



Media only: Isabel Lara (202) 633-0972 or larai@si.edu

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“Mexico at the Smithsonian” Program Series Highlights Cultural Impact of Mexicans and Mexican Americans

The Smithsonian Latino Center in partnership with the Mexican Cultural Institute and other organizations will offer a series of public programs in Washington, D.C., that highlight different aspects of Mexican and Mexican American culture and heritage. More than 20 programs—exhibitions, concerts, film screenings and lectures at various Smithsonian museums, the Mexican Cultural Institute and other venues—will showcase the impact of Mexican cultural heritage in the United States and internationally. The program series continues the Smithsonian Latino Center’s tradition of showcasing a different Latin American country or culture each year.

The “Mexico at the Smithsonian” series features film screenings such as “Lalo Guerrero: The Original Chicano” and “Bella,” including a weekend of film screenings with directors Alfonso Cuarón, Alejandro González Iñárritu and Guillermo del Toro. Among the exhibitions are “Frida Kahlo: Public Image, Private Life, A Selection of Photographs and Letters” at the National Museum of the Women in the Arts; “Mexican Treasures of the Smithsonian,” a survey of Mexican and Mexican American art and objects from various Smithsonian collections; “Lola Álvarez Bravo,” an exhibition of some of the photographer’s most striking work; and a display of Mexican artifacts from the collections of the Fomento Cultural Banamex.

The series will reach its high point Sept. 5, with the Smithsonian Latino Center’s *Smithsonian Con Sabor!* gala, which will celebrate the center’s 10th anniversary and highlight Mexican heritage, at the National Museum of the American Indian. The gala—under the patronage of Mexican Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan and chaired by former First Lady of Florida Columba Bush— will include a Legacy Awards ceremony during which the center will honor prominent individuals of Mexican descent who have made a significant impact on American culture.

“We are proud to work with the Mexican Cultural Institute on this ambitious initiative to highlight Mexico’s rich heritage, innovative cultural expressions and deep influence in the United States,” said Pilar O’Leary, director of the Smithsonian Latino Center. “Through this comprehensive programming series, which features both traditional and contemporary aspects of Mexican and

Mexican American culture, the Smithsonian Latino Center hopes to increase awareness and understanding of Mexican heritage and identity.”

“This is a great opportunity for the Smithsonian to showcase the many treasures from Mexico that it holds in its collections, as well as the contributions of Mexicans and Mexican Americans to the culture of the United States,” said Mexican Ambassador Arturo Sarukhan. “The numerous events and exhibitions that will be inaugurated in the following months demonstrate the synergies that can be captured when Mexican and American institutions work together.”

The “Mexico at the Smithsonian” program series and gala are made possible by Poder Magazine, CONACULTA, The Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Banamex, Goya Foods, Anheuser-Busch Companies and other sponsors.

The Mexican Cultural Institute is the cultural branch of the Mexican Embassy and a nonprofit organization that promotes Mexican culture in the United States.

The Smithsonian Latino Center is dedicated to ensuring that Latino contributions to arts, sciences 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.

For more information about the “Mexico at the Smithsonian” program series and venue sites, as well as about the Smithsonian Latino Center, the public may visit <http://latino.si.edu>. For general Smithsonian information, the public may call (202) 633-1000 or TTY (202) 633-5285.

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