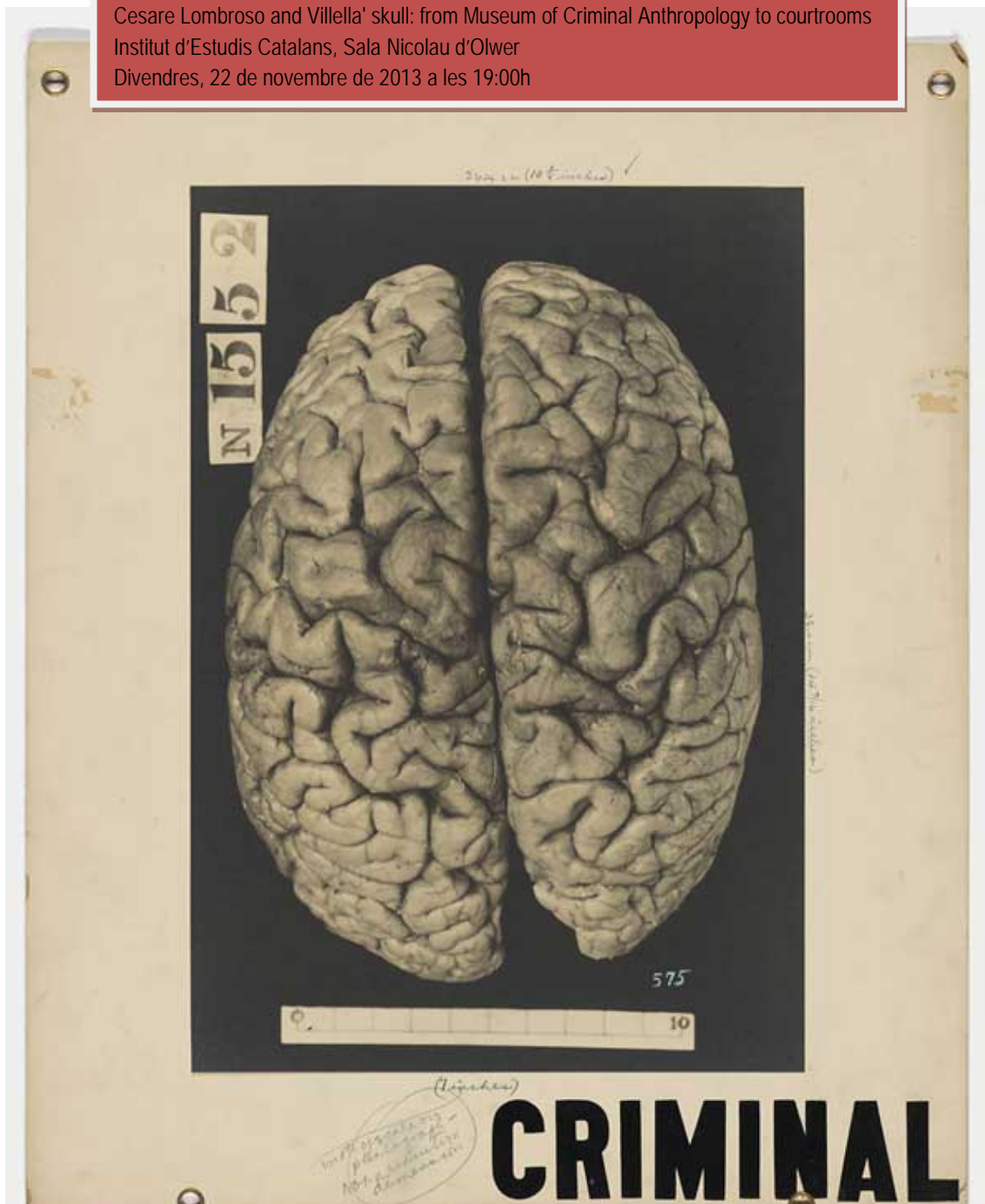


Emilia Musumeci (Università di Catania)

Cesare Lombroso and Vilella' skull: from Museum of Criminal Anthropology to courtrooms

Institut d'Estudis Catalans, Sala Nicolau d'Olwer

Divendres, 22 de novembre de 2013 a les 19:00h



The starting point of this talk is the story of Cesare Lombroso's Museum in Turin with a particular focus on the most famous and controversial 'piece' kept there: the Calabrian brigand Vilella's skull. This is also known as 'the totem, the fetish of Criminal Anthropology' and it has been object of many protests (and even of juridical trials) aimed at obtaining the immediate closure of the museum and the restitution of "the skulls of the Southern brigands, victims of the ferocity of the Savoy". Retracing this story could be useful in order to analyse not only the relationship between Lombroso's theory of 'born criminal' and the objects kept in his Museum but also to understand why lombrosian work is still so debated. The Vilella's case is indeed important, on the one hand, to deal with the thorny issue of the displaying of human remains in the museums, and on the other hand, to investigate the real legacy of biological theories of crime, currently 'rediscovered' by neuroscientists in courtrooms.

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