



REFLECTIONS FROM 57th ANNUAL CONFERENCE
Aguascalientes, Mexico
By Ricardo López-León November 2025



We concluded the 57th Annual Conference of the International Visual Literacy Association in Aguascalientes with great joy and with the satisfaction of having held a truly successful event. Thanks to the participation and enthusiasm of all attendees, the conference became a space for reflection, dialogue, and the exchange of ideas, as well as an opportunity to encounter diverse perspectives and strengthen our sense of community, inspired by the city of Aguascalientes and the festivities surrounding the Day of the Dead.

We were delighted to welcome many newcomers who joined the activities and conversations with openness and enthusiasm. The papers presented demonstrated the high academic quality that has always characterized the Association. Some of them examined visual manifestations that not only prompted us to reflect on the role of visual literacy within cultural practices, but also helped us understand the importance of images in shaping a sense of community. Through the presentations of various colleagues, we were introduced to tools that can be of great value both pedagogically and in research practice. The exchanges within our community fostered dialogue among established scholars, early-career researchers, PhD students, and even undergraduate students.

Our keynote of the day focused on a particularly interesting pedagogical technique: the use of “making-of” materials in documentary filmmaking to develop writing, management, and directing skills in film students. Working with behind-the-scenes processes rather than final outputs invites students into a mode of observation and reflection that immerses them in a unique learning experience.

The social component of the conference was equally important. Beyond offering a moment for connection, it allowed us to get to know one another better, to share our questions and concerns, and to discover different ways of seeing and being. We had the chance to experience a small piece of Mexican culture: its cuisine, its joy, and its tradition. The José Guadalupe Posada Museum opened a window into the life and work of the artist who created the first calaveras at the beginning of the 20th century, figures that would later become a defining part of the visual identity of an entire nation. We also visited the Panteón de Dolores, located in the town of Jesús María, where we were able to experience firsthand the tradition of visiting those who are no longer with us. We breathed in the scent of flowers, listened to the music, and witnessed the faith that surrounds this celebration.

After three days of intense work, we shared our experiences during an evening dinner in which we enjoyed ourselves, smiled, and embraced, making the promise to meet again soon. Thank you to everyone who made this possible. Charleston, here we come.