



ABRAHAM LINCOLN BRIGADE ARCHIVES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA) and the Puffin Foundation Announce Second Award for Human Rights Activism

New York — On May 13, 2012, the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives will present the Second ALBA/Puffin Award for Human Rights Activism, in the amount of \$100,000, to Fredy Peccerelli, Executive Director of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation, and Kate Doyle, Senior Analyst of U.S. policy in Latin America at the National Security Archive. The award ceremony will take place at the Museum of the City of New York.

“Both Doyle and Peccerelli are indefatigable defenders of human rights who have played a seminal role in the fight against impunity in Latin America,” said Sebastiaan Faber, Chair of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA).

A determined and creative researcher-activist, Doyle has spent twenty years working tirelessly with Latin American human rights organizations and truth commissions — in Mexico, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras and Peru— to obtain the declassification of U.S. government archives in support of their investigations.

Peccerelli is an innovative forensic anthropologist whose work has been instrumental to the first-ever conviction of Guatemalan military forces for crimes against humanity. As founding director of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (FAFG), Peccerelli leads a team that, over the past fifteen years, has exhumed hundreds of mass graves filled with victims of Guatemala’s civil war.

The ALBA/Puffin Award for Human Rights Activism, one of the largest human rights awards in the world, is granted annually by ALBA and the Puffin Foundation.

“The award is designed,” said Puffin Foundation President Perry Rosenstein, “to give public recognition, support, and encouragement to individuals or groups whose work has an exceptionally positive impact on the advancement and/or defense of human rights. It is intended to help educate students and the general public about the importance of defending human rights against arbitrary powers that violate democratic principles.”

The ALBA/Puffin Award is part of a program connecting the inspiring legacy of the International Brigades — the 40,000 volunteers who helped fight fascism during the Spanish Civil War — to international activist causes of today. Spanish Judge Baltasar Garzón received the first ALBA/Puffin Award in May 2011.

Award Ceremony – Sunday, May 13th at 4:30pm
Museum of the City of New York
1220 Fifth Avenue at 103rd Street
New York, NY 10029

BACKGROUND

Kate Doyle and the National Security Archive

For two decades, Kate Doyle has worked to shed light on the history of state violence and repression in the Americas. Through her research at the National Security Archive, she has obtained the disclosure of thousands of U.S. and Latin American government records from secret archives for human rights investigators, truth commissions, prosecutors and judges. She has testified as an expert witness in human rights hearings, including the 2008 trial of Peru's former President Alberto Fujimori that ended in his conviction for crimes against humanity; the Guatemalan genocide case and the case of the 1989 assassination of the Jesuits in El Salvador, both before Spain's National Court; the 2010 trial of Guatemalan police officials for the disappearance of labor activist Edgar Fernando García in 1984; and multiple hearings before the Inter-American Human Rights Commission on the "death squad dossier," charging the Guatemalan government with the abduction and disappearance of dozens of citizens in the mid-1980s.

Ms. Doyle has edited two of the National Security Archive's collections of declassified records - *Death Squads, Guerrilla War, Covert Operations, and Genocide: Guatemala and the United States, 1954-1999* and *El Salvador: War, Peace and Human Rights, 1980-1994*. Doyle also works with citizens groups throughout the Americas on their campaigns for government transparency, accountability and freedom of information, and has written about the right to information in Latin America and the United States. Recently her work was featured in the award-winning documentary *Granito*, by Pamela Yates and Paco de Onís, which narrates her involvement in the effort to indict former Guatemalan dictator Efraín Ríos Montt for crimes against humanity.

The National Security Archive (<http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/>) was founded in 1985 by journalists and scholars to check rising government secrecy. It combines a unique range of functions: investigative journalism center, research institute on international affairs, library and archive of declassified U.S. documents, leading non-profit user of the U.S. Freedom of Information Act, public interest law firm defending and expanding public access to government information, global advocate of open government, and indexer and publisher of former secrets. The Archive is housed at George Washington University.

Fredy Peccerelli and the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation

A courageous and innovative forensic anthropologist, Fredy Peccerelli has made crucial contributions to the first-ever conviction of Guatemalan military forces for crimes against humanity. As founding director of the Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (FAFG), Peccerelli leads a team that, over the past twenty years, has exhumed hundreds of mass graves of victims from Guatemala's Internal Conflict.

Using cutting-edge scientific tools, he has been able to identify victims of the Guatemalan genocide, gathering evidence for use in court and also providing closure to family members. Peccerelli has also created a national DNA database for the identification of victims of forced disappearance. When Fredy was nine, his own family was forced to flee Guatemala for the Bronx, after his father received death threats.

In 1999 Peccerelli was named by Time Magazine and CNN as one of the fifty Latin American Leaders for the New Millennium. In 2006 he was the recipient of the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA)'s Human Rights Award and in 2008 he received the Heinz R. Pagels Human Rights of Scientists Award from the New York Academy of Sciences for his work. Like Kate Doyle, Peccerelli's work was also featured in the award-winning documentary *Granito*, by Pamela Yates and Paco de Onís, which narrates his involvement as a forensic expert in the efforts to seek justice for crimes against humanity.

The Guatemalan Forensic Anthropology Foundation (www.fafg.org) is an autonomous, non-profit, technical and scientific NGO. Its aim is to strengthen the Guatemalan justice system and respect for human rights by gathering evidence, investigating, documenting, and raising awareness about past instances of human rights violations, particularly massacres and extrajudicial killings that occurred during Guatemala's 36- year-long Internal Armed Conflict. Its main tools in pursuing this goal are the application of forensic anthropology, forensic archaeology and forensic genetic (DNA) techniques in exhumations of clandestine mass graves and the analysis of the remains of victims from the Internal Conflict.

The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA)

During the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) nearly 40,000 men and women from 52 countries, including 2,800 Americans, traveled to Spain to join the International Brigades to help fight fascism. The U.S. volunteers came to be known collectively as the Abraham Lincoln Brigade. Founded in 1979, The Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives (ALBA) is a non-profit educational organization that promotes public awareness, research and discussion related to that war and its historical, political, artistic and biographical significance. ALBA has also preserved and cataloged the letters, pamphlets, posters, writings and photographs of the period. The Archives are housed at New York University's Tamiment Library and are used by scholars and students from all over the world. ALBA also presents cultural and educational programs for high school teachers, working to preserve the legacy of progressive activism of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade as an inspiration for present and future generations.

The Puffin Foundation

Since it was founded in 1983, the Puffin Foundation Ltd. has sought to open the doors of artistic expression by providing grants to artists and art organizations who are often excluded from mainstream opportunities due to their race, gender, or social philosophy. The Puffin, a species whose nesting sites were endangered by encroaching civilization, were encouraged to return to their native habitats through the constructive efforts of a concerned citizenry. The Foundation has adopted the name Puffin as a metaphor for how it perceives its mission, which is to ensure that the arts continue to grow and enrich our lives. In so doing it has joined with other concerned groups and individuals toward achieving that goal. The Puffin Foundation is also a long-standing supporter of ALBA's educational mission.