

Latin American Poetry: Beyond the Page

Supervisor: [Professor Ben Bollig](#), Faculty of Medieval and Modern Languages

Political and economic circumstances in Latin America often affect the conditions of publishing. The circulation of poetry in printed form tends to be, as Néstor Perlongher put it, limited but intense. Poetry, as Guillermo Boido noted, does not sell; it is, in Cristian Aliaga's phrase, "a tombola with no prizes." Frequent economic crises have hit local publishers, and poetry has been especially vulnerable. In Argentina, to give one example, the national and municipal prizes on which many poets relied to get their works into print have been suspended in recent years.

In Argentina, Brazil, Chile and other countries in the region, poets and poetry publishers have been at the forefront of rethinking the production and circulation of literature in the light of such conditions. Online publication, via blogs, websites, Twitter and Facebook, has been one means of reaching an audience. But there are many others. Possible case studies include poetry "slams" and performances; the links between poetry and stand-up comedy; the online community *Las afinidades electivas/Las elecciones afectivas*; graffiti poetry (e.g. the *Movimiento acción poética*, or Poetic Action Movement); sound or sonic poetry, in particular as practiced by experimental poets and performers in Chile; or literary "centres" focussed on encounters and performance, rather than printed products (e.g. *Espacio Enjambre* in Buenos Aires). One might also consider how online publishing and magazines (e.g. *Hablar de poesía* in Argentina) have encouraged a return to traditional poetic values and forms, including rhyme, rhythm, and metre, for many decades overlooked both by so-called "Neo-baroque" poets of the 1980s and the "Objectivists" of the 1990s and early 2000s.

This DPhil thesis will focus on how poets and publishers create new audiences for their work away from the printed page in contemporary Latin America, by both real and virtual means. The project will require a multi- and interdisciplinary approach, drawing on more traditional literary analysis, as well as Cultural Studies and Critical Theory (Ángel Rama, Beatriz Sarlo, Josefina Ludmer); performance studies (e.g. the work of Nelly Richard or Diana Taylor); and more recent studies of online and cyber culture (e.g. Claire Taylor, Thea Pitman). The focus will not simply be the medium, or changes in content of the work, but on the relationship between means of circulation and literary form. Does circulation off the page – be it orally, in performance, or in the virtual world – change how a poem is put together?

Applicants for this project will need a good undergraduate degree in Modern Languages/literatures (including Spanish/Spanish-American studies) and a Master's degree in a relevant discipline, as well as native or near-native fluency in Spanish.