



Almudena Ramirez-Pantabella at the International Writing Program



Spanish playwright, screenwriter and director Almudena Ramirez-Pantabella joins The International Writing Program at the University of Iowa.

Thanks to the collaboration between the International Writing Program and the Cultural Office of the Embassy of Spain in Washington D.C., Spanish playwright, screenwriter and director Almudena Ramirez-Pantabella has joined the [IWP Fall Residency](#) in 2022.

The [International Writing Program](#) (IWP) is a conduit for the world's literatures, connecting well-established writers from around the globe, bringing international literature into classrooms, introducing American writers to other cultures through reading tours, and serving as a clearinghouse for literary news and a wealth of archival and pedagogical materials. Since 1967, over 1500 writers from more than 150 countries have been in residence at the University of Iowa.

The Residency, which usually runs from late August to mid-November, is designed for established and emerging creative writers —poets, fiction writers, dramatists, and nonfiction writers. The Residency provides writers with time, in a setting congenial to their efforts, for the production of literary work. It also introduces them to the social and cultural fabrics of the United States, enables them to take part in American university life, and creates opportunities for them to contribute to literature courses both at the University of Iowa and across the country.

As part of the residency, Almudena Ramirez-Pantabella engaged in multiple activities to share and display her work and ideas, participating in various workshops and [events](#) in Iowa City.

LITERATURE
IOWA CITY

Sun, August 21–
Mon, October 31, 2022

Venue

International Writing Program, The University of Iowa, 100 Shambaugh House, Iowa City, IA 52242-2020

[View map](#)

Credits

Organized by The International Writing Program at The University of Iowa with the collaboration of the Cultural Office of the Embassy of Spain in Washington, D.C.



ABOUT ALMUDENA RAMIREZ-PANTANELLA

Born in Madrid in 1988, Almudena Ramirez-Pantanello is a Fellow of the Royal Academy of Spain in Rome in 2021-2022. She also takes part in several artist-in-residence programs such as the International Writing Program of Iowa City, the Royal Court Theatre of London, or French national playwriting centre CNRS La Chartreuse. She received the Spanish National Prize Calderón de la Barca for her play *Los amos del mundo*. Her plays have been translated and published in English, German and Italian, and her theatre works have been performed in Spain, England and South America.

Her television screenwriting credits include Netflix's most successful non-English language show, *La casa de papel*, streamed globally as *Money Heist*. She has been working as a screenwriter for other international cinema and TV productions, and is preparing the direction of her first feature film. She combines her artistic career with advanced doctoral study in the department of Literature at Complutense University and with that of teaching at University Francisco de Vitoria, WorkInProgress and Escuela de Escritores de Madrid.

It is not the first time I participate in this type of residency in which a group of artists are invited to live together for a period of time and within the framework of a program of activities. However the IWP program of the University of Iowa is different insofar as the setting in which it develops is one of unparalleled cultural richness. This program brings together no less than thirty writers whose cultures are completely different from each other. The exchange is invaluable in all respects. Artistic references, rhythms and sounds of our different languages and writings, culinary recipes and literary genres have been exchanged. The latter has been a truly positive aspect for me at this moment. The dramaturgy that interests me most is that hybrid one that escapes –without losing its theatricality– from the classic dramatic mode often just associated with dialogue. That is why being able to discover these different poetic modes from my fellow poets and novelists, and how they are occurring in their countries, has been extremely important. It will have an impact in my dramaturgy. It has also helped me explore poetry and narrative. In fact, during the residency I have written a short story that I trust will be part of my first collection of stories.

There have been countless activities in which we have participated. So many that sometimes we joked that we did everything except writing. There is no writer who is not jealous of their writing time. Jokes aside, we have been able to spend time writing and reading. Iowa City is a UNESCO Literary City. The University Libraries gives access to countless resources. The discovery of authors who have created the residency – Hualing Nieh and Paul Engle – or who have passed through it in previous years has been enriching. Among them, the program has hosted several Nobel Prize-winning writers.



At the Prairie Lights Bookstore I had the opportunity to read some scenes from two of my works translated into English, *Masters of the universe* and *Regurgitate*. Global Express theater group performed a dramatized reading of two of my other works, certainly less canonical, *Self-portrait* and *Operating theatre*. To my surprise, great interest aroused. At both the University of Iowa and Coe College I presented samples of my writing in Spanish. In addition, a colloquium took place about my work as a screenwriter, and specifically about my work as a screenwriter in *La casa de papel*. I also gave a screenplay workshop. Thanks to the students, it turned out fruitful and amazingly creative. The participation in the translation workshop was also extremely gratifying. One of my last projects in theater –in which the poetic mode has a relevant weight– was translated. The translation has resulted in the participation in a bilingual collection that includes poetry by the authors of the residency, an initiative organized by the Mexican poet David Anuar. This is just the first of many collaborations with my fellow authors.

I can only thank the IWP organizers for their hospitality: Christopher Merrill, Natasa Durovicova, Hugh Ferrer, Shelly Criswell, Aidan Managolid and all other members of IWP. I would also like to thank the University professors, among whom I highlight Ana Merino, who has accompanied me with care and dedication throughout my time in Iowa. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the Cultural Office of the Embassy of Spain in the U.S. for organizing this type of residencies where one not only builds a career but grows personally.

—Almudena Ramirez-Pantarella