



## Out of the Class and into the Gallery: Teaching Spanish through Fine Arts

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**Abstract:** Der Beitrag untersucht die Rolle von Kunstgalerien im Spanischprogramm der University of Melbourne, Australien, und zeigt, wie sich durch Kunstwerke bestimmte Unterrichtsformen für den fach- und sprachenintegrierende Unterricht eröffnen und gleichzeitig die Motivation der Lernenden erhöhen. Die Integration von Kultur und Sprache stellt für Anfänger eine besondere Herausforderung dar, doch die bildende Kunst hat sich dann als besonders fruchtbar erwiesen, wenn Kunst ohne Sprache auskommt. Bildende Kunst im Sprachunterricht wurde bereits im Hinblick auf die Motivation der Lernenden diskutiert (Bevilacqua Martello 2017). In diesem Beitrag geht es um die Motivation der Lernenden in Bezug auf unsere fortgeschrittenen Studierenden, die mit den Mitarbeitern der National Gallery of Victoria (NGV's) zusammenarbeiten, um ein auf Anfänger zugeschnittenes Programm zu entwickeln, das während des Galeriebesuchs als Lehrende oder Führer für die Studierende fungieren kann.

This paper explores the role of art galleries in the Spanish program at the University of Melbourne, Australia, illustrating how teaching language via artworks opens up particular modes of teaching that integrate language and content while increasing student motivation. The integration of culture and language is particularly challenging in the case of beginning level students, yet visual art has provided particularly fruitful, given that art bypasses linguistics. Visual arts in language instruction has already been discussed in terms of student motivation (Bevilacqua Martello 2017). I discuss student motivation in relation to our advanced level students who work with the National Gallery of Victoria's (NGV's) education team to design a program tailored to beginners students, acting as teachers or guides for the students during the gallery visit.

**Schlüsselwörter:** Spanisch, Kunstgalerien, Motivation, Sprache und Inhalte; Spanish, art galleries, motivation, language and content.

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## 1 Introduction

This paper explores the role of art galleries and visual art in the Spanish and Latin American Studies program at the University of Melbourne. I illustrate here the advantages of taking the language class into the gallery. In particular, this article shows how teaching with recourse to visual art brings together language and culture, while increasing student motivation and facilitating student engagement with a key Melbourne cultural institution. Culture is one of the most neglected aspects of language instruction, with the integration of language and culture being particularly difficult in the case of beginners and intermediate level subjects. Visual art often provides a more immediate manner of engaging student interest than a literary text (see Knapp 2012; Ortuño 1994), and importantly in the case of beginners and intermediate level students, while art may bypass linguistics, interpreting images requires them to engage in language in various ways, as appropriate to their level. As well as allowing for a more seamless integration of language and culture in the case of beginner and intermediate level subjects, visual art or class gallery visits increase student motivation, because students partake in more meaningful use of language when they talk or write about art. Moreover, as I argue here, it is encouraging for students to see the many ways in which learning language and culture through fine arts prepare them for their future professional lives. Given that exposure to and appreciation of the arts, as one scholar writes, “greatly enhance[s] [students] ability to learn, understand, and function throughout their lives” (Altman 2015: 193).

In my discussion of the role of art galleries and visual art in three core subjects of the Spanish and Latin American Studies major, I focus on a partnership between the Spanish program and the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV), which dates back to 2011. A number of art galleries in Australia have educational programs and teaching materials. Whilst the NGV is the only art gallery that has language-specific material, this is developed solely for secondary school students.<sup>1</sup> Outlining here the place of visual art and visits to the NGV in the Spanish curriculum, I hope to highlight the multiple ways in which tertiary language programs can productively partner with art galleries. Such partnerships have, as just mentioned, important pedagogical benefits. Teaching at the gallery also has important social benefits, as it becomes a place where students of different year levels are brought together. In addition, the gallery visit is significant in the way it connects our students to an

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<sup>1</sup> This includes Teachers’ Notes with detailed information about learning outcomes (in accordance with the LOTE (Languages Other Than English) domain of the Victorian Essential Learning Curriculum and VCE Study Design) and objectives (to cater to the Spanish IB *ab initio* syllabus), language focus, topics and useful material (websites, books and movies) to complement activities. Where needed, a key to exercises is provided at the end of the Teachers’ Notes.

iconic Melbourne cultural institution and offers them the opportunity to become familiar with paintings and at ease in the gallery space. One scholar has discussed the disadvantages faced by students unable to engage with arts and cultural institutions in relation to a collaborative teaching project between City University of New York and the Rubin Museum of Art, arguing that students who do not access cultural institutions do not reach the same level of job readiness (Altman 2015). Moving the language classroom into the gallery space is important, therefore, to enhance graduate employability. This offers a further incentive for us to make sure that as many of our students as possible are offered the opportunity to engage with the NGV.

## 2 Integration of language and culture

As has been discussed at length elsewhere, a university-level language course cannot be separated from the culture of the target language (see, for instance, Freadman 2012; Hajek/Nettlebeck/Woods 2012; Ros I Solé 2003; Starkey/Osler 2001). Despite this rhetoric, culture remains the most neglected component of foreign language teaching (Sercu/García/Prieto 2005). Whilst such research highlights the benefits of such integration, these have not necessarily been considered in depth in relevant research. This is true even in the area of *Content and Language Integrated Learning* (CLIL), which articulates the importance of combining language and culture content in the language curriculum. CLIL is an “umbrella” term (Marsh 2002: 56; Strotman/Bamond/Lopez Lago/Bailen/Bonilla/Montesions 2014: 92–93), describing “a pedagogy with a dual focus on developing outcomes both in language (e.g. French) and content (e.g. science) learning, simultaneously” (Coyle/Hood/Marsh 2010 cited in Cross 2015: 5). CLIL comes from the Canadian immersion approach, but is more flexible and can be applied in a range of settings, with the emphasis less on the necessary structural conditions and more on “capitalis[ing] on existing opportunities to enhance language learning retention and outcomes” (Cross 2015: 5). CLIL is seen as complying with EU policies for multilingualism (Ruiz de Zarobe/Jiménez Catalán 2009: xi) and schools that offer certain subjects in a foreign language have existed in Europe for a number of decades (Navés 2009: 24).

Cross (2015: 6–7) outlines broader findings in language education research that reinforce the benefits of CLIL, including: (1) language learning is more successful when acquired for meaningful and significant communication purposes (see also Merino and Lasagabaster 2017: 19); (2) integrating content with second language learning “provides a substantive and functional basis and exposure for language teaching” (Cross 2015: 5); and (3) language instruction is more successful when

organised around task-based activities which are motivating and functional. Similarly, Navés (2009: 25) refers to various research findings that suggest:

a second language is most successfully acquired when the conditions are similar to those present in first-language acquisition: that is, when the focus of instruction is on meaning rather than form, when the language input is at or just above the proficiency of the learner and when there is sufficient opportunity to engage in meaningful use of that language in a relatively anxiety-free environment.

There is some research on CLIL, visual art and language instruction such as Jutta Rymarczyk's work (cf. 2003a; 2003b) on the use of visual art in the context of English as a foreign language. Generally, however, this scholarship does not address the types of activities the University of Melbourne is engaged in. For instance, Korosidou and Griva (2014) discuss a CLIL project on Byzantine and post-Byzantine art and culture aimed at primary school students, with their findings suggesting that the multimodal learning environment enhanced student learning. Žemberová (2014) similarly writes about art in CLIL education, with a focus on students practising art. Meanwhile, a 2014 special issue of the *International Journal of Bilingualism* (Vol 18, Iss 2) was dedicated to multilingualism and the arts, but without a clear focus on CLIL or classroom instruction.

What existing scholarship does tell us is that visual art leads to a greater integration of language and culture, given, for instance, that art “provides students with an aesthetic experience that leads to a deeper understanding of particular cultural aspects of the target language” (Bevilacqua 2017: 6–7). Another scholar to have written about the use of visual art in the language classroom makes the important point that as well as being an excellent tool to learn another language, art allows for the inclusion of “culturally-loaded” visual material into the curriculum and can transform a language class into a cross-disciplinary course (Ortuño 1994).

Thanks in part to a five-year long curriculum reform, a number of language programs at the University of Melbourne have looked for ways to reassert the nexus between language and culture. These days, students are, as much as possible, introduced to culture from the outset of their language study. Such integration of culture and language is, however, particularly challenging in the case of a language like Spanish, which has a significant beginner cohort and very few post-VCE students. Indeed, with enrolments of around 370 students in *Spanish 1* and around 270 for *Spanish 2*, beginners Spanish is one of the School of Languages and Linguistics' biggest undergraduate subjects. On account of this large beginners-level cohort, visual art has proven to be particularly fruitful, as I argue here, given that art can be accessed by students in a different way than literary texts. Teaching

with artworks has meant that we have been able to provide our students with authentic cultural materials that they can interact with linguistically – for instance, describing what they see, what they feel; creating narratives based on depicted scenarios – regardless of how novice or undeveloped their language skills might be. Teaching with visual art allows, therefore, for a seamless integration of language and culture at beginners level that would be hard to achieve with discursive cultural texts.

### **3 Beginners Spanish and the NGV**

As part of the beginner's level core language subject *Spanish 1*, all students visit the National Gallery of Victoria where they learn about Hispanic art from the in-house art educator and from our advanced-level Spanish students. There are a number of Spanish and Latin American artists in the NGV's general collection, such as the Spanish artists Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) and Juan Miró (1893–1983), and the Chilean artist Jaun Davila (1946–). Visual art is also key to a number of student tasks, such as their individual oral presentations, one of their writing tasks and their group project, which requires them to curate visual art and cultural artefacts. Visual art is used during class-time, where students refine reading and listening skills through engagement with authentic cultural materials, such as artworks and music. In our *Spanish 1* class, students are introduced to grammatical structures and vocabulary that allow them to converse about the self in a number of informal situations, while exploring the societies and cultures of the global Spanish-speaking community. Visual art is an ideal medium for this level of expression as students learn to express opinions, describe objects and talk about what their likes and dislikes. Being able to do this with recourse to Hispanic art means students are taught language skills while being afforded a taste of and insight into the richness of the Hispanic world. Painters such as Pablo Picasso (1881–1973), Frida Kahlo (1907–1954), Diego Rivera (1886–1957), Fernando Botero (1932–), Leonora Carrington (1917–2011), Olga Costa (1913–1993), Doris Salcedo (1958–) and Joaquín Sorolla (1863–1923) are included in class activities and students are also shown artwork by some of these artists at the NGV. Students visit the NGV in week 8 of their 12-week semester and are provided with a seminar-style class and up-close viewing of Hispanic paintings. Going to the museum later in the semester means that students have had in-class time to familiarize themselves with Hispanic art. This means they may feel less intimidated and better able to engage with the work of art.

As noted, the assessment tasks also require our beginner-level students to engage with Hispanic art. The first composition (300 words) asks students to reflect on

their own cultural practices in Spanish. Reflection is prompted by their examination of three objects: an artwork reproduction, supplied by the student's teacher; a photo of the student's own family (or other kinship group e.g. housemates); and an artefact with a significant connection to the student's own culture. This is interpreted broadly and could, for instance, be their university culture, a subculture, a national or ethnic culture, with artefacts ranging from tattoos to student club cards, postcards from home to special pieces of jewellery. This assessment task prompts the students to think about their own identities in ways that connect not just to their own broader communities, but also to the greater Hispanic world.

One student, whose work I include here (see appendix: Student work), included a photo of herself and her brother in the centre of Australia, which is where her family is from, as well as an Aboriginal dreamtime image. She explained that her parents work in Indigenous communities and that she identifies closely with Indigenous culture. She also included a painting by Fernando Botero, *La Familia Colombiana*, writing that, for her, his representation of a typical family was amusing. This assessment task is important, for it allowed beginner students to use paintings, cultural artefacts and photos of their own family to reflect upon their own cultural practices as well as those of different parts of the Hispanic world.

The second composition, an assessment task completed in groups, is described to students as "A Curated Exhibition". Curation, students are told, involves selecting and organising objects in a way that tells, or constructs, a particular story about those objects. As a group, students are required to: select five of the cultural artefacts shown throughout the semester; identify a story that these five objects seem to be collectively telling, or an issue they seem to highlight; and arrange and present a photographic documentation of these five objects, accompanied by short texts in Spanish (total 300 words) in a way that brings this story or issue to the fore. Students are encouraged to use Instagram as an exhibition platform. Constructing an exhibition is a chance for students to reflect on the wide range of cultural materials studied over the semester through a critical lens that holds personal interest, while applying Spanish language skills to a real-world context. Importantly, these beginners students are able to supplement the limitations of their language skills with visual references. Some of the thematic areas identified by students in recent years have included: women in Hispanic cultures, civil unrest, cultural change over time, cultural resilience, obscured histories, childhood practices and travel and leisure.

Assessment tasks such as these are incredibly motivating and provide students with a meaningful way of developing their language skills, whilst challenging them in the area of content through critical engagement with visual art and cultural artefacts.



## 4 Student motivation

### 4.1 Work-relevant skills

It is also increasingly important for us to think about the place of *Work Integrated Learning* (WIL) in our curriculum design. I would like to reflect in this section on how teaching in art galleries or recourse to visual art allows us to provide students with meaningful opportunities to develop work-relevant skills, such as community leadership skills, intercultural competency and the ability to work collaboratively with authentic industry partners. WIL has gained momentum as a tertiary pedagogical approach over the past decade, partly as a response, in the Australian context, to a national policy and funding environment for which graduate employability and graduate outcomes have become key indicators of institutional excellence (Kaider/Hans-Wesson/Young 2017; Cooper/Orrrell/Bowden 2010; Tomlinson 2016). As part of this focus, it is important to provide students with the opportunity to engage with “real world” professional contexts, methods and technologies, connect to communities, collaboratively solve problems and work with authentic industry partners (Bridgstock 2016: 1). One way that we have addressed this focus on work relevance in our language classes has been to make explicit to students the many workplace skills they will develop during their time with us, such as problem-solving, team work, communication, mentoring, and information literacy. Teaching with recourse to visual art has also been relevant in this regard.

Significant arguments have been made in existing scholarship on visual art and tertiary language instruction and the role art galleries can play in a work-relevant curriculum. As one scholar sees it, trips to art galleries offer some of the same benefits of “service learning” (work-integrated learning; Ortuño 1994: 502) because in art galleries students are exposed to a subject from a multidisciplinary approach that provides them with opportunities to develop the lateral and critical thinking skills highly valued by the workplace. Not only do students develop linguistic skills in the target language as part of their work in the gallery, they also learn to critique visual art in terms of social, historical, political and aesthetic issues. Interdisciplinarity is highly valued, not just in the academy, but also in the workplace. Importantly, in providing our students with class visits to a major Australian art gallery, the language class becomes something much more than linguistic proficiency, as our students become skilled at interdisciplinary and critical thinking.

Moreover, the ability to interpret and respond to visual culture in a sophisticated manner is in itself a highly-valued workplace skill. Gallery visits are important in this regard because they help to make art more accessible to students of diverse

cultural and class backgrounds. Sometimes art galleries can seem intimidating to students from migrant and working-class families. Being able to inhabit the gallery space in such an informal fashion is important in that it allows students to gain confidence in this domain, even when art or art history is not their area of study. Indeed, art is not just important within cultural organisations, it is also “purchased by corporations, not only as a financial investment but to legitimize their industry and their work as part of high culture and achievement” (Freedman 2003: 75). Employees are required to talk about the art that is purchased, as it is often part of corporate branding. Finally, for many students who travel, study or work overseas, a trip to an art gallery is an experience which models what will likely be similar to many museum experiences abroad. Certainly, the NGV visit is important for our large number of international students in that it gives them access to an iconic Melbourne cultural institution.<sup>2</sup> The time spent at NGV provides international students with a sense of belonging and connectivity to their host city, while also providing opportunities to develop the capability to be effective in an international art gallery setting.

Important also in terms of WIL is the work of our advanced level students with NGV’s education team designing a program tailored to beginner students, where they act as teachers or guides for the students during the gallery visit. Given that WIL aims to provide students ways of connecting with authentic industry partners, the work our advanced level students do in conjunction with the NGV’s education team is significant in this regard. Indeed, these students not only have the opportunity to work as art educators at the gallery, but also as teachers or mentors to our beginner-level students. Prior to visiting the NGV, *Spanish 7* students (our highest language level) design their own educational material based on one of the Hispanic paintings that beginner students will view during their gallery visit. Their material focuses not just on the social, historical and political context of the artwork, but also provides beginner students with ways of interpreting or talking about the aesthetics. On the day of the visit, the *Spanish 7* students provide a seminar-style class to a small group of beginner students, therefore enjoying the opportunity to develop skills in teaching and mentoring. Seeing advanced-level students use their Spanish skills in the areas of art education and language teaching is motivating for beginner students and encourages them to see the value of advanced-level language and cultural study.

#### **4.2 Object-based learning (OBL)**

One scholar to have looked at the use of visual arts in language instruction argues that it increases student motivation (Bevilacqua 2017: 35). Visual art is, from my

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<sup>2</sup> Our beginners cohort includes 10-20% international students.



experience, motivational in the way it allows for modes of teaching that integrate language and culture, while providing students with meaningful engagement with language and culture. In terms of WIL, motivation is also increased when teaching occurs at art galleries, because students have a much greater understanding of the relevance of their university learning to the workplace. Importantly, beginner language students develop linguistic skills while also becoming more confident visiting art galleries and speaking about art. Not only do they learn to express opinions about the aesthetics of a painting, they also learn to situate it with a much broader and interdisciplinary context. The visit to the art gallery is also motivating for advanced level students as well in that it provides them with an authentic engagement with an iconic Melbourne cultural institution like the NGV, while also highlighting to them the advantages in a professional setting of advanced language and culture study.

I extend here my discussion of student motivation to a consideration of object-based learning or the tactile engagement with art or artefacts that occurs in another of our core subjects, *Hispanic Cultural Studies 1*. This seminar is an intermediate level cultural elective that teaches students about civil war and dictatorship in Spain and Latin America. In the first 6 weeks of the course, students learn about the Spanish Civil War, artistic responses to it and the Australian contribution to Republican Spain. Like *Spanish 1* and *Spanish 7*, the students visit the NGV, where they are given a lecture about art and the Spanish Civil War by one of the art educators. They also have a close up viewing of Picasso's *Weeping Woman* (1937) and learn about its commentary on the atrocities of modern warfare, as well as its connections to Picasso's personal life. In addition to the visit to the NGV, one of the seminars is conducted in the special collections room at the University of Melbourne archives, where students both view and hold visual material connecting to the Spanish Civil War. I consider here the implications of teaching with visual objects such as posters, photos and postcards. Scholarship in the area of object-based learning defines objects as any "item such as a specimen, artefact or artwork that can be collectively referred to as material culture, but the term could equally apply to manuscripts, rare books and archives" (Chatterjee/Hannan/Thomson 2015: 1). Teaching with objects not only improves learning outcomes, according to scholars, but can also "inspire, inform, engage and motivate learners of all stages of their education" (Chatterjee/Hannan/Thomson 2015: 1). According to the University of Melbourne's object-based learning website, this educational mode

counters problems of student disengagement and associated diminished knowledge acquisition outcomes. The intimate examination of artefacts of any culture brings that world to life in a way that texts, 2D, or digital

surrogates cannot. OBL helps to ignite a student's imagination and adds depth to his/her learning experience. (Jamieson 2016: n.p.)

This is particularly relevant in the case of Hispanic Cultural Studies, where students learn about the Spanish Civil War not just through film and literature, but also in the special archives collection at the University of Melbourne. Through the university's special collections, they have access to material that relates to the Australian contribution to the Spanish Civil War, which includes not just textual material, but also visual texts such as posters, postcards and photos.<sup>3</sup> The students find the visit to the university's archives to be very motivating, with many commenting in class that it was the best aspect of the course. The Spanish Civil War comes to life for them as they embark on a journey of discovery, looking at and holding primary sources that up until that point had remained theoretical and removed from their own sense of self. As they look at images relating to the war, the suffering and devastation becomes so much more real to them than other, more removed cultural texts. This is an experience embodied with artefacts and images of the war. The physical proximity to the material is further enhanced by the fact the material relates to Australians who either went to Spain to fight against fascism, or attempted to rally support for Republican Spain from Australia.

To facilitate their analysis of the University of Melbourne's Lloyd Edmonds, Arthur Howells and Kenneth Coldicott archival holdings, the students are provided with worksheets (see appendix: Worksheet) that ask them to focus on different aspects of the visual and discursive texts. The students only have immediate level language proficiency, so the images are particularly powerful in that they can be understood immediately and students spend most of their time looking at and answering questions about these visual texts. For instance, the Arthur Fenton Howells collection contains photographs of the war and a postcard booklet titled *Catalunya*. Students are asked to consider how these images position the viewer to feel about Spain and the Spanish Civil War. They also view the Kenneth Coldicott Collection, which includes posters and other material about the films Coldicott showed in Australia to garner support for the Republican cause. Coldicott travelled throughout Australia with a projector after the Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936, with varying levels of success in his fundraising efforts. The funds collected at the screenings were sent to aid work looking after orphaned children, refugee camps in southern France and purchasing ambulances that were shipped over to the British Medical Aid Unit in the International Brigade. Students were asked to analyse the posters advertising the films and the screenings of them and to consider the audiences and the purpose of poster and/or advertising. Questions asked of them

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<sup>3</sup> Please see following link to the collection  
<http://gallery.its.unimelb.edu.au/imu/imu.php?request=search>.

included: What are viewers meant to think and feel when seeing these posters? How does it position them to view the films?

Scholars point to the importance of students being actively involved in the process of learning. Chatterjee, Hannan and Thomson, for instance, write that “in order to gain real knowledge, the learner must go through a cycle of learning by being actively involved in the experience. Next the learner must reflect on the experience” (2015: 2). Certainly, the students learning experience through the University of Melbourne’s archival collections is reminiscent of this process, as they not only look through, inspect and examine the archival material, but also analyse it. Not just the tactile engagement with visual sources about the Spanish Civil War, but also the fact of being actively involved in the process of learning at the special collections is clearly highly motivating. A number of students elected to write about these sources, rather than cultural texts such as film, in their 1500 word critical and theoretical essays written in the target language.

## **5 Conclusion**

Many education scholars view paintings and/or visual art as great inspiration for critical dialogue “because the fine arts stir the human soul, express individuality as well as community, and are at once universal and culturally specific” (Freedman 2003: 17). Teaching with recourse to visual texts or taking the classroom into the gallery is, as I have argued here, particularly important in the case of target language instruction. If students understand little in the early semesters of language study, then visual art is invaluable because it bypasses linguistics. Yet while students do not require language to understand artwork, they can be prompted to engage with it according to their own level of language proficiency. Often, beginner language students feel disengaged by the way in which classroom activities or assessment tasks seem meaningless or unrelated to the real world. Yet speaking or writing about visual art is something that has not only real-world relevance, but also introduces a level of cultural content to language instruction which would otherwise be missing.

Also important is the visit to the gallery itself, which brings together students of different year levels and connects students of different cultural and class backgrounds to an important Melbourne cultural institution. For students of all levels, the gallery visit is significant in terms of work-integrated learning. While in the gallery, beginner students develop fluency not just in the target language but also in art interpretation and critical, interdisciplinary thinking. Meanwhile, advanced level students have the invaluable opportunity of working collaboratively with an important cultural institution like the NGV while at the same time mentoring beginner students. If in other contexts scholars have pointed to a direct

correlation between work readiness and engagement with cultural institutions, then taking the language class into the gallery space has important professional ramifications which go well beyond proficiency in the target language. Importantly, these benefits are also social, as research has demonstrated “that students having structured engagement with arts and cultural institutions are more likely to develop empathy and a sense of social responsibility” (Altman 2015: 203).

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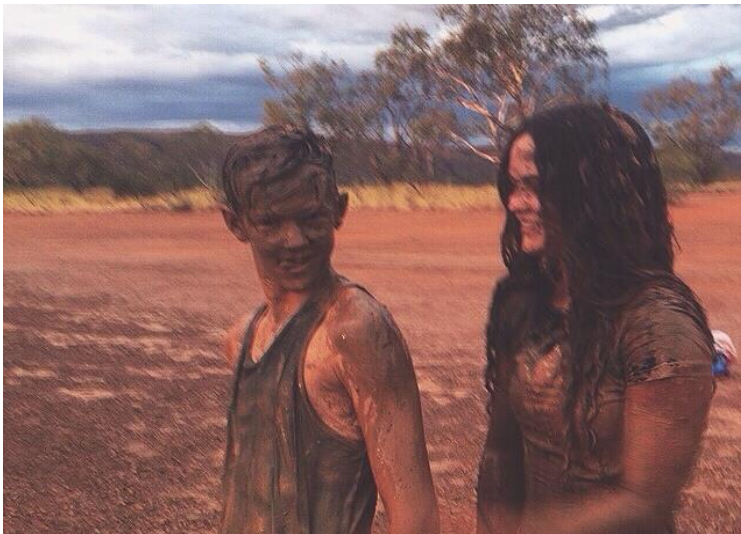
## Appendix

### 1 Student work

*Querido Nicolás,*

*Me llamo Marli Mathewson. Tengo diecinueve años, y vivo en Australia. Vivo en una universidad residencial en la Universidad de Melbourne, donde estudio. Estoy tomando principalmente clases de criminología, pero la clase de español es mi favorita. Me gusta leer y estudiar, pero también soy muy atlética. Hago muchos deportes. ¿Cuáles son tus intereses? ¿Estudias en una universidad?*

*Mi familia vive en el centro de Australia, donde nació. Mi padre es director de teatro, y mi madre es una profesora de adultos. Tengo un hermanito, él es muy trabajador. Él estudia mecánica. Todos tenemos pelo castaño rizado, pero mi padre y mi hermano son altos, sin embargo mi madre y yo somos pequeñas. ¿Tienes hermanos? ¿Qué hacen tus padres? Estos somos mi hermano y yo en el desierto del centro de Australia.*



*Mis padres trabajan en comunidades indígenas. Mi hermano y yo nos identificamos mucho con la cultura de los Aborígenes Australianos. Estudiamos la tierra y los animales del desierto, y aprendemos a recoger plantas nativas para comer. Los Aborígenes Australianos contaron historias sobre los espíritus, llamadas 'Dreamtime', y sobre la creación de la tierra. Mi historia favorita es sobre una serpiente gigante que creó ríos con su vientre, se llama la serpiente del arco iris.*



*¿Cuál es tu cultura? ¿O te identificas con una cultura de un lugar al que viajaste?*

*Viajé a Colombia cuando tenía quince años. Fui a la escuela en Bogotá por seis meses como estudiante de intercambio. Fue fantástico. Me gusta el trabajo de Fernando Botero. Creo que sus pinturas expresan bien la sátira, con las personas con características exageradas. Me gusta La Familia Colombiana, la representación de una familia típica es divertida.*



*Por favor, cuéntame sobre el arte de tu cultura. Quiero saber sobre tu vida y de tu familia. Escríbeme pronto.*

*Saludos,*

## **2 Worksheet**

HISPANIC CULTURAL STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE  
ARCHIVES

### **Group F**

#### **Item citations**

Circular Sept 28, 1938 from Helen Baillie, 1938, Kenneth Coldicutt Collection, University of Melbourne Archives, 2003.0111 unit 7, file 7/1.

Posters, c.1937, Kenneth Coldicutt Collection, University of Melbourne Archives, 2003.0111 unit 7, file 7/2.

#### **Contextual note**

The Spanish Relief Committee organised events to raise money and support for the people in Spain suffering from the effects of the civil war. They were pro-Republican in their efforts, organising film screenings of short films made to show the devastation caused by the war, especially military actions carried out by Franco. The committee produced many pamphlets about aspects of the war, and Australia's role in it.

Ken Coldicutt organised screenings of films about the war in Spain as a method of fundraising and spreading awareness. He travelled throughout Australia with a projector – with varying levels of success in his fundraising efforts. Funds collected at the screenings were sent to aid work looking after orphaned children, refugee camps in southern France and purchasing ambulances which were shipped over to the British Medical Aid Unit in the International Brigade.

#### **Activity**

What audiences do you think would attend the film screenings? Consider their political beliefs, employment situation and union membership, involvement or influence from WW1, as well as social justice convictions.

Helen Baillie refers to a previous film screening of films from the military aspect of the Spanish civil war. The circular is about upcoming new films that focus on relief work. What might the differences be (if any) between the two screenings? Consider audiences, message, advertising for the screenings, etc.

Later in the letter it becomes clear that this circular is directed to a particular social institute – who? Why might this institute get an individual invitation and special invites for its members?



Refer now to the posters advertising the films and the screenings of them.

Consider who the audiences are, as well as the purpose of the poster and/or advertising. What, if any, myths or stereotypes are perpetuated in these posters?

What are viewers meant to think and feel when seeing these posters? How does it position them to view the films?