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## **The National Endowment for the Arts and the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs Announce Authors and Artists for Guadalajara International Book Fair**

*Washington, D.C.* - The National Endowment for the Arts in partnership with the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA) announced today the roster of literary, performing, visual, design, and culinary artists selected to represent Los Angeles and the United States at the 2009 Guadalajara International Book Fair (Feria Internacional del Libro de Guadalajara or FIL Guadalajara).

The City of Los Angeles was selected by the FIL as the Guest of Honor for the 2009 fair, the 23<sup>rd</sup> year of this event. The book fair takes place in Guadalajara, Mexico from November 28 through December 6, 2009. During these nine days Guadalajara is host to a dynamic literary and cultural festival with more than 600,000 visitors.

Approximately 50 Los Angeles authors are expected to be part of a series of readings, panels, and conversations. Among those are Carolyn See, Gioconda Belli, Jane Smiley, Susan Straight, and (via satellite) Ray Bradbury. All of the selected writers are either residents or natives of the Los Angeles area or authors whose work strongly reflects the influences of the city. Nonprofit Los Angeles publishers and journals, including Tia Chucha Press and Red Hen Press, will be represented at the FIL by senior editorial staff members and will have a broad selection of books in English and Spanish available for purchase. Finally, in cooperation with the University of Guadalajara, there will be an academic component featuring approximately 20 scholars from the Los Angeles area.

NEA Acting Chairman Patrice Walker Powell said, "On behalf of the National Endowment for the Arts, I am delighted to see the exceptional roster of artists that will represent Los Angeles and the United States at the Guadalajara International Book Fair. The artists and authors we are announcing today will offer the FIL's international audience vivid illustrations of the creativity, dynamism, and innovation that are hallmarks of the United States' artistic production. We are looking forward to the fair with great anticipation."

Los Angeles's participation in this international event is an opportunity to showcase the diverse artistic voices of the city. Selected through an application and nomination process conducted by DCA, the cultural program offers seven visual arts exhibitions - among them an exhibit of works by Ed Ruscha and a site specific installation by Marc Dean Veca, and 14 performing artists, companies, and ensembles - including a performance by NEA Jazz Master Wayne Shorter, and an evening devoted to Los Angeles world music ensembles.

Cine L.A.: Visions of Los Angeles, a film series organized by Film Independent, will feature classic and contemporary independent films from 1950 to the present designed to offer audiences dramatically different takes on Los Angeles's urban landscape, its culture, and people. Films include *Chinatown*, *L.A. Confidential*, *Sunset Blvd.*, *Los Angeles Plays Itself*, and *Gods and Monsters*.

Raúl Padilla, President of the FIL said, "To host Los Angeles as this year's Guest of Honor is of supreme importance for the FIL. L.A. is the first city to be featured as the Guest of Honor. It is a city that unites both Mexicans and Americans through culture and history, but it is also one of the continent's most important and dynamic cultural capitals. The strength of the diverse and multicultural heritage of Los Angeles showcased through literature and performing arts will impress many during its presence at FIL. It will also mark a milestone in the cultural relationship between the United States and Mexico, a distinction with which we are proud to be associated."

As Guest of Honor, Los Angeles will have a large exhibition space in the convention center's exhibit hall designed by John Friedman Alice Kimm Architects that will showcase the sights, sounds, places, people, and literature of the City of Angels. The architects note that their design will reflect "a spirit of innovation" that they find throughout the city's landscape, "a buoyant and high-spirited environment reflecting the myriad artistic and technological achievements rooted in L.A."

Los Angeles Chef Joachim Splichal has been selected to prepare a special Los Angeles-themed menu for the invitational, inaugural luncheon marking the opening of the FIL. Splichal has been hailed as one of the nation's 'legendary chefs' by *Bon Appetit* and named Bon Appetit/Food Network Restaurateur of the Year in 2002. His enthusiasm for California's abundant food translates into innovative and elegant dishes.

"Los Angeles and Guadalajara have long been capitals of creativity, bastions of diversity, and centers of rich culture, great art, and a deep history of excellence and innovation," Los Angeles Mayor Antonio R. Villaraigosa said. "Our two cities - and our two nations - are bound together by a shared history and heritage, and we look forward to showcasing our talents and strengthening the ties between the United States and Mexico as the Guest of Honor at the Guadalajara International Book Fair."

The announcement of the artist roster was made at a press conference at the Mexican Cultural Institute in Washington, D.C. and featured remarks from Arturo Sarukhan, Mexican Ambassador to U.S.; NEA Acting Chairman Patrice Walker Powell; Mr. Padilla; University of Guadalajara Chancellor Marco Antonio Cortés Guardado; Executive Director of DCA Olga Garay; and Los Angeles writer and author of the novel (and screenplay) *The Player* Michael Tolkin.

"There are no two countries in the world today that are more important to one another's well-being and prosperity than Mexico and the United States," said Ambassador Sarukhan. "There has always been a vibrant cultural exchange between both nations. The City of Los Angeles will be contributing to this ongoing dialogue with an incredibly rich program. There are few cities in the US that are as closely bound and intertwined with Mexico and Mexican culture as LA, so it is most appropriate that it is the first city to be featured as the Guest of Honor at the FIL in Guadalajara."

#### **About the National Endowment for the Arts**

The National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency dedicated to supporting excellence in the arts, both new and established; bringing the arts to all Americans; and providing leadership in arts education. Established by Congress in 1965 as an independent agency of the federal government, the Arts Endowment is the largest annual national funder of the arts, bringing great art to all 50 states, including rural areas, inner cities, and military bases.

### **About the Guadalajara International Book Fair**

Founded 21 years ago by the University of Guadalajara, the Guadalajara International Book Fair is the largest Spanish publishing market in the world. Each year more than 17,000 book professionals, including publishers, literary agents, translators, librarians, reading advocates and distributors travel to Guadalajara for commercial and professional exchanges. In addition, half a million visitors from within Guadalajara and other Mexican cities come every year.

The 35,000 square meters of the exhibit hall contains more than 1,900 publishing houses from 40 countries. There are more than 90 activities per day; more than 300 book presentations take place during the book fair. In the cultural arena, the book fair offers a broad range of artists centered every year on the Guest of Honor. The book fair has a \$50 million dollar economic impact in the city and is visited every year by more than 100,000 young people. It hosts more than 1,600 journalists from 20 countries.

### **About the City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs (DCA)**

The Department of Cultural Affairs both generates and supports high quality arts and cultural experiences for Los Angeles residents and visitors. DCA advances the social and economic impact of the arts and assures access to arts and cultural experiences through grant making, marketing, public and community arts programming, arts education, and creating partnerships with artists and arts and cultural organizations in every community in the City of Los Angeles.

DCA grants \$3.2 million annually to over 280 artists and nonprofit arts organizations and awards the Artist-in-Residence (A.I.R.) and City of Los Angeles (C.O.L.A.) Individual Artist Fellowships. The Department provides arts and cultural programming in its numerous Neighborhood Arts and Cultural Centers, theaters, and historic sites, and manages several arts and education programs for young people. It directs public art projects and manages the City's Arts Development Fee and Percent for Arts Programs, and the Art Collection and Murals Programs. DCA markets the City's cultural events through development and collaboration with strategic partners, design and production of creative promotional materials, and management of the [culturela.org](http://culturela.org) website.