In the last years, Havana, capital of socialist Cuba, has become famous all over the world for the morbid charm of its flaking façades. Its beauty resides in the poetry of its ruins. The ruins of Havana are far less poetic for the people who inhabit them. Houses frequently collapse causing fatalities. The decay of this city and its living quarters is a continual source of both danger and shame for its inhabitants. The film portrays five persons in Havana who reside in buildings at various states of decay. They all try to escape from a life which risks to become ruined by the fact of inhabiting a ruin.

Habana – Arte Nuevo de Hacer Ruinas tells the stories of people who are waiting every day to be buried by the buildings they are living in. They suffer from living in ruins but nonetheless refuse to move out. Anywhere else but in Cuba, these buildings would have long ago been renovated, torn down, or turned into museums. Through this, the film presents the ambivalent admixture of magic and destruction. At the same time it captures the final moments of these buildings before they’re renovated – or simply collapse altogether.

March 10, 2010
3:30 pm
341 Eggers Hall

Presented by Myrna García-Calderón
Assistant Professor, Department of Languages, Literatures, and Linguistics

Refreshments will be served.