



**Media only:** Danny López (202) 633-0804 [lopezd@si.edu](mailto:lopezd@si.edu)

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## **Smithsonian Hosts Symposium Exploring Indigenous Roots of Caribbean Culture** *Beyond Extinction: Consciousness of Taíno and Caribbean Indigeneity*

The Smithsonian Latino Center will host a symposium on the survival of Taíno language, identity and material culture in contemporary Caribbean consciousness Friday, Aug. 26, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. in Room 4018 on the fourth level of the National Museum of the American Indian. Panelists include archeologist Osvaldo García-Goyco, historian Alejandro Hartmann Matos, biologist Juan Carlos Martínez Cruzado and architect Cristian Martínez Villanueva. Roberto Borrero, president, United Confederation of Taíno People, will serve as respondent. José Barreiro, assistant director for research at the National Museum of the American Indian, will moderate.

This symposium is part of the Taíno Legacy Project that explores the culture, history and legacy of the Native peoples of the Caribbean islands. In particular, this project will focus on the Taíno, the inhabitants of Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and the Bahamas, who both greeted—then resisted—Columbus and his men during the first decades of Spanish colonization in the Americas.

This project reflects one of the most important cultural encounters in world history. It provides perspectives on Taíno civilization before European contact using the Smithsonian’s archeological collections, while demonstrating the enduring presence of a “consciousness of Taíno” on the islands—from domestic architecture, agriculture and spirituality to art, language and biology. “The term, extinction, as applied to a culture and its human community, is always troublesome,” said Barreiro. “There is a persistent exuberance about ‘Taíno,’ in the islands and in their diasporic communities. This is what we are exploring.”

This project is a multiyear collaboration between the Smithsonian Latino Center, the National Museum of the American Indian, the National Museum of Natural History and the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. An exhibition and public program series on Taíno Legacy is currently under development in collaboration with scholars from the United States and the Caribbean. For information call (202) 633-0925 or visit [www.latino.si.edu](http://www.latino.si.edu).

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