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## **The Smithsonian Latino Center and Fundación Carso Sign Memorandum of Understanding**

The Smithsonian Latino Center has signed a memorandum of understanding with Fundación Carso, the philanthropic arm of Grupo Carso, which operates the Museo Soumaya. Grupo Carso is a group of companies owned and managed by Mexican entrepreneur Carlos Slim. Under the MOU, the Smithsonian Latino Center and Fundación Carso will develop a series of exhibitions, public programs, educational materials and other activities to highlight Latino culture and heritage.

This collaboration is the first of its kind between Fundación Carso and a U.S. cultural institution. The Smithsonian and Fundación Carso have agreed to work together to obtain funding to support their programs from a number of sources, including those affiliated with Grupo Carso.

The MOU may result in some of the following initiatives and activities:

- Public programs commemorating the 200th anniversary of Mexican and Latin American independence in 2010
- The development of a Latino “virtual museum” to highlight the Smithsonian’s Latino and Latin American collections, research and programs
- The development of bilingual educational resources on Latin American and U.S. Latino art and culture
- Traveling exhibitions regarding Latino and Latin American art, culture and history
- Fellowships, internships for U.S. Latino and Latin American scholars
- Professional development programs for young artists

In addition, the Smithsonian Latino Center and Museo Soumaya have agreed to place special emphasis on creating opportunities for distance learning, such as live broadcasts of concerts, lectures related to exhibitions, or other public programs that can be transmitted via podcast or satellite in museum lecture halls or classrooms. The collaboration also will include efforts to ensure the mutual exchange of information via newsletters, Web sites and other mediums.

The Smithsonian Latino Center and Museo Soumaya previously collaborated in fall 2006 on the exhibition “Myth, Mortals and Immortality: Works from Museo Soumaya de México,” which highlighted major themes in Mexican culture, spirituality and history. The exhibition featured works by some of Mexico’s renowned artists, such as Diego Rivera, Rufino Tamayo, José Agustín Arrieta, Juan Soriano and

David Alfaro Siqueiros, and was seen by more than 35,000 visitors during the seven weeks it was on view at the Smithsonian. Columba Bush, a member of the Smithsonian Latino Center’s National Latino Advisory Council facilitated the relationship with Fundación Carso.

“The Smithsonian Latino Center and Museo Soumaya share the belief that art—in all of its mediums—is an important tool in fostering understanding between cultures,” said Pilar O’Leary, director of the Smithsonian Latino Center. “We are excited to be taking this important step in strengthening our partnership with Museo Soumaya to accomplish our mutual goal of ensuring that Latino contributions to art, culture and history are fully highlighted and appreciated across the Americas.”

“We believe that this opportunity to work with the Smithsonian Institution to strengthen knowledge of Latino culture and heritage through public programs, exhibitions and educational opportunities is an important one,” said Carlos Slim, president of the board of directors of Fundación Carso. “It is a serious commitment on our part and we are grateful for the confidence and goodwill demonstrated by the Smithsonian to work with our foundation on this initiative with the Smithsonian Latino Center.”

“For Fundación Carso, this MOU with the Smithsonian Latino Center represents a unique opportunity for our organization to expand its public outreach; to create a forum for the exchange of ideas regarding contemporary Latin American and U.S Latino society; and most importantly, increase awareness of and pride in Latino identity through art, culture and the preservation of folkloric traditions,” said Alfonso Miranda Márquez, director of Museo Soumaya.

The Smithsonian Latino Center is dedicated to ensuring that Latino contributions to art, science and the humanities are highlighted, understood and advanced through the development and support of public programs, scholarly research, museum collections and educational opportunities at the Smithsonian Institution and its affiliated organizations across the United States and internationally. For more information, visit <http://latino.si.edu>.

Museo Soumaya is a nonprofit cultural institution located in Mexico City that aims to collect, research, preserve and exhibit Latin American, Mexican and European art. Its mission is to promote knowledge and enjoyment of art through permanent and temporary exhibitions, publications, conferences, film cycles and other outreach programs. The museum’s collection includes European masters from the 15th century to the 18th century, the second largest Rodin collection outside of France and modern works by artists, such as Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, David Alfaro Siqueiros and Diego Rivera.

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