



Smithsonian
*Donald W. Reynolds Center for
American Art and Portraiture*
National Portrait Gallery

News

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Symposium Discusses Spain's Contribution to the American Revolution and the Impact of Hispanic Culture in the United States

A symposium entitled, "The Spanish Contribution to the Independence of the United States: Between Reform and Revolution" will be held at the National Portrait Gallery from Thursday through Saturday, Sept. 27–29. The symposium is an initiative of the Fundación Consejo España-Estados Unidos with the assistance of the Embassy of Spain and is co-organized by SEACEX, the Smithsonian Latino Center and the National Portrait Gallery. It accompanies the exhibition, "Legacy: Spain and the United States in the Age of Independence 1763-1848."

The conference brings together historians and academics from Spain, Mexico, the United Kingdom and the United States who will present their ideas and discuss the relationship between Spain and America in the 18th and 19th centuries and consider the legacy of those historical interactions. Three aspects of the period will receive special attention: the Spanish contributions to the American Revolutionary War; the changing U.S. borders and their effect on Latin American republics; and the presence and impact of Hispanic culture in the United States. The issues that are being presented will be open for public debate during the conference.

"The Spanish Contribution to the Independence of the United States' will remind us that even during the formative years of this nation American culture and politics were significantly influenced by Spain and her colonies," said Marc Pachter, director of the National Portrait Gallery. "This symposium, exhibition and other initiatives that the Portrait Gallery is supporting, demonstrate the wide range of ways that we portray individuals who are important to our history."

"In many history books, the Spanish contribution to the American Revolution has been ignored or underestimated, with the belief that Spain was playing only second fiddle to France in this

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international conflict,” said Eduardo Garrigues, advisor for Hispanic affairs in the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and the organizer of the symposium. “But without the financial and military support of Spain, the outcome of the war might have been different.”

“The Smithsonian Latino Center is proud to collaborate on this symposium,” said Pilar O’Leary, director of the Smithsonian Latino Center. “In keeping with our mission to ensure that Hispanic contributions to our society are fully recognized and understood, we hope that this will raise broad public awareness about the important role of Hispanic-Americans in the founding of our country.”

The symposium will take place in the Nan Tucker McEvoy Auditorium at the Donald W. Reynolds Center for American Art and Portraiture located at Eighth and G streets N.W., Washington, D.C. A complete schedule and registration information is available at <http://www.npg.si.edu/event2/legacysym.htm>. Registrations should be submitted via e-mail to NPGLegacy@si.edu by Sept. 21, and are on a first-come, first-served basis.

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