

“Many Voices, Muchas Voces,” Art Exhibit Celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month

Rep. Adriano Espaillat Scheduled to Keynote Opening Reception

(New York, N.Y. — Oct. 2, 2018) SUNY Empire State College celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month through “Many Voices, Muchas Voces,” an exhibition featuring artwork by the college’s students, faculty and alumni.

The artistic expressions respond to this year’s national theme, “Hispanics: One Endless Voice to Enhance our Traditions,” in a variety of mediums, including oil paint on canvas, photography, digital illustrations and drawings, all of which reflect the diversity of Hispanic history and culture.

Rep. Adriano Espaillat, D-N.Y., 13th District, is scheduled to keynote the opening reception, which takes place at 5 p.m., Thursday, Oct. 11, Metro Gallery, fifth floor of the college’s 325 Hudson Street location in Manhattan.

He said, “I am proud to join SUNY Empire State College to celebrate the rich history and proud heritage of the Latino community during National Hispanic Heritage month. The ‘Many Voices, Muchas Voces’ exhibition highlights the significant role of Latinos in helping to shape this nation and its future. Our voices are culturally significant and our stories help to tell the story of the American Dream in communities around the nation and to audiences around the globe.”

“Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month through the artwork of students, alumni and faculty reflects the diversity of those populations and the college’s overall commitment to diversity in its academic enterprise,” said Officer in Charge Mitchell S. Nesler. “At the same time, ‘Many Voices, Muchas Voces’ showcases the talent of the college community in the visual arts.”

“This exhibit brings together many voices from across the American continent and combines them into one,” said Visiting Assistant Professor Raúl Manzano ‘05, who curated the exhibition. “Through the creativity of the artists, Hispanic heritage is celebrated in many mediums in beautiful and provocative ways. We are fortunate to be able to draw on such a deep well of talent at the college for this important recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month.”

Gallery hours are noon to 5 p.m., Monday through Thursday. The exhibit runs through Thursday, Nov. 29. Admission is free and access to the gallery is by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, contact Manzano at Raul.Manzano@esc.edu or 718-907-5740.

Manzano, a 2005 alumnus, has been with the faculty since 2006. He introduced the Hispanic Heritage month exhibits in 2011 at the college’s Brooklyn location.

Since then, the college has partnered with several organizations, including the [Latin American Cultural Week \(LACW\)](#), the [Pan American Musial Research \(PAMAR\)](#) and the Latin Media and Entertainment Commission, as well as with public elected officials celebrating the Latino culture.

About the Artists

Patricia Cazorla ‘17

In metaphorical visual language, with bold and vivid colors of the Ararauna bird, an endangered species displaced from its habit in the Amazon and adapted to new lands, Cazorla expresses views on the current socio-political volatility of her native country, Venezuela. She portrays an exodus from Venezuela in “Many Voices, Muchas Voces” that has never been seen in the Americas before and a displacement of people that has been compared to the Syrian crisis.

“The Venezuelan government has been infringing on human rights and has created a horrific health crisis and unlivable conditions for its citizens,” said Cazorla.

Natural Langdon '17

Langdon's documentary photographs of Cuba bring awareness to traditions and cultures that seem to be disappearing or changing due to global influences, technology and commercialization. Langdon said, "My photos reflect daily life in Habana, Cuba, exploring the people, markets and the lives of others in search of authentic Cuban culture through their many voices."

Raúl Manzano '05

In his narrative oil paintings of the Statue of Liberty, Manzano fuses past and present perceptions of this iconic symbol, assuming the roles of spiritual protector and the nation's guardian.

In his painting "Come Sweet Heart, Lean on Me," the artist portrays a welcome, safe and comforting environment for an immigrant boy who seems to be fragile and lost in a new world and his uncertain future.

In another work, "Grasping for Freedom, Grasping for Hope," Manzano applies dramatic dual aerial perspectives to bring two stories together. In one, hands from people of diverse backgrounds reach up to the Statute of Liberty for help. In the other, a shocking and disconcerting facial expression is worn by "Lady Liberty," who is looking down over a dividing wall, leaving viewers wondering how they perceive current socio-cultural, racial and political affairs in 21st-century America.

Student Carmen Velez

Exploring her Latino heritage through the many Hispanic communities, Carmen Velez's photographs provide a glimpse of this rich and diverse culture in an increasingly gentrified society. Her images of food markets and portraits of the everyday citizen are testimonies to the influence of these vibrant and hard-working communities.

Student George A. Velez

George Velez's children's books illustrations are a play between fantasy and reality, where he transports the imagination of a child to an adult world in search of friends beyond planet Earth. The images combine traditional drawing and digital media techniques.

About Hispanic Heritage Month

Each year, Americans observe [National Hispanic Heritage Month](#) from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15 by celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of United States citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988 to encompass the current 30-day period. It was enacted into law on Aug. 17, 1988, on approval of Public Law 100-402.

About SUNY Empire State College

SUNY Empire State College educates nearly 18,000 adult students in person, online, and through a blend of both, at more than 30 locations in New York and worldwide at eight international sites.

Together with one of the SUNY Empire's more than 1,300 faculty mentors, each student designs his or her own customized pathway to a college degree that accommodates his or her schedule and awards credit for prior college-level learning.

SUNY Empire awards more than 3,000 degrees annually and 94 percent of graduates stay in New York state. Today, more than 84,000 SUNY Empire alumni are entrepreneurs, veterans and active members of the military, professional athletes, teachers, medical professionals and leaders in their field, as well as in their communities. To learn more, visit www.esc.edu and follow the college on social media @SUNYEmpire.

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