|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **About you** | **[Salutation]** | Justus | [Middle name] | Nieland |
| [Enter your biography] | | | |
| Michigan State University | | | |

|  |
| --- |
| **Your article** |
| Los Olvidados (1950) |
| **[Enter any *variant forms* of your headword – OPTIONAL]** |
| Directed by the great Spanish surrealist Luis Buñuel, *Los Olvidados (The Young and the Damned)*, is an ironic pseudo-documentary about the adolescent lives of Mexico City’s slum-dwellers, and the first great film of Buñuel’s Mexican period. In the late 30s and 40s, Buñuel was a political exile from General Franco’s fascist Spain. Under these circumstances, the radical artist became a commercially successful director in the Mexican film industry, where he directed a series of subversive films that married formal experimentation with popular appeal, generating a kind of vernacular modernism. *Los Olvidados* tracks the short, brutal life of young Pedro, preyed upon by a malevolent tough named Jaibo, but more importantly, victimized by Mexico’s explosive state-sponsored modernization schemes under President Miguel Alemán. Even as cosmopolitan Mexico City dreams of progress and modernization, young citizens like Pedro and Jaibo are systematically dehumanized and discarded, left without futures in a present marked by irrationality, violence, and abjection. A Mexican film noir, *Los Olvidados* includes a celebrated dream sequence about Pedro’s privation, but its artistic achievement lies in its cynical manipulation of documentary, neorealist, and melodramatic codes. Opting for disorientation and strategic cruelty, *Los Olvidados* disallows spectatorial sympathy, or catharsis, and liberal heart-warming. |
| Directed by the great Spanish surrealist Luis Buñuel, *Los Olvidados (The Young and the Damned)*, is an ironic pseudo-documentary about the adolescent lives of Mexico City’s slum-dwellers, and the first great film of Buñuel’s Mexican period. Having established his avant-garde credentials in his first two surrealist masterpieces, *Un chien andalou* (1929) *and L’Âge d’or* (1930), Buñuel, in the late 30s and 40s, was a political exile from General Franco’s fascist Spain. Under these circumstances, the radical artist became a commercially successful director in the Mexican film industry, where he directed a series of subversive films that married formal experimentation with popular appeal, generating a kind of vernacular modernism. Inspired by the authenticity of Vittorio De Sica’s neorealist study of postwar Italy’s impoverished, scrappy youth, *Sciuscià (Shoeshine)(*1946), Bunuel’s producer pitched *Los Olvidados* as a way of capitalizing on a postwar vogue for melodramatic films about poor, loveable urchins—a trend also evident in the Mexico’s own *cine de arrabal* (slum film), sentimental pictures about urban destitution. No feel-good film about the noble, happy poor, *Los Olvidados* instead tracks the short, brutal life of young Pedro, preyed upon by a malevolent tough named Jaibo, but more importantly, victimized by Mexico’s explosive state-sponsored modernization schemes under President Miguel Alemán. Even as cosmopolitan Mexico City dreams of progress and modernization, young citizens like Pedro and Jaibo are systematically dehumanized and discarded, left without futures in a present marked by irrationality, violence, and abjection. A Mexican film noir, *Los Olvidados* includes a celebrated dream sequence about Pedro’s privation, but its artistic achievement lies in its cynical manipulation of documentary, neorealist, and melodramatic codes. Opting for disorientation and strategic cruelty, Los Olvidados disallows spectatorial sympathy, or catharsis, and liberal heart-warming. |
| Further reading:  (Acevedo-Muñoz)  (Buñuel)  (Fay and Justus)  (Polizzotti) |