

Christmas 2019 at ICMAB

Thursday, 19 December

ICMAB-CSIC

Bellaterra



Programme

Sala d'Actes Carles Miravittles + Streaming

- 10:30-11:00** Dreams of Modernity: Scientific Research and Cosmopolitanism in Spain (1900-1939) by Agustí Nieto-Galan, Centre d'Història de la Ciència (CEHIC), UAB
- 11:00-12:00** "El enigma Agustina" Film screening
- 12:00-13:00** Colloquium with Agustí Nieto-Galan about the Scientific Research in Spain before the Civil War and the role of women scientists at that time

Ground Floor

13:00-13:30 Christmas Songs with the ICMAB Choir

First Floor

13:30 Christmas buffet

Abstract

As an introduction to the film, El enigma Agustina (2018), I will briefly describe how, from the early decades of the twentieth century to the end of the Civil War in 1939, the Spanish scientific community developed an ambitious plan of modernisation.

Under the banner of the Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas (JAE), cosmopolitanism and the connection to a European network of scientific expertise and research schools became a crucial target for the academic and political authorities up to the Second Spanish Republic.

The opening in 1932 of the Instituto Nacional de Física y Química - nicknamed 'The Rockefeller' after the funding used to create it - and its leading role in research in the 1930s; university reforms in teaching and experimental labs; the organization international conferences and frequent invitation of foreign luminaries -including several Nobel prizes-, and a systematic plan of research grants abroad (pensionados), materialized that dream of modernity, which almost came true in the 1930s (also for women scientists).

Nevertheless, the dream was dramatically interrupted by General Franco's coup d'état in 1936, the Civil War, and repression that followed, once the new fascist dictatorship was established. Names such as Enrique Moles, María Teresa Toral, Francisco Giral, among others, will help us to assess the lights and shadows of the so called "Silver Age of Spanish Science" in the early decades of the century.



Bio

Agustí Nieto-Galan is Full Professor of History of Science at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB), and ICREA Acadèmia Fellow (2009 & 2018).

Following degrees in both chemistry (URL) and history (UB), he took his PhD in the History of Science at the Universitat de Barcelona (UB) and held postdoctoral positions in the Modern History Faculty, University of Oxford, and the Centre de Recherche en Histoire des Sciences et des Techniques at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie/CNRS, Paris.

He has written widely on the history of chemistry and natural dyestuffs, and the history of the popularization of science (18th-20th centuries). He is a founding member of the international research group "Science and Technology in the European Periphery" (STEP), and former Director of the Centre d'Història de la Ciència (CEHIC) at the UAB.

His last book is: The Politics of Chemistry (Cambridge University Press, 2019)

Film Synopsis

In the course of a PhD Thesis about Blas Cabrera, a PhD researcher finds some old documents and photos in an old trunk at the El Pardo Palace. Among all the documents, there is a doctoral thesis in physics by Agustina Ruiz Dupont, in addition of some letters signed by some of the most famous scientists of the XXth century. Who is this mysterious woman, with no historical references, but that seems so important at the time? The enigma Agustina begins.

The Film "El enigma Agustina" (2018) is an Original Idea of Manuel González & Emilio J. García (IAA-CSIC), with Nerea Cordero, Antonio Leiva, Natalia Ruiz Zelmanovitch and Manuel González as main characters. Produced by Laniakea Management & Communication.

"El enigma Agustina" is funded by the IAA-CSIC and the Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología - Ministerio de Economía y Competitividad (FECYT-MINECO), with the collaboration of the Sociedad Española de Astronomía (SEA), the Consejería de Cultura de la Junta de Andalucía, and the Instituto Andaluz de la Mujer (IAM).



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!