

LeaLA Consolidates Its Leadership as a Cultural Event Promoting Spanish and Reading

The Fourth Edition of the Los Angeles Spanish-language Book Fair Increases Book Offerings for the Hispanic Market

LOS ANGELES, May 19, 2015 /PRNewswire/ -- Its aisles packed with readers and boasting a host of successful book presentations and cultural performances, LeaLA wrapped up its fourth edition on a positive note, consolidating its position as the only Spanish-language book fair in the United States and as the event dedicated to reading in Spanish and Latin American culture.



On the third day of activities, with the South Hall of the Los Angeles Convention Center teeming with families, students, teachers and visitors of different nationalities, the number of

attendees had reached 86,700 throughout this intense experience of reflection, humor, learning and the entire world of books, literature and words.

The director and founder of LeaLA, Marisol Schulz, remarked, "This fair has a mission, which goes beyond opening the market of Spanish books (although that is part of it) and it involves responding to the need of a representative population of the Latino community to have access to the cultures of their countries of origin. Because of this lack of access to reading material in Spanish, LeaLA provides a space where they can find books that speak to them of their heritage and in the language of their ancestors and for many in their native tongue."

In the words of Carlos Sada Solano, Mexico's Consul General in Los Angeles, "LeaLA is without a doubt the most important cultural event carried out by Mexico in another country." Hilda Solis, Supervisor of the First District of Los Angeles County, presented an award to LeaLA during the opening ceremony, which was attended by Ana Guerrero, Chief of Staff on behalf of the Los Angeles Mayor's Office; Luis Rodriguez, poet laureate of the City of Los Angeles, as well as officials from the University of Guadalajara.

With eight countries in attendance, including 875 publishing imprints, LeaLA offered a forum for a gathering that will have widespread repercussions, thanks especially to the participation of more than 100 professionals representing schools, universities and libraries of California, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Spain, the United States, El Salvador, Mexico and the Dominican Republic who made purchases directly from publishers and distributors. The fair had 204 stands, a children's area for young readers, as well as theatrical performances that drew large audiences.

Guest of Honor Mexico City, with a large delegation of writers, researchers, intellectuals and artistic performers, captured the attention of participants who had the opportunity to learn about the different eras of Los Angeles' sister city. Also participating was the Los Angeles office of migrant services with information and services on citizenship.

A project developed by LeaLA, which has gained momentum with this edition, has been the participation of talent from the world of culture, sports and entertainment, who by way of their presence at the fair and recorded messages will be the LeaLA and Spanish language ambassadors.

The LeaLA ambassadors include the director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Gustavo Dudamel, screenwriter Sergio Arau, musician Carlos Vives, violinist Aisha Syed, psychologist Silvia Olmedo, journalists Juan Carlos Arciniegas and the president of the Foundation for a New Latin American Journalism Jaime Abello, among other Spanish-language enthusiasts.

Diego Luna, Gisele Blondet, Isela Vega, Maria Antonieta Collins, and Chiquis Rivera also participated either reading to children or to showcase their books.

Participating from the world of literature were Xavier Velasco, Juan Villoro; Carmen Boullosa, Cristina Rivera Garza; Mario Bellatin; Benito Taibo; Javier Sicilia; Alberto Ruy Sanchez; Lydia Cacho, Sanjuana Martinez, Francisco Hinojosa; Jorge F. Hernandez; Elmer Mendoza; Claudio Magris, Fabio Morabito, Rosa Beltran, Jose Ignacio "Chascas" Valenzuela, among others.

LeaLA event sponsors were: Univision; Volaris; Goya Foods; ScholarShare; AltaMed; Rose Hills; Los Angeles Times/HOY; El Clasificado; Omnimetal; First 5 LA, Programa Paisano; La Opinion; Tequila La Revancha, Recent Spanish Cinema Los Angeles; FICG in LA, Fuego Lounge/Don Chente Bar and Grill, and Hotel Transylvania 2, the movie.

Public entities and organizations participating as partners of the fair are: the National Council for Culture and the Arts of Mexico, Conaculta; the Culture Secretariat of the government of the state of Jalisco; City of Los Angeles; Los Angeles Public Library; Los Angeles Unified School District with Parent Community and Student Services (PCSS); the NEA program in conjunction with LA City Hall, Big Read; the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior, IME); the consulates of Mexico, Dominican Republic and El Salvador in Los Angeles; UC Mexico Initiative; the Alumni Association of the University of Guadalajara in Los Angeles; LA Libreria; the Mexican Civic Patriotic Committee; Dollar Book Fair Libraries; Los Angeles County; and Los Angeles County Public Library.

About LéaLA

LéaLA is not only the sole book fair in the United States dedicated entirely to books in Spanish, but is also a major cultural event whose pillars are the literary program and the promotion of Spanish-language books and publishers. It is also an opportunity to experience a book fair where Latinos can rediscover their roots and their culture, and feel proud of the language they inherited from their families—now the second most important language in the United States. LéaLA is an initiative organized by the University of Guadalajara Foundation USA and backed by the International Book Fair of Guadalajara (FIL). For further information, please visit: www.lea-la.com.



