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CONTACT: Melissa Ulbricht, Center for the Humanities, (608) 263-3412, maulbricht@wisc.edu

SUZANNE JILL LEVINE, RENOWNED SPANISH TRANSLATOR, TALKS ABOUT REVOLUTIONARY QUEER ARGENTINE WRITER, MANUEL PUIG

MADISON, Wis. (Feb. 20th, 2020) – At 24 high schools across the state, students have been studying renowned writer Manuel Puig’s 1976 novel, Kiss of the Spider Woman. This revolutionary story focuses on two prisoners who form a strong bond in their cell just prior to the start of Argentina’s Dirty War. On April 8, 2020, more than 1,000 students will convene to discuss Puig’s novel at the 16th annual Great World Texts in Wisconsin student conference at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, along with celebrated academic, Suzanne Jill Levine.

The Great World Texts in Wisconsin program reaches students and teachers in dozens of school districts throughout the state of Wisconsin. Drawing from world literature throughout the ages, the program’s selection of texts reflects a capacious understanding of the idea of the “literary classic.” In previous years, faculty, teachers, and students have collaborated on texts associated with 16th century China, ancient Greece, and contemporary India. Each year, participating students read and discuss one such work in their classrooms and create projects which connect the book to their own interests.

This year, students will engage with the important and seemingly modern-day questions invited by Kiss of the Spider Woman. What are our individual freedoms during times of national crisis? How do we create and sustain collective memory? What role do movies and art play in times of political turmoil? Students will use the Great World Texts program as a meaningful way to engage with the powerful ideas that will shape the future of Wisconsin.

Students from the 24 participating Wisconsin schools will convene at the annual Great World Texts student conference at UW-Madison on April 8, 2020. They will have an opportunity to share their work with other schools and students, as well as meet and hear from a leading academic, Suzanne Jill Levine, Manuel Puig’s biographer and the author of the groundbreaking book, The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction.
The Great World Texts program is an initiative of the University of Wisconsin-Madison Center for the Humanities. Support for this year’s program comes from A.W. Mellon Foundation, the Evjue Foundation, UW-Madison Libraries, the Department of English, the Anonymous Fund of the College of Letters & Science, and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Further information about Great World Texts in Wisconsin can be found at humanities.wisc.edu/great-world-texts.

Applications for next year’s conference will open in April, 2020.