Our Journeys/Our Stories: Portraits of Latino Achievement

Nuestros caminos/Nuestras historias: Retratos del logro latino

Smithsonian Institution
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An exhibition developed by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives and organized for travel by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service. The exhibition, its national tour, and related programs are made possible by Ford Motor Company Fund.

Stories of Latino achievement, self-discovery, and roots and traditions are celebrated in a new bilingual photography exhibition developed by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives (SCLI) and circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES). Our Journeys / Our Stories: Portraits of Latino Achievement explores the diversity of the Latino experience in the United States through stories and portraits of men and women who have led extraordinary lives.

The exhibition is an illustrated anthology of inspirational narratives that reveal the depth and breadth of Latino contributions to the United States. Twenty-five newly commissioned portraits depict Nobel laureates, scientists, artists, athletes, entrepreneurs, politicians, community activists, and people from all walks of life. An advisory committee made up of historians, curators, and people known for their work in the Latino community selected these 25 remarkable stories to convey a broader picture of Latino achievement.

Ricardo Viera, a scholar and curator of Latino and Latin American contemporary art and photography, challenged three of today’s most exciting photographers to capture the featured individuals. Through powerful color photographs, Celia Alvarez Muñoz, Héctor Méndez-Caratini, and Luis Mallo reveal their subjects’ character within the context of his or her own “place.”

Accompanying the portraits are biographical highlights and excerpts from recent oral history interviews conducted by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives and SITES. These compelling first-person narratives engage visitors as they learn, for example, how the featured Latinos pursued their goals, were inspired by their forebears, or mentored others.

Contextual panels reinforce Latino contributions to society over generations by recognizing individuals who inspired the profiled Latinos as well as the next generation of “people to watch.” American labor leader and activist Dolores Huerta, for example, is accompanied by photographs and text about César Chávez (1927–1993) and today’s United Farm Workers’ leadership.

A thoughtful overview of Latino achievement and influence in the United States is contained in an introductory text panel by Nicolás Kanellos, the University of Houston’s Brown Foundation Professor of Hispanic Literature and founding director of Arte Público Press, the nation’s oldest and most esteemed Hispanic publishing house. Woven throughout the exhibition are dichos, traditional sayings or proverbs that pass knowledge, experience, and common values down through generations in the Latino community.

Our Journeys / Our Stories opens at the Smithsonian Institution in February 2004 before beginning its nationwide tour in May 2004. The exhibition will be accompanied by a public programming component that includes a website, brochure, family activity guide, teacher’s guide, and poster sets for schools. Host venues are encouraged to use their own community resources to complement the presentation.
Author of *The House on Mango Street*, *My Wicked Wicked Ways*, and the recent *Caramelo*, Sandra Cisneros has emerged as one of the most influential Latina authors of our time. Vivid and lively, her writings explore feminism, religion, poverty, and oppression in mainstream society through the prism of Latino culture.

Inspired to pursue medicine as a result of her own childhood health condition, Antonia Novello has been a vocal health advocate for women, children, and minorities. The first female and first Hispanic U.S. Surgeon General, Novello has assumed leadership roles at the National Institutes of Health and UNICEF. She is currently commissioner of the New York State Department of Health.

“I always say that echoes are not well heard... our chances of survival cannot be good if we do not unite as one [Latino] voice.”

Antonia C. Novello

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Photo by Celia Alvarez Muñoz

Photo by Luis Mallo
Six-time Emmy Award-winner John Quiñones is a correspondent for ABC News’ 20/20 and host of the network’s 20/20 Downtown. During his three-decade career, Quiñones has traveled the globe, covering stories as diverse as the 1980 Cuban boat lift, the Albanian refugee crisis, and the Congo’s threatened rainforests.

Photo by Luis Mallo

Raised in a farm community in California’s San Joaquin Valley, Dolores Huerta learned about community activism from her mother, a local businesswoman. After a brief stint teaching, Huerta turned to social services and civil rights advocacy, believing she could do more for her students by helping their parents. During the 1960s, she co-founded with César Chávez the United Farm Workers of America. A tireless advocate for migrant workers throughout her career, Huerta continues to work for social change and justice by empowering others to help themselves.

“¡Sí, se puede! ¡Sí, se puede! ¡Sí, se puede!”
We can do it! We can do it! We can do it!

Photo by Celia Alvarez Muñoz

John Quiñones
born San Antonio, Texas
Television news correspondent

Dolores Huerta
born Dawson, New Mexico
Labor leader and social activist
Tania León
born Havana, Cuba
Composer, conductor, educator, advisor to arts organizations

Tania León is an accomplished conductor and composer of Scourge of Hyacinths, Desde . . . , Drummin; and other orchestral works honored by the American Academy of Arts and Letters, Chamber Music America, and the National Endowment for the Arts, among others. A New York City resident since 1967, León is a founding member of the Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Photo by Luis Mallo

Juan Romagoza Arce, M.D.
born Usulután, El Salvador
Internist and public health official

A torture survivor and political refugee from El Salvador, Juan Romagoza continues his work on behalf of the poor as executive director of La Clínica del Pueblo in Washington, D.C. His holistic approach to diagnosis and treatment acknowledges the social, environmental, and economic factors influencing his patients’ health.

Photo by Héctor Méndez-Caratini

Ellen Ochoa
born Los Angeles, California
Astronaut, physicist, inventor

Ellen Ochoa achieved recognition as a three-time patent holder for optical devices before becoming the first Hispanic female astronaut. Raised in a close-knit, single-parent household, Ochoa was encouraged by her mother to excel academically, eventually earning undergraduate and graduate degrees in physics and electrical engineering.

Photo by Héctor Méndez-Caratini

Cristina García
born Havana, Cuba
Author and former journalist

Author of Dreaming in Cuban and The Agüero Sisters, Cristina García emigrated with her family from Cuba to New York City in 1960, in the wake of Castro’s rise to power. She explores Cuban cultural identity by coming to terms with her own personal experience of displacement and loss of cultural memory.

Photo by Celia Alvarez Muñoz
The Garzas are all about strong family bonds and a commitment to higher education. When they started their family, José María and Eva C. Garza decided to make college graduations a family tradition. Three generations of Garzas and dozens of degrees later, education remains a family priority.

Photo by Celia Alvarez Muñoz

Derek Parra started skating at a local roller rink, becoming a successful inline skater before making the transition to ice skating. At the 2002 Winter Olympics, Parra set the world record in the 1,500-meter speed skating competition, making him the first Mexican-American to win a gold medal in the Winter Olympics.

Photo by Luis Mallo

“The destination is so much more rewarding when you can look back and reflect on everything you’ve done to get there.”

Derek Parra

Garza Family

various birthdates and birthplaces throughout Texas

South Texas family committed to higher education

Derek Parra

born San Bernadino, California

Olympic gold and silver medal speed skater

Olympic gold and silver medal speed skater
Joseph A. Unanue
born Brooklyn, New York
Businessman and philanthropist

The son of Spanish immigrants, Joseph Unanue is the president and CEO of Goya Foods, Inc. Since Unanue’s parents established Goya in 1936, the company has grown to become the largest Hispanic-owned food company in the United States. Unanue also supports scores of civic, cultural, athletic, and religious organizations.

Photo by Luis Mallo

Pepón Osorio
born Santurce, Puerto Rico
Installation artist, community arts educator, facilitator

After moving to New York in 1975, Pepón Osorio began his exploration of conceptual art by engaging in a variety of activities such as painting, stage design, social work, and community activism. Since then, he has been refining his particular style of installation art, mixing disparate aspects of his Puerto Rican and New York experience. Steeped in community, his work centers around social justice, cultural history, and identity issues.

Photo by Héctor Méndez-Caratini

“My heart is where humanity is. I think I am more of a humanist than anything else.”
Pepón Osorio
Exhibition Collaborators

Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives
The Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives, in collaboration with other Smithsonian units as well as national cultural and educational organizations, disseminates knowledge and fosters understanding of the contributions of U.S. Latinos in the visual and performing arts, literature, science, history, and culture. In addition to providing a forum for national dialogue among individuals, cultural organizations, and institutions, the Center sponsors exhibitions, performances, public lectures, educational K-12 programs, national symposia and seminars, printed and electronic publications, and a sophisticated electronic research resource network that highlights the contributions of Latinos. For more information, visit latino.si.edu.

Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service
The Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES) has been sharing the wealth of Smithsonian collections and research programs with millions of people outside Washington, D.C., for more than 50 years. One of the Smithsonian’s four national outreach programs, SITES connects Americans to their shared cultural heritage through a wide range of exhibitions about art, science, and history, which are shown wherever people live, work, and play: in museums, libraries, science centers, historical societies, community centers, botanical gardens, schools, and shopping malls. For more information, including exhibition descriptions and tour schedules, visit www.sites.si.edu.

This brochure was made possible through funding by the Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives.

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Specifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contents</th>
<th>25 color photographs commissioned for the exhibition, photo panels, text panels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation fee</td>
<td>$2,000</td>
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<td>Running meters</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Weight</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crates</td>
<td>TBD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shipping</td>
<td>Included in fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tour begins</td>
<td>May 2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Registrial Requirements

Institutions hosting this "moderate security" exhibition must meet the following space, security, and environmental requirements to ensure the safety and stability of the exhibition:

The exhibition must be displayed in a limited-access, gallery-type area. An open area, mail, hallway, or lounge is not acceptable.

The exhibition area must be locked and secured during closed hours. An alarm and/or guards during closed hours are preferred but not required.

Exhibition storage and staging areas must be locked and environmentally stable.

Guards or other trained personnel whose sole duty is supervision of the exhibition must be present during hours when the exhibition is open to the public.

Objects must be handled by personnel trained in handling museum objects. (The photographs are framed with clear plexiglass and have hanging hardware and wires already attached.)

Fire protection must be provided according to local ordinances and is subject to SITES's approval.

Temperature must be maintained between 65-75 degrees Fahrenheit, plus or minus 2 degrees, with 45-50 percent relative humidity.

The light level for the photographs must not exceed 20 foot candles. Direct sunlight should be diffused or eliminated to prevent fading of panels and photographs. Any fluorescent lighting should have ultraviolet filters.

No smoking, eating, or drinking are permitted in staging, storage, and exhibition spaces.

Exhibition Support

As a host of Our Journeys/Our Stories: Portraits of Latino Achievement, you will receive the following:

- Complete curatorial and registrarial information.
- Complete shipping, handling, and installation instructions.
- Wall-to-wall insurance coverage under the Smithsonian’s policy.
- Bilingual exhibition brochures, family activity guides, teacher’s guides; and poster sets for schools.
- Public relations support in the form of digital press releases, images, and logos, and advice on promoting the show and hosting special events.
- Guidelines for local fundraising.
- Educational and programming resources.
- Ability to link to and from the SITES and Smithsonian Center for Latino Initiatives websites.
- Content/Design

To reserve your date on the exhibition tour, please contact Michelle Torres-Carmona, Senior Scheduling and Exhibitor Relations Coordinator.

202.357.3868 x122 • torrescmps@si.edu

Photographers

Celia Alvarez Muñoz is a Texas-born, Mexican-American conceptual multi-media artist whose approach to portraiture is personal and poetical. Housed in major museum, university, and corporate collections, Munoz’s work has ranged from hand-made books to photography, large-scale installations, and public art pieces that emphasize the collective history of individuals, families, and communities. During her three-decade career, the Texas artist has exhibited internationally and created site-specific art at over 50 major U.S. museums.

Luis Mallo, artist and photographer, was born in Cuba and lives and works in New York City. His portfolio is characterized by a diversity of texture and subject matter; his portraiture conveys his respect for the sitter and an appreciation of the unguarded moment. Mallo has been in solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States and in Brazil, Argentina, and Spain. His work is in the permanent collections of The New York Public Library and The Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, among many others.

Héctor Méndez-Caratini was born in Puerto Rico, where he resides and works. Over the past three decades, the photographer and video artist has dedicated himself to documenting and promoting the cultural identity of Puerto Rico and emerging Caribbean nations. Méndez-Caratini’s prize-winning work has been on view in more than 100 exhibitions in the U.S., Europe, and Latin America. His work is in the permanent collections of many prestigious institutions in the U.S. and abroad, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Center for Creative Photography.

Design: Studio A, Alexandria, Virginia
Caminante, no hay camino, se hace camino al andar.

Traveler, there is no path, you make it as you walk.

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