law (Berkeley Law), played a vital role in making the exhibit happen. He observed that these paintings depict the abyss that opens when the rule of law departs. Steve Silberstein, himself a former librarian at Berkeley and now a progressive philanthropist, embraced the project and provided ideas, encouragement, and critical funding, as he would toward many other CLAS initiatives.

Over the next seven weeks, we removed all the shelving, books, and computers from a reference room of the Doe Library; rerouted the main entrance to the library; built a gallery; installed new museum lighting and a state-of-the-art alarm system; trained 40 or so docents, most of them students and faculty; and mounted the exhibit of 48 paintings and drawings. We also planned a semester-long academic program around the exhibit, which brought faculty from UC Berkeley and Stanford, as well as human rights scholars from New York and Chile. As part of this

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Left: Fernando Botero, “Abu Ghraib 74,” 2006. 175 x 117 cm, oil on canvas.

Below: Fernando Botero in the Abu Ghraib exhibition at UC Berkeley, January 2007.



Photo by Jan Sturmann.



Photo by Jim Block

Botero's "Abu Ghraib 57" hangs outside the UC Berkeley School of Law library.

program, we held an advanced screening of "No End in Sight," a documentary about the Iraq War, with the film's director, Charles Ferguson, who went on to be nominated for an Oscar that year for the film.

"The reviews do not fully prepare the viewer for encountering these paintings in person," I wrote in the Spring 2007 Berkeley Review. "Their visual richness leaves us no choice but to confront the demonic acts they portray." I will never forget the first time I saw the paintings. I was standing in a fine art custodial facility in Oakland as highly skilled workers gingerly removed the first painting from a carefully packed shipping crate. It was a poignant moment. I was struck by the richness and depth of the colors, the striking composition, and ultimately, the horror of the acts it portrayed. The image was indelible. Botero's brilliance as an artist truly reaches into one's soul. As Isabel Allende wrote in the first entry in the guestbook on opening night, "Thank you, *maestro*, for putting a mirror before our eyes."

When Fernando Botero and Sophia Vari arrived in Berkeley the day before the opening, Beatriz and I felt an instant personal connection with both that has only deepened over time. We opened with a conversation between Fernando Botero and Robert Hass, Professor of English at UC Berkeley and Poet Laureate of the United States. The event drew more than 1,000 people and

overflowed the largest space available on campus. The opening exceeded all our expectations but turned out to be only the beginning of our activities with the paintings and the artist.

During the seven-week exhibit, some 15,000 people viewed Botero's Abu Ghraib collection. One final event was a reception in the gallery for all the people who had made the event a reality. Overwhelmed by emotion, along with so many in the room, Beatriz Manz sent Botero an email that began, "I am writing this email through a veil of tears. You have deeply impacted us."

Several days later, clearly moved, Botero responded by announcing that he planned to donate 60 paintings and drawings — almost the entire Abu Ghraib collection — to UC Berkeley. The artist's extraordinary gift to Berkeley was international news. Agence France-Presse reported it, and The New York Times ran an article announcing it. We were stunned, ecstatic, honored, and deeply appreciative.

Thomas Laqueur, Professor of History at UC Berkeley, captured the meaning of this gift when he wrote "Berkeley will have, for study and contemplation, art that may well come to stand for a defining moment in the history of this country and the Iraq War." He felt the Abu Ghraib works were "an enormous visual and intellectual resource to the campus and the public at large." In addition to the

role CLAS played in staging the exhibit, Laqueur pointed out that "this art is here in large measure because of what Berkeley represents for the history of free speech and critical engagement with the great public issues of the day." And, he concluded, "well into the future, people will be able to come to campus to confront Abu Ghraib through the vision and craftsmanship of Fernando Botero."

In 2012, CLAS collaborated with the new Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos (Museum of Memory and Human Rights) in Santiago, Chile, to stage an exhibit of the Abu Ghraib works. The collection provoked intense, overwhelmingly favorable media attention across the country for months prior to and during the exhibit. These works became a must-see event and sparked a national discussion on human rights, torture, and democratic values. President Piñera visited the museum for the first time to see the exhibit.

The approach to the museum — a stunning modern building that evokes the haunting quality of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C. — leads down a gentle

slope toward "Memory Plaza," passing alongside the 30 articles of the United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Upon entering the building, visitors are greeted with the words of President Michelle Bachelet, who inaugurated the museum in the final months of her first term as president: "We cannot change our past, we can only learn from what we have lived. This is our opportunity and our challenge."

Christopher Edley, who accompanied us to the opening in Santiago, was so moved by the reception of the art, first at UC Berkeley and now in Chile, that he chose to put four powerful paintings from the collection on permanent display at Berkeley Law. They sit just outside the dean's office in a major corridor between that office and the law library. "Art offers the possibility of serving a need that law has failed to serve," Edley said during the museum panel discussion in Santiago. "How can we be sure that we will continue to debate what is right and what is wrong? I believe that the answer lies, in part, in art. That is what Señor Botero has done for us."

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The Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos (Museum of Memory and Human Rights) in Santiago, Chile.

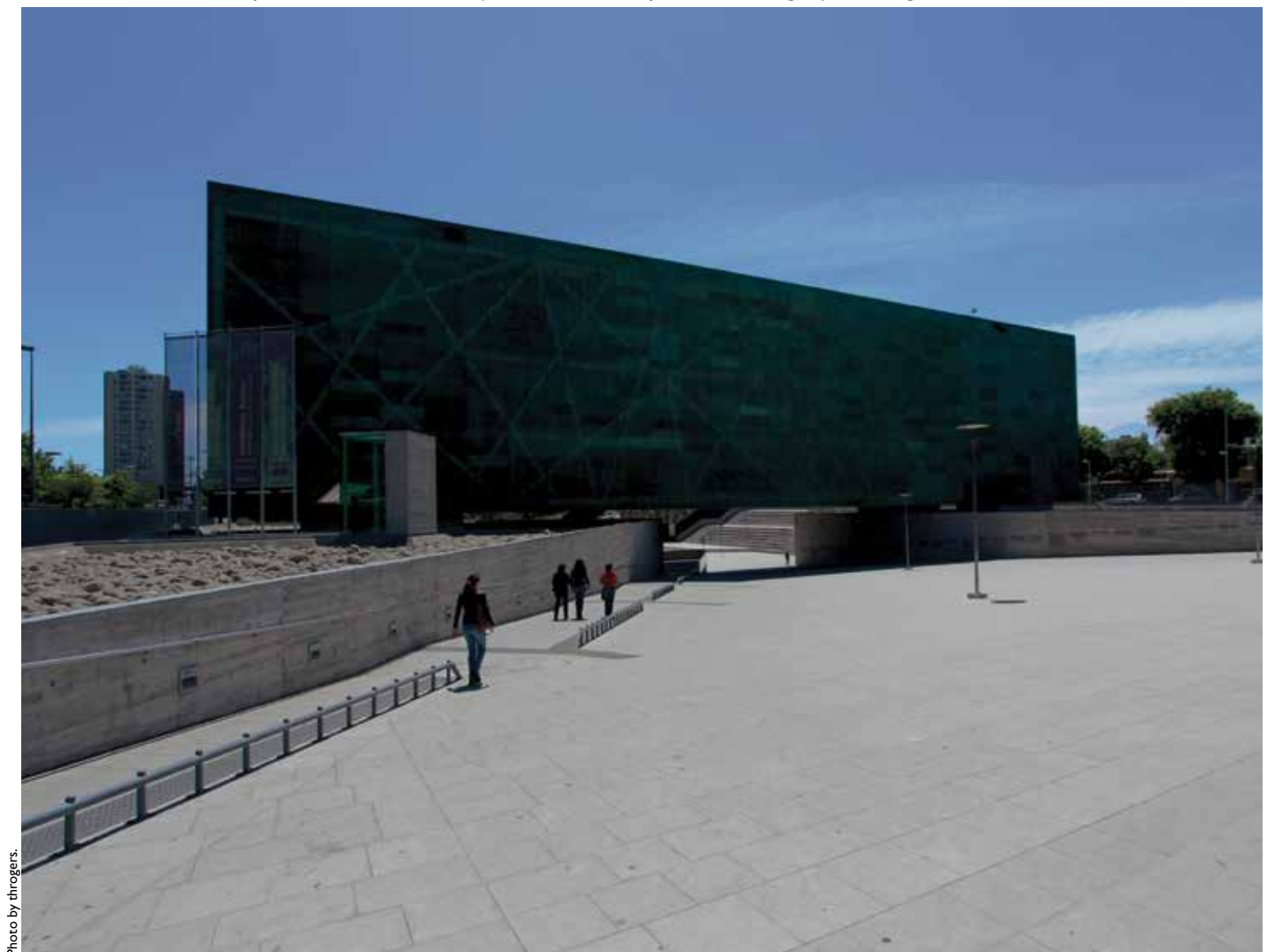


Photo by throggers

As the Abu Ghraib exhibit unfolded in Chile, the Museo de Bellas Artes in Mexico City, one of the most important cultural institutions in Latin America, chose to hold the largest-ever retrospective of Fernando Botero's paintings and sculptures. They devoted an entire gallery to the Abu Ghraib works, and CLAS facilitated the loan of 10 paintings from UC Berkeley. The President of Mexico and his Minister of Culture both attended the opening and publicly thanked the university for the loan of the Abu Ghraib paintings.

When we host visitors at CLAS for talks, seminars, and conferences, we almost always take them to Berkeley Law to see Botero's four Abu Ghraib masterpieces. When Dilma Rousseff (President of Brazil, 2011-2016) visited in April 2018, we also took her to see an exhibit of nine Botero Abu Ghraib drawings on display at the Berkeley Art Museum, in addition to the art at the Law School. As a student she had been arrested and horrifically tortured by the Brazilian military under the dictatorship, so we knew these paintings would have a special meaning and resonance for her.

Rousseff walked slowly along the Botero drawings, stopping in front of each one and studying it intensely in silence. Isabel Nogueira, a Brazilian staff member at CLAS, and I were in the gallery, standing several feet away. When she reached the end, Rousseff turned around and slowly began walking back looking at each painting a second time. Midway on this second view, she stopped and stared at a drawing that depicts a male prisoner suspended by a rope attached to his ankle. After a time, she quietly said, "I can hear their screams."

As noted art critic and managing editor at *Art in America* magazine David Ebony has pointed out, Botero is "one of the most courageous artists of our time." His genius as an artist underscores the value of art in our lives and the ways in which it can transform how we view the world.

CLAS is now facilitating a display of the Abu Ghraib works at the Beaux Arts in Mons, Belgium, that is scheduled to open in October 2021.

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Dilma Rousseff gazes at Botero's "Abu Ghraib 17" in the Berkeley Art Museum.



Photo by Isabel Nogueira.

Twenty Years Now, Where'd They Go?

(continued from page 16)

The Road to the Sun

Science plays a defining role in our lives, beyond theory and the laboratory. It is key to understanding critical social issues and, in particular, existential threats such as the climate crisis and nuclear risk that impact our very existence on the planet.

We invited U.S. scientist and inventor Stan Ovshinsky to give a talk at UC Berkeley in April 2008. The talk drew an overflow crowd of several hundred people that filled the elegant Morrison Room in the Doe Library across the hall from where we had exhibited the Abu Ghraib paintings little more than a year earlier. Almost immediately, Ovshinsky's talk received 25,000 views online, and that number continues to increase.

"Ovshinsky is arguably one of the greatest thinkers and inventors you've never heard of," the Smithsonian magazine wrote in October 2018. "He's been called his generation's Thomas Edison and his brilliance compared to that of Albert Einstein." Ovshinsky's fundamental contributions to amorphous materials — the field is now called Ovonics in his honor — transformed photovoltaics (the conversion of light into electricity using semiconducting materials), among much else.

The 2008 event with Ovshinsky inaugurated a new effort for CLAS on the climate crisis. It was the first step on our "Road to the Sun," a series of activities related to solar energy and other alternative energy sources across the Americas, including Chile, Costa Rica, Mexico, and the United States.

The next step would come soon after, when CLAS brought Chilean President Michelle Bachelet to Berkeley on June 12, 2008. The day began with a visit for the president and her delegation to Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, where five energy scientists briefed the group on what California was doing on renewable energy, with a particular emphasis on solar.

In a public talk organized by CLAS at UC Berkeley's International House later that day, President Bachelet explored the challenges of globalization and emphasized global cooperation as essential to deal with climate change and the rising demand for energy. She looked at California as a natural partner in these endeavors. Bachelet, Chile's first female president, also emphasized issues of gender equity and a number of critical initiatives related to women.

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Solar panels in the Atacama Desert, Chile.

Photo by obscur/Shutterstock.com.



Stan Ovshinsky with his "printing press," which produced flexible solar materials by the mile.
Photo by Brendan Ross.

Issues raised during the visits by Ovshinsky and Bachelet inspired CLAS to organize a special two-day workshop of the U.S.–Mexico Futures Forum in Detroit, Michigan, where Ovshinsky lived and had research laboratories and production facilities. Participants in the September 2008 workshop included Roberto Dobles, Minister of the Environment and Energy in Costa Rica; Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas; Christopher Edley; Bob King, who would become the president of the United Auto Workers; and David Bonior, among others.

Ovshinsky laid out an inspiring energy vision in Detroit. "The ages of civilization have been classified by the materials they use: the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Silicon Age," he said. "We are at the dawn of the Hydrogen Age." In the early 1960s, he defined the "hydrogen loop" as an alternative to fossil fuels. The hydrogen loop starts with the unlimited energy of the sun — itself composed of hydrogen — and harnesses solar rays through photovoltaic material.

In Detroit, we toured state-of-the-art solar factories and research laboratories and spoke with scientists about their work. Standing under a solar material manufacturing machine the length of a football field that Ovshinsky had designed and built, we had the sense of the mass-production age and the hydrogen age coming together. We also knew we were standing just miles from the Ford Highland Park plant where the first Model T rolled off the auto assembly line almost a century earlier.

That evening, we spent a working dinner in the Garden Court of the Detroit Institute of the Arts, surrounded by Diego Rivera's "Detroit Industry Murals." Painted during the darkest hours of

the Great Depression, these masterpieces celebrate the dignity of work and the power of mass production. With this monumental art as a backdrop, we discussed the ways in which renewable energy could transform Detroit, Mexico, Latin America, and the world.

"We have to open the possibility of using inventions like those of Stan Ovshinsky and using hydrogen or solar energy as a fuel," Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas said. "And that will make our economies work much better than they are working right now." Cárdenas also observed that collaboration on these new technologies could improve living standards and bring the United States and Mexico together in more constructive, collaborative ways. "We should find the ways to cooperate and different ways to use renewable energies," he said. I raised the notion of a photovoltaic solar facility spanning the U.S.–Mexico border in the desert, a symbol of the links between the two countries and of the unlimited power available from the sun, a proposal Governor Jerry Brown shared with the Foreign Minister of Mexico in 2014.

This initial Detroit trip proved so successful that I accompanied Ricardo Lagos (President of Chile, 2000–2006) on another visit to Detroit the following year in 2009. At the time, Lagos was serving as the United Nation's

Special Envoy for Climate Change (2007–2010). After the visit, Lagos wrote in the Berkeley Review that "the kinds of solutions that Stan Ovshinsky is proposing should be available in Chile," and we all began contemplating more comprehensive ways to address the climate crisis, while simultaneously ensuring broader patterns of development for countries such as Mexico and Chile, as well as equitable growth and social justice.

Almost immediately, Lagos invited Ovshinsky to visit Chile for a week on a trip that would involve lectures, meetings with key stakeholders, and discussions about a renewable future. The trip was organized by the government of President Michelle Bachelet: she understood the importance of the visit, and Chile rolled out the red carpet. Ovshinsky was accompanied by his wife Rosa Ovshinsky, a noted hydrogen physicist in her own right.

Ovshinsky began by delivering the keynote address at a conference on renewable energy with 500 participants from throughout Chile in the port city of Antofagasta, surrounded by the Atacama Desert, and bathed in unlimited quantities of intense sunlight. He received an enthusiastic standing ovation, and his visit received extensive media coverage.

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From left: Dionicia Ramos, Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas, Roberto Dobles, Christopher Edley, and Stan Ovshinsky with a hydrogen-powered car.



Photo by Cristel Heinrich Bettoni.

Ovshinsky seized the moment and would later tell a film crew that “Chile [could be] a showcase of how you could have energy without pollution, without climate change, without war over oil.” He spoke about “building new industry in Chile” for jobs and development and collaborating with Chilean scientists on future research. While standing near the summit of an 8,600-foot peak near the Paranal Observatory, Ovshinsky couldn’t resist saying, “I love it here. I’m closest to the sun.”

Six years later, President Bachelet was elected for a second term. With Máximo Pacheco as her new Minister of Energy in 2015, she implemented a far-reaching plan to advance solar energy. Beatriz Manz and I were invited to Chile as her special guests for the inauguration. A day or two later, I was pleased to be asked to meet with Minister Pacheco. What I thought would be a fifteen-minute courtesy call wound up being an hour-long discussion of solar possibilities.

Bachelet’s efforts in this area proved impressive. Chile had virtually no solar installed in 2009, but had some 600 megawatts by 2015, and more than tripled that to nearly 2,000 megawatts in 2017, more than the rest of Latin America combined.

Ricardo Lagos also remains highly committed to addressing climate change and has continued to play an important role on this issue. He returned to CLAS in January 2018, following a conversation we had in Santiago several weeks earlier. We spent a morning at Lawrence

Berkeley National Laboratories, where he met with the Director Michael Witherell and key research scientists studying climate change. We then drove to Sacramento and met with Governor Jerry Brown that afternoon to discuss what California and Chile were doing on renewable energy and possibilities for collaboration. As always, Lagos took time to meet with students, faculty, scientists, and friends.

A Brief Digression: The 2011 U.S.–Mexico Futures Forum and Spring Semester at CLAS

I’m taking a slight detour to highlight the ways in which CLAS activities tend to intersect. I’d like to focus on a single semester, Spring 2011. It wasn’t a unique semester, but it gives a sense of our range and the ways in which various projects interact with one another.

The September 2008 renewable energy workshop in Detroit inspired Futures Forum activities more generally. The climate crisis was a central theme at almost all subsequent Forum meetings. In Spring 2011, the event included Luis Alfonso de Alba, Mexico’s U.N. Special Envoy for Climate Change, and Steve Weissman, Director of the Energy and Cleantech Law Program at Berkeley Law.

The 2011 Futures Forum also included some new participants. Sergio Fajardo, Mayor of Medellín, Colombia (2004-2007), related his groundbreaking work on combating drugs and violence in his city; Darrell Steinberg, the President pro Tempore of the California State Senate, and John Chiang, the California State

From left: Sergio Fajardo, Kamala Harris, and John Chiang speak over dinner with Pete Gallego (back to camera).



Photo by Meredith Perry.



Photo by Jim Block.

Participants in the U.S.–Mexico Futures Forum, 2011.

Controller, focused on the importance of the California–Mexico relationship. Robert Reich, former Secretary of Labor and Professor of Public Policy at UC Berkeley, discussed the continued economic uncertainty and ways to address it in both countries.

California Attorney General (now U.S. Vice President) Kamala Harris gave the keynote talk at dinner and spent the evening with us in a conversation that addressed drug policy, security, Mexico, and California. Fajardo provided critical perspective from his Medellín experience. CLAS would work with Harris on several other occasions going forward. Fajardo would become Governor of Antioquia and narrowly missed the runoff in the 2018 presidential election in Colombia.

In Spring 2011, we also hosted Michelle Bachelet for a special seminar. At the time, she was the inaugural head of U.N. Women, a new mega-agency, and came to Berkeley to teach a seminar on “Women, Development, and Democracy” for CLAS.

CLAS also welcomed Spanish jurist Baltasar Garzón that semester. Garzón’s 1998 indictment of Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet set a critical precedent on universal jurisdiction. In addition, we screened “Presunto Culpable” (Presumed Guilty), a disturbing

documentary on the criminal justice system in Mexico, with its director, Roberto Hernández. The film is credited with inspiring major reform of the country’s judicial system. It became the highest-grossing documentary in Mexican history and was awarded a 2011 Emmy for investigative journalism. I received an Emmy as an executive producer, which also reflected the contributions of CLAS to the project.

CLAS and Human Rights:

Daniel Coronell and Beatriz Manz

Issues related to human rights in Latin America have run through much of what CLAS has done. In fact, human rights have been very much in our DNA. Two events provide a sense of our activities: our support for Colombian journalist Daniel Coronell and Professor Beatriz Manz’s participation in the genocide conviction of Guatemala’s former dictator Efraín Ríos Montt.

When I first met Daniel Coronell, he was one of the most highly regarded investigative journalists in Colombia. Through the combination of his sharp intellect, hard work, and uncommon courage, he had done groundbreaking work on human rights. He has received Colombia’s most prestigious awards for news programming, the Premio >>



Daniel Coronell in the newsroom at Univision in Miami.

Photo by José Zamora/Univision.

for his appointment to be extended for a second year.

During his first year, we opened the Botero Abu Ghraib exhibit in January 2007. We asked Coronell if he would interview Fernando Botero and write an article about the visit for the Berkeley Review. He immediately accepted our proposal but confessed he was in awe of Botero's iconic stature as an artist. When we told Botero that Daniel Coronell would interview him, he was thrilled but also told us he was in awe of Coronell's stature as a journalist. They were both right, and it was an exceptional article. Coronell most recently participated in a CLAS webinar on the November 2020 U.S. elections and their impact on Latin America. He is now President of News for Univision in the United States.

The second case involved Beatriz Manz, now UC Berkeley Professor Emerita, who played a key role in two

Nacional de Periodismo Simón Bolívar and the India Catalina prize, several times.

Coronell was concluding a prestigious John S. Knight Senior Research Fellowship at Stanford University, when one of his colleagues phoned me with deeply disturbing news: Coronell had no option but to return to Colombia when his fellowship concluded in the spring of 2006, despite having received terrifying death threats against himself and his family.

At dinner that night in a small restaurant in Berkeley, Daniel Coronell spoke of his concern for the safety of his family and himself. His journalistic investigations of death squads, drugs, and politics as well as their unsavory linkages was both alarming and vital for Colombia, yet extremely dangerous for him. We discussed the possibility that he could come to CLAS as a Senior Scholar immediately and teach a course at UC Berkeley. We brainstormed ways to secure financial support for him. We had no specific funding or course at the time, but thanks to UC Berkeley's flexibility and the exceptional efforts of Aryeh Neier, who has been involved in so many of our efforts, we did the right thing and made the arrangement work.

Sara Lamson, CLAS Vice Chair at the time, and Dionicia Ramos, who would later become Vice Chair, put their hearts into the effort and immediately found housing for Coronell and his family. They quickly became a vital part of our community. At the end of Coronell's first year, we felt it was still not safe for him to return to Colombia, and we arranged

precedent-setting court cases concerning one of the most ruthless dictators in Latin America's contemporary history. For more than three decades, Manz carried out anthropological field work in Guatemala, some of it literally under fire. In the early 1980s, she chose to put her own life on the line to document horrific acts in the Ixil region during the genocide under General Efraín Ríos Montt. "I was one of the very few anthropologists — perhaps even the only one — who continued going to the area during the most intense period of war," she wrote in the Spring 2013 issue of the Berkeley Review. "I did this because I felt that these horrific crimes needed to be documented for a broader audience."

"General Efraín Ríos Montt came to power in Guatemala through a coup in March 1982 and was deposed by another coup in October 1983, seventeen blood-drenched months later," Manz wrote. "The most heinous state-sponsored violence of Guatemala's civil-war era took place during the brief period he was in power." Atrocities and widespread state-sponsored murders had continued in the country after Ríos Montt was deposed, yet Manz repeatedly returned to Guatemala.

One of the most notable political murders was the assassination of Manz's research partner and close friend, Guatemalan anthropologist Myrna Mack Chang. She was killed outside her office by military assassins on September 11, 1990, because of her work examining forced displacement during Guatemala's genocide. Seeking justice



Photo by Mary Jo McConahay.

Beatriz Manz is sworn in at the Ríos Montt trial in front of (from left) Justices Patricia Bustamante, Yassmin Barrios, and Pablo Xitumul.

for this unspeakable crime, her sister Helen Mack has become one of the most respected and courageous human rights campaigners in the country. Mack Chang's daughter, Lucrecia Hernández Mack, continues the tradition as a physician, former health minister of Guatemala, and now a progressive member of the Guatemalan Congress.

Court cases against former general and head of state Efraín Ríos Montt began in Spain in 1999 and concluded in front of a three-judge High Risk Court Tribunal in Guatemala City in 2013, where Manz played an important role. One hundred or so witnesses testified, many of them Indigenous Guatemalans from the Ixil area, but Manz was among the few foreign expert eyewitnesses to document the crimes committed in the Ixil region. At the end of this grueling trial, Chief Justice Yassmin Barrios announced a guilty verdict against Ríos Montt on charges of genocide and crimes against humanity, the first time these charges had been prosecuted successfully by national courts in the country where the heinous acts occurred.

For Manz, "the experience of testifying was not an act apart from anthropology but rather a central part of the responsibility of being an anthropologist." She sat a few feet away from the general when she delivered her testimony, which she views as one of the highlights of her professional career.

Jerry Brown @JerryBrownGov
Standing with the Guatemalan judges who found Ríos Montt guilty of genocide. pic.twitter.com/zlBxoA17hi 11 Oct

Image courtesy of Jerry Brown.



Governor Jerry Brown on meeting the Guatemalan judges.

Immediately after the Ríos Montt trial in May 2013, CLAS and Berkeley Law hosted the three Guatemalan judges on the tribunal — Yassmin Barrios, Pablo Xitumul, and Patricia Bustamante — for a week-long visit. These three courageous and principled jurists discussed the extreme challenges the trial posed for the Guatemalan judicial system in a public forum, and we also brought them to a course of 400 or so students that Professor Manz and I co-taught called "The Southern Border," something we did with many CLAS visitors.

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UC Berkeley students in "The Southern Border" course offer a standing ovation to the judges during their campus visit.
Photo by Jim Block.



Emmanuel Saez speaks as Governor Sergio Fajardo listens, live from Medellín, Colombia, November 2012.

We had already discussed the broader context of human rights in Guatemala, as well as the trial itself, in several lectures. We were deeply moved when the students spontaneously gave passionate standing ovations, both as the judges entered the classroom and after their talk. For many, it was a visibly transforming experience, and students have mentioned it years later. Although the verdict was overturned on a legal technicality 10 days after being issued, it has been widely hailed as precedent-setting.

During the jurists' visit to UC Berkeley, we had dinner one evening at our home with Governor Jerry Brown and his wife Anne Gust Brown. The governor was deeply moved by meeting the judges and asked to take a photo with them. He then tweeted the photo with the caption "Standing with the Guatemalan judges who found Ríos Montt guilty of genocide." He was concerned about their continued safety and has raised this concern with high-ranking diplomats in the United States and Latin America a number of times since.

CLAS and New Ways of Communicating

In March 2020, when the Berkeley campus closed and California locked down, CLAS immediately went online with an extensive public program. Our transition to this new reality was considerably aided by the fact that our online conversations didn't begin with the pandemic, but go back to 2011 and the height of the student-led protests in Chile. The students inspired and mobilized people throughout their country, including workers, Indigenous people, and community leaders, as well as members of labor unions, NGOs, and feminist groups. They drew as many as one million people into the streets in August 2011.

As the protests were unfolding, we invited several student leaders, including Giorgio Jackson and Camila Vallejo, to a spur-of-the-moment webinar with UC Berkeley students and faculty held at Berkeley Law. At the last minute, Vallejo became involved in a sit-in and was unable to take part, but the conversation with Jackson about the

issues and goals the students were pursuing, as well as their strategies, was exceptional and inspiring. Later, we would host webinars with other student leaders including Gabriel Boric.

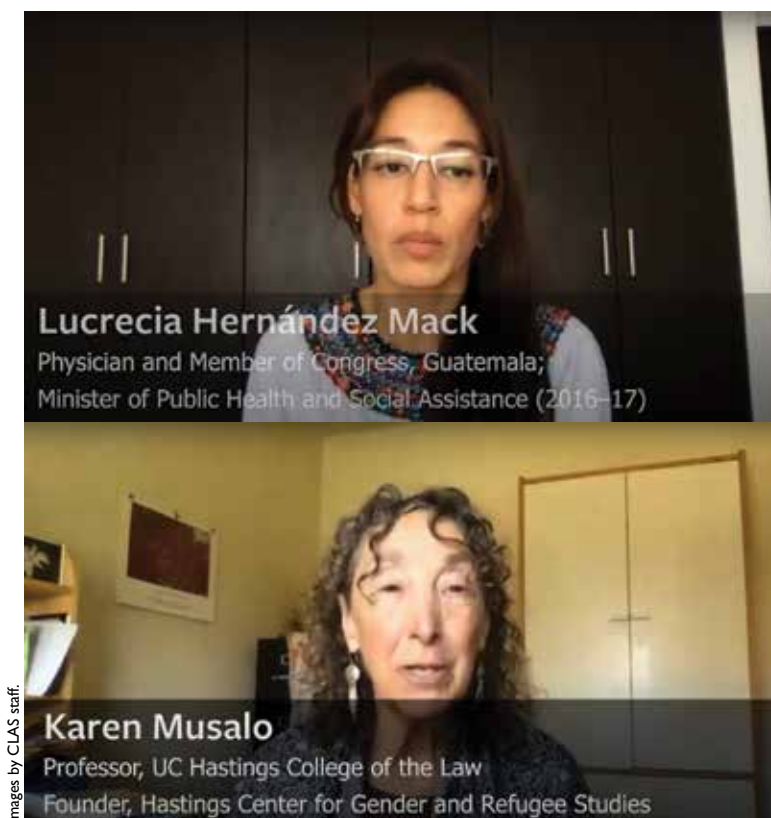
After the Jackson webinar, CLAS organized a four-part transcontinental series, "Inequality: A Dialogue for the Americas," in Fall 2012. The series opened with a conversation between Ricardo Lagos and Robert Reich and concluded with UC Berkeley Professor of Economics Emmanuel Saez and Sergio Fajardo, Governor of Antioquia, Colombia. Fajardo's government was just then implementing an innovative program, "Antioquia la más educada," as part of a broader effort to address inequality, impunity, and violence. Saez praised the approach, saying "as an economist, it's great to see such entrepreneurship at the political level."

The participants in these early webinars have remained very much a part of the CLAS community. Jackson and Boric are now members of Congress in Chile and have emerged as national political leaders. Fajardo concluded his term as governor, and *The Financial Times* flagged him in January 2021 as one of two frontrunners for the 2022 presidential election in Colombia.

As CLAS went online after March 2020, we built on that earlier experience. A few highlights capture the range of our efforts. We organized several webinars on Central America, seeking to provide a broader context for events through scholarly experts as well as immediate details as they were unfolding.

"Covid-19, the Northern Triangle of Central America and U.S. Immigration Policy" on May 1, 2020, featured Lucrecia Hernández Mack, the first female Minister of Public Health in Guatemala and now a congressional deputy with the reform-minded Movimiento Semilla party, and Karen Musalo, Professor of Law at UC Hastings College of the Law, where she founded the Hastings Center for Gender and Refugee Studies.

In late May 2020, the "Migration, the U.S.–Mexico Border, and Covid-19" panel included two noted academics and two people working in Mexico. The interaction between informed academic perspectives and highly knowledgeable people on the ground was particularly powerful. Stefano M. Bertozzi, Dean Emeritus at UC Berkeley's School of Public Health, and Elizabeth Oglesby, a professor at the University of Arizona, Tucson, provided incisive overviews. Katie Sharar, from the Kino Border Initiative in Nogales, and Adalberto Ramos, Director of the Center for the Assistance of Migrants in



Two experts discuss Covid-19 and immigration, May 2020.

Exodus, in Agua Prieta, provided the immediacy of what was taking place in Mexico.

We also held two webinars on Mexico's President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. The first was with Lorenzo Meyer, Professor Emeritus of History at El Colegio de México in Mexico City. The second was with Denise Dresser, Professor of Political Science at ITAM. Meyer and Dresser have different perspectives but are both noted public intellectuals and longtime friends of CLAS. More than 2,000 people registered for Dresser's webinar. While we were only able to accommodate 500 participants during the event, the rest were able to view a recording of the proceedings on our website. Denise Dresser has been a frequent presence at CLAS in recent years and has interacted extensively with faculty and students.

In September 2020, Irma Alicia Velásquez Nimatuj provided a compelling perspective on "Trade, Improvement, and Survival: An Indigenous Approach to the Current Immigration 'Crisis.'" She is a scholar and an international spokeswoman for Indigenous communities in Central America and was the first Maya-K'iche' woman to earn a Ph.D. in Social Anthropology in Guatemala.

Our final online event of 2020 was "U.S. Elections 2020: Implications for the Americas" with Maria Echaveste, Senior Scholar at CLAS and Deputy Chief of Staff to President Clinton (1998-2001); Daniel Coronell, President of News for Univision in the United States; and

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Paul Pierson, Professor of Political Science at UC Berkeley. This combination provided a range of perspectives and backgrounds from three compelling observers.

A Few More Reflections...

This article has sought to provide insight into the spirit of CLAS through five events and a brief look at one semester. Before concluding, I'd like to briefly mention several other moments along the way that didn't fit neatly into this framework but nonetheless have left an indelible mark.

On a sun-filled morning in December 2002, I found myself with the president of South Africa's largest metalworking labor union. We stood on a dirt mound next to a river flowing with toxic industrial waste through a community about a mile south of the U.S.-Mexico border in Tijuana. This leader was no stranger to struggle or desperate poverty, yet he was incredulous and indignant that these conditions could exist within sight of the United States.

"How can the United States allow this to happen?" he asked, visibly upset. "The unemployed and the dispossessed living in these conditions so close to your country." I had to answer that what we were witnessing was not the jobless and the marginalized but was, in fact, a new phenomenon I've called "high-productivity poverty."

Harley Shaiken and members and leaders from the Machinists Union visit a toxic waste site left by the battery-recycling plant Metales y Derivados, on a ridge overlooking a densely populated neighborhood in Tijuana, Mexico.



Photo by CLAS staff.

All the workers we had met in the neighborhood, indeed most of its residents, were employed in state-of-the-art factories or *maquiladoras*, which we had also just seen, and their living standards reflected suppressed, poverty-level wages. Organizing independent unions was dangerous and virtually impossible, so even as productivity rose, wages slid, and families suffered.

We were on a CLAS-organized trip with the executive committee of the International Metalworkers Federation (IMF) — about 30 trade union presidents representing 20 million workers from around the world — as well as graduate students from UC Berkeley and CLAS staff members. The International Association of Machinists (IAM), an affiliate of the IMF and a major manufacturing union based in the U.S. and Canada, was the inspiration behind the trip. Seasoned leaders from South Africa, Brazil, Great Britain, Japan, Russia, Ghana, Canada, the United States, and other developed and developing economies were there.

This compelling moment was the culmination of a four-year collaboration between CLAS and the IAM that brought 600 elected and appointed leaders from across North America to visit Tijuana and meet with community leaders and workers in their communities on multiple trips. Our goal was not to build walls or throttle trade, but



Photo by Scott Squire.

Gilberto Gil and Joan Baez while she dances during his performance at UC Berkeley, February 2005.

to develop policies that ensure ordinary people, families, and communities on both sides of the border benefit from expanded trade and growing economies. The alternative is hyper-inequality, social tension, and political backlash, as we have so clearly and destructively seen around the world in recent years.

The second moment was infused with music and dance. In February 2005, we hosted Gilberto Gil, Brazil's Minister of Culture at the time, but also an iconic Brazilian musician and singer. He was a vital pioneer of the *Tropicália* movement, which fused local folk culture and global influences. During the military dictatorship, Gil was imprisoned and then driven into exile in 1969. Since Gil held a ministerial post, one of his staff members told us, he would not be able to give a concert... but if a guitar were on stage, who knows what might happen? Miraculously, a guitar appeared, and his singing electrified an overflow audience of 700. Gil alternated questions and answers with song, pioneering a new way of having a public conversation.

A woman whom I had invited was sitting in the first row and became so moved by the music that she got up on the stage and began dancing, which truly inspired the audience. She was a very good dancer, but unforgettable and known across the world as a singer. The woman was Joan Baez. She had met Gil in Brazil at a benefit for political prisoners, and they have been friends ever since.

The third moment took place with Governor Jerry Brown in late-July 2014. The governor was preparing to lead a large trade and investment mission that included leaders of California-based companies as well as leading members of the legislature and the governor's cabinet. At the time, the media was flooded with disturbing photos of children from Central America's Northern Triangle (Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala) perilously riding the roofs of freight trains headed to the U.S. border. Their plight tore at the consciences of many, while provoking extreme anger in others. The Governor of Texas sent the National Guard to the border to intercept the children. "The trains are loaded with cement, iron, quartz, wheat, corn, diesel, vegetable oil, fertilizer, or wood," the Mexican poet Homero Aridjis wrote, "but the human cattle along for the ride have no food, drink, or guarantee of safety."

Sixty thousand unaccompanied children had arrived at the border in less than a year and were turning themselves over to U.S. Border Patrol agents seeking refuge, their right under U.S. law. Governor Brown was deeply moved by their desperate plight, and we discussed what might be done in a phone call prior to his trip. The result was that he and the Archbishop of Los Angeles José H. Gómez invited a bishop from each of the three Northern Triangle countries and one from Mexico — all working closely with migrants in their respective countries — to a meeting in Mexico City.

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I was asked by the governor to accompany him on the trip and also to participate in this closed meeting. It was deeply moving to engage with the religious leaders who were dealing with the humanitarian crisis directly. At a moment when it seemed little would be done, Governor Brown and Archbishop Gómez galvanized action on the plight of children across the Americas. They spoke to a packed press conference immediately after the meeting, with the bishops behind them and journalists in attendance from across the Americas. More importantly, they followed up in substantive ways back in California. I am proud CLAS contributed to this exceptional event.

One final moment I had referred to earlier: the CLAS meeting on renewable energy and climate change in Detroit and the working dinner at the Detroit Institute of Arts. At the dinner, we were surrounded by Diego Rivera's 1932 masterpiece, the "Detroit Industry Murals," featuring the legendary Ford Rouge plant, the largest factory in the world, and its workers toiling on the line.

Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas was with us. He had come of age with Rivera as a young man in Mexico. His father, the legendary President Lázaro Cárdenas (1934-1940), had walked arm-in-arm with Rivera immediately behind Frida Kahlo's casket at her funeral in Mexico City in 1954. Three very different themes came together for me at that exceptional moment: the unique role Cárdenas had played

making Mexico a more democratic country; my memories of my grandfather, who had worked on the line in the Rouge plant for decades and was there while Rivera was making the sketches for the frescoes now surrounding us; and the existential threat of climate change in the Americas that had brought us to Detroit.

I'll end by giving a bit of context to the title of this article, "Twenty Years Now, Where'd They Go?" The title is a line from the song "Like a Rock" by Bob Seger, a legendary singer-songwriter from Detroit who transmits the hard work, grit, and spirit of the city through many of his songs.

For my part, I know where the years have gone, and it has been a special journey with exceptional people. It's been a privilege to be at UC Berkeley and to have remained in touch with students who have gone on to make real contributions and to know that they've taken what we've done together with them. And I look forward to the new and exciting paths CLAS will pursue going forward and the generations of new students who will be a vital part of that future.

Harley Shaiken served as the Chair of the Center for Latin American Studies from 1998 to 2020. He is Professor Emeritus in the Department of Geography and the Graduate School of Education at UC Berkeley.

Governor Jerry Brown and Archbishop José Gómez at a Mexico press conference on unaccompanied minors at the U.S. border, July 2014.



Photo by Justin Short, Office of the Governor of California.



A docent points out parts of "Detroit Industry" to local students visiting the Detroit Institute of Art's Rivera Court.
Photo © 2017 Detroit Institute of Arts.



Photo by Jim Block.

CLAS has built a community that connects Latin America and UC Berkeley. From bringing students into the classroom with innovative thinkers to showcasing the cultural treasures of the region, here are several highlights of the Center's impact and the spirit of CLAS.

Special Seminars

CLAS hosts some of the region's preeminent academics, artists, and leaders in residence at UC Berkeley, inviting them to teach master classes for graduate and undergraduate students. For many students, the Special Seminars Series at CLAS offers a unique opportunity to engage with world-renowned figures from Latin America.

In 2000, we hosted **Ruth Cardoso**, a noted anthropologist who was the First Lady of Brazil at the time. Several well-known Mexican scholars have also taught for CLAS, including **Lorenzo Meyer**, **Sergio Aguayo**, and **Denise Dresser**. Most recently, in March 2020, CLAS offered a virtual course with **Javier Couso**,

Above: Sergio Fajardo, 2018.
Left: Denise Dresser, 2017.

Photo by Jim Block.



Photo by Dioniçia Ramos.

Professor of Law at the Universidad Diego Portales, Chile, and Utrecht University, the Netherlands.

CLAS has hosted political leaders the likes of **Ricardo Lagos**, President of Chile (2000-2006); **Cuauhtémoc Cárdenas**, Mayor of Mexico City (1997-99); **Michelle Bachelet**, President of Chile (2006-2010 and 2014-2018); **Juan Gabriel Valdés**, Chile's Ambassador to the United States (2014-2018); and **Sergio Fajardo**, Colombian presidential candidate (2018).

We have welcomed **Daniel Coronell**, Colombian journalist and President of News for Univision in the United States, who spent two years in residence and teaching at CLAS; Mexican journalist **Alma Guillermoprieto**; and Chilean guitarist and composer **Horacio Salinas**, musical director of Inti-Illimani.

As Berkeley students graduate — whether with doctoral, masters, or undergraduate degrees — and start their careers, we can see the impact of CLAS Special Seminars spread around the world.

Above: Ricardo Lagos (center) on the Berkeley campus, 2006.
Right: Michelle Bachelet (center), 2019.



Photo by Jim Block.



Photo by Jim Block.



Photo by Miguel Oropeza Caballero.

Cultural Connections

The arts — painting, sculpture, literature, film, music, and more — have been at the core of CLAS programming since the beginning.

We welcomed the iconic Chilean musical group **Inti-Illimani** as part of Cal Performances in Zellerbach Hall in 2007 and the group's musical director, singer and guitarist **Horacio Salinas**, in 2011.

In 2007, CLAS hosted an exhibit of brilliant and searing paintings and drawings from the Abu Ghraib works by Colombian artist **Fernando Botero**. Professor of English at UC Berkeley and Poet Laureate of the United States **Robert Hass** held a conversation with Botero to open the exhibit. In 2009, Chancellor Birgeneau presented Botero with the Chancellor's Citation in recognition of his donation of 60 Abu Ghraib works to UC Berkeley as a result of the CLAS exhibit. In 2012, CLAS organized a showing of the Abu Ghraib collection at the Museo de la Memoria y los Derechos Humanos (Museum of Memory and Human Rights) in Santiago, Chile.

In 2015, CLAS hosted "Unspoken Words/Steps on Sand," an exhibit of murals by Central American children

Above: Horacio Salinas plays his guitar at Berkeley, 2011.
Left: A visitor in the "MONTARlaBestia" exhibit at CLAS, 2017.

in U.S. detention camps. The moving works portray their vision of the perilous journey to the U.S.–Mexico border and were painted under the supervision of Argentine artist **Claudia Bernardi**.

In 2016, CLAS partnered with the Mexican Museum of San Francisco to host flautist **Elena Duran**. CLAS and the Mexican Museum also hosted a talk by Mexican stateswoman **Guadalupe Rivera y Marín** about her father, Diego Rivera. The value of the 2015 event is reflected in the face of the young woman speaking with Rivera y Marín.

In 2017, CLAS hosted an exhibition by the **Colectivo de Artistas Contra la Discriminación** (Artists Collective Against Discrimination). "MONTARlaBestia" (Riding the Beast) showcased art and poetry about "La Bestia," the train that carries Central American migrants on a hazardous journey across Mexico towards the United States.

Above: The Tree of Life from "Unspoken Words/Steps on Sand," 2015.
Right: Guadalupe Rivera y Marín after her talk, 2016.



Photo by Perla Nation.



Photo by Jim Block.



Photo by Jim Block.



Photo by Jim Block.

In Conversation With Directors and Actors

CLAS frequently screens award-winning films and hosts directors and actors to discuss their recent work. Here are a few highlights.

A screening of “A Better Life” (2011) featured director **Chris Weitz** and Oscar-nominated actor **Demián Bichir**. In 2012, director **David Turnley** presented “Shenandoah” (2012), his documentary about disturbing tensions targeting Mexican migrants in a Pennsylvania coal town ripped apart during hard times.

Director **Diego Luna** screened his film “Cesar Chavez” with CLAS in 2014. At the event, he discussed the film with **Arturo Rodriguez**, president of the United Farm Workers union; **Maria Echaveste**, a Senior Scholar at CLAS; and **Harley Shaiken**. United Farm Workers co-founder **Dolores Huerta** was a special guest at the screening. After a visit by Luna to CLAS several years earlier, Shaiken mentioned a

Above, from left: Harley Shaiken, Diego Luna, Arturo Rodriguez, and Maria Echaveste discuss Luna’s “Cesar Chavez.”
Left: Dolores Huerta with students at the “Cesar Chavez” screening.



Photo by Ana De Carolis.

talk Chavez had given at UC Berkeley, and the Bancroft Library provided a recording to the director.

Walter Salles received a standing ovation at a CLAS event in 2005 after discussing the production process for his movie “The Motorcycle Diaries” (2004). In 2016, we hosted a screening of “Aquarius” (2016) and a conversation with its star, **Sônia Braga**. A visit from director **Petra Costa** to screen her film “Democracia em Vertigem” (The Edge of Democracy, 2019) was followed by a public conversation with Oscar-winning filmmaker **Charles Ferguson**. CLAS has hosted advanced screenings with the director for all of Ferguson’s films, including the Oscar-winning “Inside Job” (2010).

A proud moment at CLAS was working with Mexican director **Roberto Hernández** and producer **Layda Negrete** on “Presunto Culpable” (Presumed Guilty, 2011). Among other awards, the film won the 2011 Emmy for Outstanding Investigative Journalism, and CLAS Chair Harley Shaiken received an Emmy as an executive producer of the film.

Latin America has a vibrant film tradition, and CLAS looks forward to future Cine Latino programs.

Above: Charles Ferguson listens to Petra Costa, 2019.
Right: Demián Bichir with Berkeley students, 2013.



Photo by Jim Block.