

THE LABYRINTHS

CALL FOR PAPERS

Fourth bi-annual graduate conference of the Department of French, Hispanic and Italian Studies, UBC, Vancouver, Canada.

September 30th - October 1st, 2011

Deadline for submission April 22nd

The labyrinth is a structure consisting of a number of intercommunicating passages arranged in bewildering complexity, through which it is difficult or impossible to find one's way without guidance (The Oxford English Dictionary).

The structure of the labyrinth can be found in many artistic forms from visual arts to literature. Specifically, we would like to investigate how the image or symbolic meaning of the labyrinth is represented in literature and consider the effects of its tangled structure on the articulation of literary discourse. In labyrinthian texts, the reading experience is one of confusion and perplexity; interpretation comes only from walking mazes of words and intersecting meanings. The image of a labyrinth not only encompasses an architectural structure, but also an idea and a state: the secret, concealed at its center, and the condition of wandering and being lost. Furthermore, the boundaries of labyrinth symbolism go beyond the physical embracing metaphysical realms: while ancient cultures saw it as an initiation and mystical pattern, modern perception seems to perceive it as a confrontation to its most profound existential angst.

We encourage questions, positions and ideas exploring approaches to all aspects of literature, theory and linguistics relevant to labyrinth contexts in French, Francophone Hispano-American, Spanish and Italian literatures.

Speakers may present in English, French or Spanish.

Contributions may include:

- Fractal structures, hypertexts, intertextuality and palimpsests
- Literary architectures
- Enigmas, riddles, games
- Urban landscapes, flânerie, wanderlust
- Diaspora, pilgrimage
- Myths
- Memory, mind, dreams, spatial and temporal disorientation
- Order and chaos
- Visionary literature
- Reader's role: how do we *walk the labyrinth*?

Abstracts of not more than 250 words should be directed to fhislabyrinths@gmail.com no later than 22 April 2011.

Please note that there will be a 20\$ participation fee.