

GALERIA
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The Arthur V. Mauro Institute for Peace & Justice at St. Paul's College presents

2020 BROWN BAG LECTURE SERIES

Friday, February 14 | 12:00 pm - 12:55 pm | Mauro Institute, Room 252, St. Paul's College

The Guatemala Studio: Truth and Reconciliation after 'La Violencia'

A lecture with **Professor Ralph Stern**, Faculty of Architecture, University of Manitoba

In the twentieth century, Guatemala has been defined by a series of military dictatorships punctuated by attempts at social, agrarian, and political reform. In 1954, however, the C.I.A.-assisted coup against the democratically elected and reformist government of Guatemalan President Jacobo Árbenz thrust Guatemala into a downward spiral of ever increasing violence against its civilian population. Plagued by shadowy paramilitary forces acting against union leaders, leftist politicians, and student activists, by the early 1980s La Violencia evolved into a full-blown scorched earth policy undertaken by President Ríos Montt and the Guatemalan military against the Indigenous Maya population. Officially regarded by the Guatemalan and United States governments as a 'counterinsurgency' against leftist guerillas, the impact on the Maya was devastating: the Guatemalan military conducted more than 600 massacres and the total number killed amounted to 200,000 and a further 40,000 'disappeared'. More than eighty percent of the victims were Mayan.



The Guatemala Studio seeks to create a Museum of Truth and Memory as a site in which the phrase *Nunca Mas*, Never Again, can find meaningful architectural expression. Unlike Argentina or Chile, Guatemala has not memorialized its past through architectural form. Working together with faculty and students from Universidad Rafael Landívar, a group of architecture students traveled to Guatemala in October 2019 to engage the peoples, cultures, and issues confronting Guatemala today. This presentation gives an overview of Guatemala's history, and the experiences, endeavors, and hopes that students from the University of Manitoba have for Guatemala's future.



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