



November 2016

**Art of 1973 Chilean Coup on Display at
Guggenheim Library, Monmouth University, NJ**



In observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, Dra. Priscilla Gac-Artigas, of the World Language Department, and her husband, the Chilean writer Gustavo Gac-Artigas, mounted an exhibit in the Guggenheim Library entitled *Memorias—Geography of a Decade: Chile 1973-1983*. The serigraphs, paintings, and photographs in the exhibit had not been seen in almost 35 years, and they had never before been displayed in the United States. They were exhibited in Europe and Northern Africa after the 1973 coup which overthrew Salvador Allende's government in Chile. Dra. Gac-Artigas was delighted with

the support she received from Monmouth's Hispanic Heritage Committee and from the Library in planning for the exhibit. "Monmouth is my community, my home," she said. "It's so important that the exhibit was so welcome."

The exhibit's serigraphs and posters included works by José Balmes, Guillermo Núñez, Gracia Barrios (three Chilean National Art award winners), Joan Miró, Alejandro Marcos, Ernest Pignon-Ernest, Eduardo Berroeta and Jack Ottaviano. The striking photographs were taken at the time of the coup in Chile by photojournalists with the Gamma agency, one of the most renowned press agencies in the world in the seventies.

The last play performed in Chile before the coup, *Libertad, Libertad*, was directed by Gustavo Gac-Artigas, who had responded to a call from poet Pablo Neruda for Chilean artists and intellectuals to oppose Pinochet through their work, by speaking for "the people who have no voice." Because of his opposition, Gac-Artigas was jailed and eventually forced to flee to France. On Monday, October 3rd, he read from his forthcoming novel, *And We Were All Actors: A Century of Light and Shadow*, as part of the *Memorias* exhibit. "We are dinosaurs," he said of those who were in Chile at the time of the coup, "and we don't have a role. The only thing we want is to show people what happened." He hoped those who learn about his experiences will also say, as he does: "Nunca más. Never, never, again."

From Monmouth, Dra. Gac-Artigas hopes the works will travel to the Institute of Cervantes in New York and then to the University of Pennsylvania. She said many Monmouth professors had brought their art and political science students to see the exhibit in the Library, recognizing "the importance of learning this history."