

## **The Latino Museum of History Art and Culture Director's Museum Report**

After the many years of clouded uncertainty, the sun is beginning to shine! TLM is now within days of opening to the general public. The museum's gallery space is taking form.

In this transitional period of museum growth there is a greater need for a close working relationship between the Director and the Board of Trustees. This is also a critical time to refocus on TLM's founding doctrine - Mission Statement. The combination of these two factors will provide the core foundation for TLM's future.

Currently TLM is going through the usual institutional growing pains associated with most museums during this transitional phase. These growing pains have created change, and not just in the renovation of building, but also within the museum's structure. Hence, new departmental areas, and staff are needed to manage the new "full service museum".

The combined partnership of the Board and Staff working together can provide careful planning that avoids the pitfalls particular to most new museums. As the only museum in the United States that represents itself as the cultural authority on "Latinismo" (Latino culture in the USA and Latin America), the museum will generate culturally specific audiences who have specific cultural interests. But as an American museum, TLM is open to the general public thus unveiling common ground. Our policy to have Spanish, English and Japanese museum texts will make our programming available to the wide audience of the community that we serve.

**The following areas of museum functions are considerations and criteria that have helped provide TLM's current mission:**

- Audiences- general public, enfranchised Latinos, and public school pupils.
- Museum Discipline focus- Latino/Latin American History, Art and Culture
- Museum experience- education and entertainment
- Educational excellence in "one of a kind" educational programming for teachers and children
- Museum partnership/support international, national, state and community
- Future development work will determine the museum's growth potential.
- Future Permanent Collection and Stewardship
- Staff Development to have internationally known scholars associated with the museum
- Operating Costs
- Marketing and public relations
- Continual Exhibition Schedules
- Board Development - the current Board revitalization will impact on the museum's support system.

As TLM grows so do the operating cost. It is estimated that it will take one and half million dollars to safely operate TLM for the first year and a half. First steps for the endowment are also critical for this institution's future. We now have a grant writer/development staff member, but it will take at least six months to make a dent in the museum's financial needs.

The "Day of The Dead: My Personal Icon" Exhibition will open TLM's doors to the public from November 1 to 30, 1997. From this point on, there will only be approximately only one month between exhibitions for de-installation and installation of new shows.

De-installation for "My Personal Icon" takes five to seven days. On December 15, the exhibition organizers of "Young Quechua's Wisdom" arrive from Peru to start the gallery design and installation.

### **INAGUARAL SEASON EXHIBITION CALENDAR**

- 1. *My Personal Icon* -Day of the Dead - *Dia de los Muertos*:  
November 1 to November 30, 1997.**
- 2. Young Quechua's Wisdom Warma Yachay La Sabiduria de la Niñez Quechua (also 4 small culturally related exhibitions):  
January 10, to March 15, 1998.**
- 3. Paul Sierra -A Cultural Corridor - *Pablo Sierra-Un Corredor Cultural* -(American Association of Museums related events)  
April 11, to July 12, 1998.**
- 4. Los Four - A Retrospective of the East Los School of Painting  
*Los Cuatro, Retrospectiva de la Escuela de Pintura* -East Los  
Fall 1998 to January 1999.**

### **First two years:**

For the first two years, all exhibitions have a three month duration period. All of the exhibitions are professionally curated and will provide the educational associated programming.

The average cost of a TLM exhibition will be \$65,000.00. This does not include staff and operational costs. A major exhibition like *Los Four*, that includes a catalogue and top educational programming is estimated at \$150,000.00. By comparison, rental fees for a "Canned" exhibition from Mexico averages \$300,000.00 to \$400,000.00.

### **Exhibitions/Show**

TLM will feature contemporary Art Show and historical exhibition. TLM will feature more contemporary themed exhibitions, and hence save money in the long run. TLM does not have the financial base to spend on the high expense associated with BLOCK BUSTER traveling and will produce only one Major in-house exhibition like *Los Four*.

The museum now has a Registrar's department. The museum architect, Tom Hernandez, is working with Rosa Lowinger to convert the safe area in the vault into a temporary storage facility to house the Permanent Collection and art that is on loan. Another very temporary solution is moving all the art into the top quarantine room next to gallery A. This room can also be ready to store art for the next few months, in which the question of storage will be solved. The "Flooding Insurance" reimbursement funds can cover most of the cost of making one of these areas a temporary storage and work area for the registrar. At the present time, the art from Peru is kept in the director's office for safe keeping, barring any flood, fire or earthquake.

As mentioned earlier, TLM is a young museum and can not be compared to already established mainstream cultural institutions. We do not have the large budget of these institution's.

### **Inaugural Season and the end of Phase One of Renovation:**

- TLM is now a functioning museum.
- The museum will soon have minimal/temporary standards for the intake and handing of art within a controlled environment.
- Full functioning Gallery "A" space.

Gallery "A" space will function as the main museum exhibition area. TLM exhibition standards differ from the older traditional museums like the National Gallery, where Renaissance Art is placed on gold art frames. TLM's gallery "A" has simple museum walls that will not require any additional *mateniance* in



between shows. The walls can be painted, designed for all types of exhibitions, and/or have murals painted directly on them and be able to withstand heavy hanging canvas. The floors must be able to take fork lifts, sand, wood constructions and be able to take paint splatters off all the floors.

This museum gallery space is a 3-D canvas that is utilized by teams of artists and preparator, curators, educators and museum professionals every two to three months. Hence the museum exhibition space will function like a clean canvas for every changing exhibition.

**The Future Phase Two of Renovation will provide the following:**

**Gallery B: Wish List**

- Exhibition space that alternates with main Gallery A
- Functions as teaching area and screening of video and films

**Basement:**

- Storage area for Curatorial and Preparator's supplies.
- Educational area, for Teacher Referral, slide/lesson plan Library and storage
- Graphic/Media Station, storage for video, film, music and high-end computer technology.
- Installation and operational staff work area
- The registrar's office must make room next to the kitchen to be closer to the receiving of the elevator

As in any small museum, the staff will need to be working in several areas and departments. Once the museum finances get better, more staff will be hired.

As of today, all current employees have a tremendous work load that extends outside the forty hours. All staff work at home on week ends and week nights.

This has kept the museum programming on target.

**Here is the barest of the "Bare Bones" staff. Without this basic museum foundation TLM will not be able to function.**

All of the following staff positions are needed to function as a Museum to produce the first four exhibitions, and the related educational programming. Once TLM finishes it's renovated phase, it immediately needs to keep meeting the CAD, CRA, Bank of America, grant etc. deliverables. The future of the museum rests on this first year.

## **Staff and general job descriptions:**

### **Permanent Staff:**

- 1. Denise Lugo - Director/Chief Curator
- 2. Cynthia Cuza - Assistant to the Director/Operational Management

The Director joined TLM in April 1996 and within a month moved the museum's office from the MALDEF building to the permanent site in Downtown L. A. For twelve years the Director taught Latino/International art history at the University and college level.

The Director works with the Board to guide and provides the conceptual and vision of the museum's mission. The Director is also responsible for presenting the highest intellectual content of all the exhibition and related programming. The Museum Director oversees all of the acquisitions, preservation, and research interpretation of the permanent collection. Other duties include creating strong communication ties with the national and community museum as well as national education institutions. Responsible for selecting, scheduling and overseeing the curating of exhibitions. Also responsible for design and look of all permanent and temporary. The Director is a member of the prestigious Smithsonian's Steering Committee and American Association of American Museum's Planning Committee.

**Cynthia Cuza The Assistant to the Director, is the second administrative position at TLM.** Ms. Cuza has degrees in economics and finance from the prestigious Harvard and MIT. She has administration and finance experience. She supervises the museum in the Director's absence and is charge of museum personnel.

Importantly, during the current renovation of the museum, Cynthia Cuza was given the added position of the "museum contractor". As a contractor, she has done an excellent job working with the museum architect, construction crew, sub-contractors, and the associated City bureaucracy.

### **TLM's Curatorial Department:**

As the Chief Curator, the Director is responsible and works closely with the curatorial staff.

- 3. Monica Torres Creason - Curatorial Department Head  
Latino Art in the United States
- 4. Margarita Medina, Latin American Art

**Monica Creason** is responsible for managing all administrative aspects of the Curatorial Department. She now has a specialized background on the Los Four Exhibition. She has worked with them since her start in TLM as a volunteer. She has been organizing the Curatorial Department. She has worked on all of TLM's past exhibitions for the last year and half.

**Margarita Medina**, began as the administrative assistant in March 1996. She has a strong curatorial background. She is currently working on all of the first three exhibitions.

- **5. Ruth Chiang** - Book Keeper is the oldest member of the team. She works with the board and the staff. She has the administrative system and staff communication that have adopted to TLM's growth. She is currently work closely on the renovation and related financial work with Cynthia, Tom and Jess Soto Mayor.
- **6. Jim Dichirico** - Funds Development Director is the first member of TLM's development team. He will work closely with the Board and the staff. He has a strong knowledge of fund raising and is organizing a vigorous, systematic, ongoing development program. He is also courting many of the past donors for future donations.
- **7. Jordan** - Graphic Artist/Multi-Media Coordinator has over thirty years experience on computers. She is working as an Administrative Assistant, and is restructuring the entire museum data systems for all of the individual departments. She is also creating all of the new museum graphics/logo, related stationary, invitations, brochures. She will also work on all of the museum newsletters and other publications. etc. She will work on all of the educational inter-active computer and video. Jordan also works well with the *Computer Technology Specialist*, Joe Flores. Since she has preparator experience, she will also work in the installations of exhibitions.
- **8. Young Kim** - Registrar has volunteered for one year at TLM. He and an earlier registrar, created the foundation of the current registrar department. There can not be an exhibition without a Registrar. He is responsible for handling and recording all damage of incoming and out going art in regards to exhibitions and educational programs. He will take over all of the associated legal and insurance museum forms, before any art can be installed in the upstairs gallery. He is responsible for every work of art that enters and leaves the building at all times. As noted above, he is working with Rosa Lowinger and Tom Hernandez in creating a proper art storage area. He is now putting together a Registrar department.



### **Related Exhibition Staff**

The following staff members are needed to provide the basic operational foundations for all of the up coming exhibitions and related programming.

### **Need to Hire Staff Members**

- **Office Receptionist** Performs stenographic and clerical duties. Works closely with director, screens telephone calls; maintains files; operates copying and fax machines. Answers incoming calls to museum and can fill in as docent and gallery assistant in an emergency. Will also help out with the curatorial/educational installations of all wall text. \$1,200.00 per month.
- **Computer Technology Specialist** Responsible for the development, purchase, installation, maintenance and repair of all electronic equipment, including Computer Network, and all office equipment. Trains and supports staff in all office and multimedia activities, including internet, media presentations and graphic design. Trains staff and volunteers in use of software and hardware. Part time \$1,500.00 per month.
- **Facilities Manager** Responsible for the operation, maintenance and repair of the physical plant including heating, lighting, ventilation, air conditioning and electrical systems, and grounds of museum. 20 hours per week, \$15/hour.

### **Consultants Staff**

8. **Preparator**, The Preparator is responsible for all of the installations and deinstallations. This position can become full time within the following year as TLM becomes more established. The Preparator works closely with the director and curators to ensure a top notch show. He prepares and designs the exhibition galleries, graphics for the educational wall text. He will also work on the incorporation of the video documentation within the exhibitions for the maximum educational and aesthetic experience to all visitors. The Preparator will work with the handling of the objects/art with the registrar and the conservationist. All of the hanging of the work will be supervised by the director. The Preparator, will insure the highest environmental conditions for all exhibitions. The Preparator is responsible for all installations and deinstallations of exhibitions.
- **Security** one person will be present in the main galleries when the doors open to the public. The security person, is responsible for the safety of all the general public, exhibition/art and educational field trips. These two positions are full time and the regular staff can not fill these positions.

- **Gallery Assistant**, The gallery assistant sits on the registration desk inside the museum's entrance. She/he answers all incoming phone calls takes messages for the entire museum staff. The assistant will also screen all appointments with staff. On down time the assistant will work on clerical work. This person will also work closely with the security person in the museum. They will also help out with the children's and general public docent work as well as sign in all school buses, educational related field trips, and deal with the general public. \$1,200.00 a month
- **Two part-time docents** for all children's field trip to the museum and facilitates hands-on art workshops.

**Reception: Every exhibition has at least one reception. One is usually for Board, VIP, and membership. The 2<sup>nd</sup> is for the general public. Cost for the reception will vary on Board advisory.**



## **MISSION**

**The Latino Museum of History, Art and Culture presents exhibitions which celebrate the artistic contributions of Latinos in the United States, the Americas and internationally. The exhibitions program utilizes a comprehensive approach integrating the historical with the artistic in order to promote the richness and diversity of all Latino expression and to contribute to the public education about Latino cultures and their achievements. The Latino Museum also collects significant examples of the artistic and cultural heritage of Latinos. The collection and the exhibition program primarily represent 20th Century Latino cultural contributions set in their historic context.**

**The Latino Museum fulfills its mission by the following objectives:**

- Δ Exhibits and interprets significant and outstanding examples of Latino historical, artistic and cultural production.**
- Δ Develops and disseminates information and analysis of Latino historical, artistic and cultural contributions through available educational tools and communications technology.**
- Δ Sponsors educational programs and special events to promote the richness and diversity of Latino historical, artistic and cultural expressions.**
- Δ Collects and conserves outstanding, particularly significant and representative examples of the historical, artistic and cultural heritage of Latinos.**

**A combination of historical and artistic components in all educational and exhibition material will provide a greater understanding of the Latino culture. Bilingual inter-active computer/CD-ROM, video, films and slides will enhance the educational experience at the Museum.**