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Celebrate Mexico Now kicks off today

September 09, 2009 | By Charlie Carballo

Cuisine. Dance. Film. Literature. Music. Celebrate Mexico Now presents a cultural, creative explosion of Mexican arts. Kicking off the fun fest is a book reading and signing with Liza Monroy, author of Mexican High--a coming of age story that captures the challenges of teenage life at one of Mexico City's most elite private schools, at 6 p.m.; and the opening reception begins at 7 at King Juan Carlos I of Spain Center at New York University. Admission is free. www.nyu.edu/kjc for details. On Saturday, celebrate Mexican independence at Cadman Park Plaza, Brooklyn War Memorial. 212-217-6478 for more. Free admission. www.lavitrina.com New York Authentic Mexican Restaurant Week begins September 14-20.



Contemporary sounds, film, dance & food at Mexican fest

Magos Herrera plays at Joe's Pub.

Claudia Norman launched Celebrate Mexico Now! in 2004.

Liza Monroy's reading of her debut novel "Mexican High" kicks off the festival on Sept. 8.

In 2003, Claudia Norman was already the artistic director of the Queens Latino Cultural Festival and a series at Lincoln Center when she noticed a vacuum in Mexican-themed events in the city.

The Mexico City native held a meeting with 60 cultural institutions, from the Brooklyn Academy of Music to the defunct Carlito's café in East Harlem, to see when they last had presented contemporary work from Mexico.

"There was a complete void," said Norman, 43, of that meeting. "It was very important to respond to the new reality of New York and all that audience that was part of their neighborhoods."

"All that audience" is the roughly 350,000 Mexicans who call New York City home today, a spectacular increase from the 61,000 Mexican residents counted by the 1990 census.

To fill the gap, Norman launched in the fall of 2004 Celebrate Mexico Now!, the city's first festival of contemporary Mexican music, dance, film and literature that kicks off its sixth edition next Tuesday.

The festival's focus this year is mostly on artists who were born and raised in Mexico but have moved here, where they have "developed and changed their language with the experience of New York," Norman explained.

Such is the case of Carlos A. Cruz Velázquez, a former folk dancer in Puebla who came to the city in 2006 on a Fulbright scholarship to attend NYU's Tisch School of the Arts.

In the process, he ended up "completely changing his career to become a choreographer and contemporary dancer," she said.

Velázquez and his five-year-old company, colectivodoszeta, were selected in a very competitive process to perform at Joyce SoHo this season. Their four-day run there starting on Sept. 17 wraps up Celebrate Mexico Now! on Sept. 20.

The festival also features a Restaurant Week, a chance to experience top-quality Mexican food at 30 participating eateries. "Chefs have an important artistic part," said Norman, who moved to New York in 1989.

For 11 years, she has been the artistic director of the Chase Latino Cultural Festival in Queens and for nine the curator of La Casita series at Lincoln

Center's Out of Doors. Both present performers from across the Latin American spectrum.

But Celebrate Mexico Now!, a joint effort with cultural institutions across the city, is mostly about artists rooted in her homeland — though her approach is far from nostalgic.

“For six years, we have been putting in context the Mexican contemporary art presence,” Norman said. “What’s being done today — they can be expressions with indigenous traits or with electronic traits, but it’s what people, young and old, are breathing here today and around the world.”



The Feed outings: Jewish Cooking with Joan Nathan and Celebrate Mexico Now

Posted in Eat Out by Eat Out on September 10th, 2009 at 12:00 am

Jewish Cooking with Joan Nathan

It takes more than apples and honey to make a Rosh Hashanah dinner. Just ask Joan Nathan, the James Beard Award–winning author behind *Jewish Cooking in America*. Nathan will discuss her favorite High Holiday recipes and the history of Jewish food. Let’s hope it does something for your brisket, too. **FREE Tenement Museum Shop, 108 Orchard St between Broome and Delancey Sts (212-431-0233). 6:30pm.**

Celebrate Mexico Now

They say New York isn’t known for its Mexican food; more than 25 local eateries, including Toloache and Hecho en Dumbo, would disagree. They’re participating in this South of the Border take on Restaurant Week, offering prix-fixe menus (prices range from \$15 to \$25 for lunch, and \$20 to 35 for dinner). *Various times and locations; visit mexiconowfestival.org for a full list of participating restaurants. Through Sept 20.*



Town & Village Blog

Stuyvesant Town, Peter Cooper Village, Gramercy, Waterside

Magos Herrera's new album is titled "Distancia," but music lovers will not want any distance between themselves and this unique artist. Born in Mexico City, she is fluent in Spanish, Portuguese, and English and not only sings, but also writes thoughtful songs.

The album reveals a rich contralto voice that can evoke a variety of feelings or scat with abandon. She co-produced the CD with saxophonist Tim Ries and created most of the arrangements. The album features a terrific ensemble, including guitarist Lionel Loueke, pianist Aaron Goldberg, bassist Ricky Rodriguez, drummer Alex Kautz, and background vocalists Ingrid and Jennifer Beaujean. The ten tracks are comprised of original songs ("Reencuentro," "Tu Ojos," "Staying Closer," "Alegria"), and standards by Antonio Carlos Jobim ("Retrato em Branco e Preto," "Inutil Paisaje," "Dinde"), Milton Nascimento ("Vera Cruz"), and Cesar Portillo de la Liz ("Tu, Mi Delirio"). Add Herrera to the list of Latin American artists who have enriched the jazz scene. On September 11, Magos Herrera will perform at Joe's Pub (425 Lafayette St.; (212) 539-8777; www.joespub.com) with special guest Tim Ries and most of the musicians from the album.



Celebrate México Now

National Museum of the American Indian

Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House (1 Bowling Green between Broadway and State St)
Financial District | Map

212-514-3766

Subway: R, W to Whitehall St; 4, 5 to Bowling Green | Directions

<http://www.nmai.si.edu>

Prices

Tickets: Free

Description

Although the bulk of this weeklong festival of Mexican culture is for adults, today's musical celebration is intended for families. Fandango band Radio Jarocho headlines the event, letting tots in on the exuberant folk sounds of southern Veracruz, Mexico. ¡Olé! Ages 8 and up.

When

***Starting Sep 12.**

Sat 5pm–8pm

Mundo Hispana of KSL, Concert Preview >>

Inicia en NY sexto Festival de arte y cultura "Celebrate Mexico Now"
September 8th, 2009 @ 9:21am

Nueva York, 8 Sep. (Notimex).- El sexto festival de arte y cultura denominado "Celebrate Mexico Now", el cual muestra ejemplos representativos de la cocina, danza, cine, literatura, música, teatro y artes visuales mexicanas, inició hoy en esta ciudad.

Organizado por una productora privada, CN Management, las presentaciones del festival están programadas en torno a la celebración de la Independencia de México.

El festival incluirá una lectura con la escritora Liza Monroy, la proyección de una serie de cortometrajes mostrados en el Festival Internacional de Cine de Morelia y un concierto de la cantante de jazz Magos Herrera.

Se presentarán también el conjunto de música folclórica Radio Jarocho y el grupo de rock electrónico Sweet Electra, además de un recorrido gastronómico, la película "El General" dirigida por Natalia Almada y el proyecto de danza Colectivosdazeta.



I General (Celebrate Mexico Now (2009)

Plutarco Elias Calles is the subject of a new film by Natalia Almada called *El General*. Get a glimpse at a well-known yet mysterious figure.

"Celebrate Mexican Independence Day with a screening of '*El General*,' the newest film from Natalia Almada. '*El General*' is a subjective portrait of Almada's great-grandfather, Plutarco Elias Calles, the embattled president of Mexico from 1924 to 1928, and looks at her family's and Mexico's history via archival images, family films, audio recordings, and photographs, as well as new footage of contemporary Mexico. Director Natalia Almada will be in attendance, and a reception will follow.

Part of The Film Society of Lincoln Center's annual Latinbeat series, and co-presented with The Mexican Cultural Institute of New York." - Celebrate Mexico Now



New York Authentic Mexican Restaurant Week (Celebrate Mexico Now 2009)

As the capital of the world, NYC's selection of Mexican Restaurants leaves nothing to be desired. However, for the novice gourmet, this can be a bit intimidating and this is where the NY Authentic Mexican Restaurant Week comes into play. Put down that terribly fake burrito and taste the real thing.

This specially priced dining week offers a crash course in true Mexican cuisine--its flavors, aromas, and textures--and opens doors to some of the city's finest Mexican restaurants. Menus for New York Authentic Mexican Restaurant Week are created under the guidance of Mexico City-native and Cordon Bleu grad chef Roberto Santibañez.

For reservations and special menus, please contact participating restaurants directly:

Cabrito
Cafe El Portal
Cafe Frida
Centrico
Chavella's Restaurant
Crema
Dos Caminos
El Aguila- Centro de Comida Mexicana
El Centro
El Paso Taqueria
Fonda
Hecho en Dumbo
Hell's Kitchen
La Barra Cevicheria
La Esquina
La Palapa Cocina Mexicana
La Superior
Los Dados
Mama Mexico
Mañana Restaurant
Maya Restaurant
Maz Mezcal
Mercadito

Pampano
Papatzul
Rocking Horse Mexican Café
Rosa Mexicano
Sueños
Taqueria la Superior
Toloache
Zarela



Mexico Independence Celebration (Celebrate Mexico Now 2009)

Some days are simply an awesome time to be alive; Mexican Independence Day is one of them and what's better is that the Mexican government is getting down as Ambassador Ruben Beltran (the guy in the pic) becomes ambassador of partyland, for a day at least.

"Join Mexican American Societies (MAS) and the Consul General of Mexico in New York, Ambassador Rubén Beltrán, in an official celebration of Mexican Independence Day. Live music by local bands." - Celebrate Mexico Now, 2009



Radio Jarocho (Celebrate Mexico Now 2009)

What do Veracruz and NYC have in common? Radio Jarocho, that's what. They're the only group in the city that is dedicated to Son Jarocho and Fandango. They've just come out with a new album this June, so be sure to check it out.

"Radio Jarocho is the only New York City-based project devoted entirely to the son jarocho and fandango traditions from southern Veracruz, Mexico. Formerly known as Semilla, Radio Jarocho has performed in notable events dedicated to Mexican and Latin American folk arts, including: Celebrate México Now, Brooklyn Folk Music Festival, National Geographic's All Roads Film Festival, Lincoln Center's La Casita, and Brooklyn Botanical Garden's Chili Fest. The group's first recording, Radio Jarocho, was released in June 2009." - Celebrate Mexico Now 2009



Winners of the 2008 Morelia International Film Festival

Talent is a good thing to find and is even better in bite-sized form. As part of the Celebrate Mexico Now festival, here is a chance to see the winners of the 2008 Morelia Film Festival in the short film section.

"A program of award winning shorts from the 2008 Morelia International Film Festival that was shown during 'critic's week' at the Cannes Film Festival. Screening followed by Q&A;with filmmakers Karla Castañeda and David Pablos. All films in Spanish with English subtitles.

'La canción de los niños muertos'
[The Song Of The Dead Children]
(David Pablos, 2008, 38 minutes, fiction)
After their mother dies, five children and their father spend the summer in the cabin of a stranger.

'Jacinta'
(Karla Castañeda, 2008, 8 minutes, fiction)
When life becomes nothing more than memories, a solitary elderly woman decides to weave her own destiny.

'Roma'
(Elisa Miller, 2008, 25 minutes)
A train with hidden immigrants enters a soap factory. One of the travelers gets off the train, and finds help and solidarity in the factory.

'Zoogocho'
(Bernardo Arellano, 2008, 40 minutes)
The adventures of a group of Zapotecan kids who live in a remote orphanage in the mountains of Oaxaca." - Celebrate Mexico Now 2009



Magos Herrera (Celebrate Mexico Now 2009)

A polyglot, Magos Herrera has got the whole worldly thing going on, especially when it comes to mixing up sounds from Brazil, Mexico and Cuba. In case you haven't read the bottom part already, she's a popular gal and with that being said, join the club.

"Mexican chanteuse Magos Herrera elegantly blends classic jazz styling with Latin American melodies and rhythms. Fluent in Spanish, Portuguese and English, her repertoire is filled with languid Brazilian beats and the romance of Mexiba.can and Cuban sones and boleros. Herrera is popular in Mexico and throughout Latin America, and has performed internationally at festivals and concert halls, including Lincoln Center, The Knitting Factory, and The Jazz Standard (all in New York), Millenium Park (Chicago), de la Ciudad de Mexico (Mexico City) and Sala Galileo Galilei (Madrid). Herrera's newest CD "Distancia" (Sunnyside Records) was released in spring 2009, and it shortly became the number one jazz CD on itunes.

For her performance at Joe's Pub, Herrera is joined by special guest Tim Ries (saxophone), Aaron Goldberg (piano); Ricky Rodriguez (bass); Alex Kautz (drums); Ingrid Beaujean (vocals); and Jenny Beaujean (vocals)." - Celebrate Mexico Now 2009



colectivodoszeta / carlos a. cruz velázquez (Celebrate Mexico Now 2009)

The celebrations go on and this particular event, the art of dance is represented. Coreographer Carlos Cruz Velazquez will make you want to prance and dance.

"The Joyce SoHo program features the premiere of "of shame and leaves (...or recipe to forget) ," as well as earlier works. Choreographer Carlos Cruz

Velázquez, who has been working professionally in New York for the past three years, transitioned to contemporary dance after many years as a principal dancer with the renowned Mexican Folk Dance Company of the American School of Puebla. He holds an MFA in choreography and performance from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts, for which he received a Fulbright Fellowship and grants from Mexico's Fondo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes (FONCA)." - Celebrate Mexico Now 2009



Mexican High (Celebrate Mexico Now 2009)

Embrace excitement, all ye who enter here! The Celebrate Mexico Now 2009 festival is underway and this means a chance at sampling a lot of good things to come from south of the border. Kicking off the event is a book reading and signing with the author of the book, Mexican High, Liza Monroy.

"A book reading and signing with Liza Monroy, author of 'Mexican High' (Spiegel & Grau). Monroy's debut novel, 'Mexican High' is a coming of age story that marvelously captures the challenges of the teenage life at one of Mexico City's most elite private schools.

Followed by an opening reception for Celebrate México Now 2009." - Celebrate Mexico Now



Sweet Electra (Celebrate Mexico Now 2009)

Can't decide if you're in a electronica, rock or indie mood? **Sweet Electra** has you covered as they are able to go from one end of the spectrum and back again. So, sit back (or stand) and let the sounds of Guadalajara and NY collide, as los Sweets play songs off their new album *When We Abandoned Earth*.

This event is part of the **Celebrate Mexico Now Festival 2009**, and the CD release party for *When We Abandoned Earth*.

"Originally from Guadalajara, Mexico, and now based in Brooklyn, Sweet Electra slips easily between electronica, rock and indie music, overlaying Nardiz Cooke's bittersweet vocals on Giovanni Escalera's electronic bass and beats. In addition to dozens of sold-out concerts in Mexico, Sweet Electra has played at Celebrate México Now (New York City), Romerías of May (Cuba), Festival Vive Latino (Mexico City), Peak of Tajin (Veracruz), and the DJ Tour MOTO Motorola throughout Mexico and Europe. The songs on their latest album, 'When We Abandoned Earth,' retain Sweet Electra's distinctive, danceable rhythms while reflecting the new influences the duo has encountered since relocating to New York." - Celebrate Mexico Now 2009



All about Jazz, Album Preview (vocalist Magos Herrera) >>

Vocalist Magos Herrera

To Perform at Joe's Pub on September 11

In Support of Recent Release *Distancia*

"The Mexican-born Herrera sings in Spanish, English and Portuguese. But really, what she does on *Distancia* transcends language. Blending elements from various traditions, she's stretching the very notion of jazz singing, pushing past the diva pleasantries into a sound that's bold, thrilling and effortlessly global" - Tom Moon, NPR

Vocalist Magos Herrera will perform with her group at Joe's Pub on September 11 in support of her most recent release, *Distancia* (May 5 on Sunnyside Records). The performance, which also features special guest Tim Ries on saxophone, is a part of the citywide festival Celebrate Mexico Now, showcasing the vanguard of contemporary Mexican art and culture.

If you listen to "Salt of the Earth," the sensational track from saxophonist Tim Ries' Sunnyside CD, *Stones World*, you'll hear a sensuous and thrilling contralto voice that swings and sighs, like no other. That voice belongs to the brilliant and beautiful, Mexican-born, New York-based singer, Herrera. Like Luciana Souza and Claudia Acuna, she is a world-class jazz vocalist in the literal sense of the word: She's fluent in English, Spanish, and Portuguese, and is likewise proficient in deciphering and delivering the syncopated science of jazz, and Afro-Hispanic musical genres. Her gifts are on full display on her Sunnyside debut, *Distancia*, supported by an exceptional rhythm section featuring guitarist Lionel Loueke, pianist Aaron Goldberg, bassist Ricky Rodriguez, drummer Alex Kautz, with background vocalists Ingrid and Jennifer Beaujean. Buoyed by that stellar lineup, Herrera delivers a delicious, dancing and diverse ten-track potpourri of original songs, and standards by Antonio Carlos Jobim, Milton Nascimento, and Cesar Portillo de la Luz.

Magos' love and thanks come through loud and clear on this disc - co-produced by Tim Ries. Her self-penned songs "Reencuentro" "Tu Ojos," "Staying Closer," "Alegria," are pulsed by scintillating vocal percussion, interlocking, Pan-Afro/American rhythmic structures, tinges of Joni Mitchell-style rock timbres, and flamenco-flavored handclaps. Magos reinterprets the works of master composers with equal verve. She updates Caesar Portillo De la Luz's famous bolero "Tu, Mi Delirio," with a kind of "quiet storm" vibe. Nascimento's "Vera Cruz" is resurrected with a deep groove, which morphs into a spirited Tower of Babel-style vocal beat box. And Jobim's "Retrato em Branco E Preto," "Inutil Paisaje," and "Dindi" are rendered in impassioned ballad, bossa nova-scat, and John Coltrane-ish settings.

If, as the saying goes, "it takes a village to raise a child," then it takes an musician open to all of the world's musical hues and grooves to produce an artist like Magos Herrera. Born in Mexico City, Magos graduated from the Musicians Institute of Technology, and studied at Mannes College of Music, the New England Conservatory, and privately with opera teacher Konstantin Jadan. She moved back to Mexico City in 1998, where she released her first CD, *Cajuina* (Independiente, 1998), followed by *Orquideas Surrantes* (JM Distributors, 2000), *Whispering Orchids* (Opcion Sonica, 2000), *Mexican Divas II/III* (Opcion Sonica, 2001-2002), *Pais Maravilla* (JM Distributors, 2003), *Magos Herrera Compilacion* (Mecca Records, 2004) and *Todo Puede Inspirar* (EMI Music, 2005). She's toured Latin America, India, Japan, and the United States and performed and recorded with Jerry Gonzalez, Diego el Cigala, Tim Ries, and Ute Lemper.

Magos Herrera has evolved into a global-centric musician, capable of expressing herself in a multiplicity of languages, and vocal settings; from straight-ahead, ballads, scats, and the various dimensions and invention of Afro-Latin music. As *Distancia*, proves, no style of music is distant from her.

[Click here to read Tom Moon's NPR story on Magos](#)

"... [S]he forges new paths in her repertoire ... Afro-Latin, pop, and Brazilian influences - all perhaps unifying the Latin experience in a contemporary sense - yet most of all - brilliantly meshing and resonating with Mexico's vast, diversified cultural legacies"

-Evangelina Kim, *New York Times*

"Though jazz long ago embraced Afro-Cuban influences that ought to make Mexico a logical bastion of the music, there are few well-known players from Mexico. But here is a brilliant singer, Magos Herrera, with a US debut on Sunnyside Records, recording with a top-flight band (Aaron Goldberg's piano, Lionel Louke on guitar, among others) and making Mexican jazz sound as obvious as chocolate ice cream."

- Will Layman, *PopMatters*

Magos Herrera at Joe's Pub
with special guest Tim Ries

Friday, September 11, 9:30pm

Magos Herrera, vocals
Aaron Goldberg, piano
Ricky Rodriguez, bass
Alex Kautz, drums
Ingrid Beaujean, vocals
Jenny Beaujean, vocals
Time Ries, saxophone

Joe's Pub
425 Lafayette Street
New York, NY 10003