

# Sensory **Worlds**: Iberian **Empires** and The Other **Senses**

Indiana University, Bloomington  
October 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>, 2013

The **symposium** will explore the ways in which Iberian writers crafted images to describe sensory perceptions of Old and New **Worlds**, both real and imagined. While previous research has tended to focus on the visual, invited speakers and panelists are asked to explore the ways in which medieval and early modern **texts** produced, activated, and continue to indulge the other senses—from the standpoint of philosophical and aesthetic insights, as well as modern approaches to cognition.

The sensual realm is crucial to understanding the cultural **encounters** that inspired Iberian authors and thinkers from these periods: from the influential theory of the senses pioneered by the Cordoban philosopher Averroes, to the fearsome sound of Moorish drums pounding in the **ears** of the Cid, to the confluence of textual and plastic art forms that surrounded the Hapsburg dynasty and characterized Golden Age theatre, and the exotic sights and **fragrances** that confronted travelers and captives like Columbus and Cervantes on their ventures across the Atlantic and throughout the Mediterranean. Early modern novelists evoked new **tastes** imported from Asia and the West Indies, and catalogued increasingly urban sound- and smellscapes. They described the effluvial pungency of bustling ports and city centers of **empire**, the odors of tobacco smoke and flayed animal skins, and the booming explosion of siege cannon, while poetically interiorizing the sensorial plane and forging **synesthetic** gateways to transcendence and the ineffable. Discourses of sacramental and purportedly miraculous seeing, hearing, tasting, and **touching** were at the same time central to the effort of affirming the faith and converting religious minorities and indigenous peoples on the Peninsula and in the Americas. The senses were no less instrumental in the confessional coercion and tortuous scrutinies that characterized the Inquisition. This will be a highly productive opportunity to dialogue and collaborate with dynamic colleagues and researchers working in cross-disciplinary areas in the fields of **Iberian** literature and culture.

Keynote speakers: **Josiah Blackmore** (University of Toronto), **Enrique García Santo-Tomás** (University of Michigan) and **Lisa Voigt** (Ohio State University).

Please send one-page **abstract** and two-page **CV** to [iusenses@indiana.edu](mailto:iusenses@indiana.edu) by **March 31, 2013**.  
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*Notifications will be sent out by April 8th, 2013.*