

April 24, 2012

Argentinian poet to lecture on Latin American women and overcoming violence

An Argentinian author and artist will talk about oppression of women in Latin America at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point on Wednesday, May 2.

Nela Rio, a retired professor of Latin American literature at St. Thomas University, will speak at 7:30 p.m. in Room 221 of the Noel Fine Arts Center, 1800 Portage St. Her presentation, "Silenced Voices and Representations of Violence: Latin American Female Writers and Memory Construction," is part of The Latin America/ Caribbean Speaker Series through the College of Letters and Science. It is open to the public free of charge.

In her lecture, Rio tells vivid stories of female oppression to spread awareness and advance human rights.

"I have chosen to remember the lives of women who have lived under oppressive, dictatorial political regimes, as well as the lives of women and older persons affected by family violence," she said. "Some have been my personal friends; others were encountered during my work in organizations for immigrants and refugees in Canada.

"All of us are makers of history, even those whose passage in life has been deemed insignificant," said Rio. "The construction of memory is also individual and collective. It may be liberating or oppressive, may hide or demonstrate, preserve or destroy."

An internationally recognized author and artist, Rio has published 12 books and contributed to literary journals in Canada, Spain, Slovenia, U.S., Honduras, Brazil and Argentina. Rio is president of the Registro Creativo of the Canadian Association of Hispanists, the founder of the Annual Multicultural Multilingual Poetry Recital (since 2000), and founder of the Outspoken Art/Arte Claro, for the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

On her literary work, Rio said, "My writing is not intended to be a political commentary but to portray the spiritual context from which many of us operate in our commitment to advance human rights."

For more information, contact Anju Reejhsinghani, assistant professor of history at UW-Stevens Point and chair of the Latin American/Caribbean Speaker Series, at 715-346-4122 or areejhsi@uwsp.edu.

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