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CONTACT:
Irasema Romero
Luisa.romero@dallascityhall.com
214-671-0049

The Latino Cultural Center Proudly Presents
El Viaje – The Journey: Latin American Jewish Artists and Poets

May 6 – August 28, 2010

DALLAS, April 15, 2010 – The Latino Cultural Center is proud to present the exhibition *El Viaje - The Journey: Latin American Jewish Artists and Poets* from May 6 through August 28, 2010. The exhibition features a portfolio of original prints by 18 Latin American artists and poets inspired in the story of the travels of the Jewish people when they moved from their homes in Europe and Africa to the Americas. The exhibition was produced by the Jewish Museum of Florida, Miami Beach.

Artists and poets from 10 Latin American countries are represented in the exhibition, using different styles and techniques to interpret and symbolize passage and transit, identity and community, memory and loss, life and death, each one in their own way. They approach the theme of “the Journey” from many angles: figurativism, abstract art and photography. They overlap images using local references of their countries, personal memories, social facts and Jewish symbolism. Writings by 15 contemporary Latin American poets and two 11th Century Spanish poets are also part of the exhibition, with their poems also inspired in the theme of journey.



Samy Benmayo, “Untitled,” 1999

As a special event accompanying the exhibition, the Latino Cultural Center will screen *Adio Kerida* (Good Bye Dear Love), an award-winning documentary by anthropologist, poet and filmmaker Ruth Behar. The documentary follows Behar as she returns to her native Cuba to profile the island’s remaining Sephardic Jews and chronicle her own family’s journey to the U.S. as Cuban-Jewish exiles. **Two screenings are scheduled: Thursday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, July 18 at 2:30 p.m.**

The Latin American Jewish artists featured in the exhibition are: Lydia Azout (Colombia), Ricardo Benaim (Venezuela), Nadia Benatar (Venezuela), Samy Benmayor (Chile), Luis Camnitzer (Uruguay), Felipe Ehrenberg (Mexico), Walter Goldfarb (Brazil), Gerardo Goldwasser (Uruguay), Elias Heim (Colombia), Jac Leirner (Brazil), Becky Mayer (Colombia), Liliana Porter (Argentina-New York), Carlos Poveda (Costa Rica-Venezuela), Baruj Salinas (Cuba-Miami), Daniel Scheimberg (Argentina), Lihie Talmor (Israel-Venezuela), Meyer Vaisman (Venezuela), and Moico Yaker (Perú).

The poets featured in the exhibit are: 11th century Spanish poets Moshe Ibn Ezra and Yehuda Halevi, and contemporary poets Marjorie Agosin (Chile), Ruth Behar (Cuba/Michigan), Daniel Chirom (Argentina), Sonia Chocron (Venezuela), Elias David Curiel (Venezuela), Juan Gelman (Argentina), Rosita Kalina (Costa Rica), Martha Kornblith (Perú), José Kozer (Cuba/New York/Spain), Liliana Mizrahi (Argentina), Miriam Moscona (México), Roberto Piccioto (Argentina), Alejandra Pizarnik (Argentina), David Turkeltaub (Chile), and Saul Yurkievich (Argentina).

“The themes explored in *El Viaje – The Journey* are both particular to the Jewish Diaspora in Latin America and universal to all of us whose families have experienced migration, the notion of loss, displacement and settling into a new life and a new country,” notes María Muñoz-Blanco, director of the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs. “We are grateful to the Jewish Museum of Florida for allowing us the opportunity to bring this work to Dallas.”

Jews first arrived in the Americas from Europe with Christopher Columbus’ explorations into the Antilles in 1492. That was also the year when the Spanish monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, issued the Edict of Expulsion against the Jews of Spain. During the period of Spanish colonization and with the reach of the Inquisition, Judaism was officially banned in the Spanish colonies. As each country gained its independence from Spain, the Inquisition was abolished in Latin America and slowly Jews took advantage of the legislation framed for Protestant minorities. It was not until the late 19th century that large waves of Jewish immigration began. The largest number settled in Argentina; about 20% were Sephardic. After World War I, immigration continued until 1940 when Jewish immigration was severely restricted. Since World War II there has been less Jewish immigration to Latin American and rather more emigration, either from one country to another within the region or to the United States and Israel.

The exhibition was produced by the Jewish Museum of Florida, based on a portfolio of original prints commissioned by the Sephardic Museum of Caracas Morris E. Curiel. In 1999, the Sephardic Museum invited 18 Latin American Jewish artists and poets to create original works that depict the journey of the Jews – their displacement, visual testimonies, and contributions as they took new paths in their lives. The artwork created by the artists was published in 1999 in a limited-edition portfolio, entitled *El Viaje – The Journey*. The Jewish Museum of Florida acquired the portfolio for their collection, premiered it at their Miami Beach museum in 2002, and has loaned the work to the Dallas Latino Cultural Center for this special presentation.

The Latino Cultural Center is a division of the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs. The mission of the Latino Cultural Center is to serve as a catalyst for the preservation, development and promotion of Latino arts and culture in Dallas. The Center is located at 2600 Live Oak, Dallas, Texas 75204.

LCC hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For additional information please call 214-671-0045 or visit our **Web site at, www.dallasculture.org/latinocc**.

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