

Museum of the American Latino Celebrates 25 years of Latine Heritage Festival

25 October 2022



Families and guests gathered around to celebrate the beginnings of Latin Heritage Month as the Museum of the American Latino held its annual Latin Heritage Festival

Washington, D.C. – The Latin Heritage Month festival was held at the National Museum of American History and showcased a range of Latino art, history and music through exhibits and presentations throughout the museum. Each presentation and display explored themes of Latinidad in the United States, as the country has become home to many Latinx families across generations. Latinidad refers to the complexities and intersecting identities that make up different Latino cultures.

“Opportunities like this festival are really to focus in on some of the narratives that are central to American history but don't get enough attention and certainly don't have visibility for the average person in this country,” said Ashley Oliva Mayor, a curatorial assistant at the National Museum of American History.

The event concluded with performances by Latino and Latina artists. The group was D.C. Cuban All Stars, followed by urban Latino artist JChris and concluded with a performance by

the all-women Los Angeles group, Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles. The musicians paid tribute to their respective cultures by playing compositions and classics from their respective genres.

“The performers were amazing. Mariachi Reyna de Los Angeles really just killed it, they are such a phenomenal group of amazingly talented female musicians, and I, they, they brought down the house at the end,” Mayor Said.

Mayor is a Miami native of Cuban descent. She said this year’s festival served a double purpose as it celebrated and inaugurated the Molina Family Latino Gallery as a new museum installation. The exhibit is the first dedicated space to represent Latino history and will be the first installation of the National Museum of the American Latino once the building is completed.

Angie Garcia, a Latina mother, flew out from Uvalde, Texas, after a previously scheduled trip. Her husband was asked to share his drone footage of the murals commemorating the Uvalde shooting victims to display on the Smithsonian website. Garcia and her family then attended the Latin Heritage Festival.

“It's neat because it, you know it, spreads the word. It educates everyone on their different nationalities and everything that's around, and you don't realize how much diversity there is,” Garcia said.

Garcia also said she was surprised at how large and diverse the Latino population in D.C. and the East Coast is. She was interested in the museum within the museum, referring to the Molina Family Gallery exhibit.

Nicholas Aguirre Zafiro
505-974-8118
naguirre76@gwmail.gwu.edu

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'NAGUIRRE' followed by a stylized flourish.