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# IWU Celebrates Latinx Heritage Month

Oct. 10, 2022

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. — As National Latinx Heritage Month continues through Oct. 15, Illinois Wesleyan University is celebrating the culture and history of Latinx communities through events and discussions.

“Latinx Heritage Month provides us with an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the achievements of individual members and groups with the Hispanic-Latine communities here in the US that have contributed to our collective culture and heritage. [Hispanic Studies](#), together with [ODI \(Office of Diversity and Inclusion\)](#), SALSA (Spanish and Latine Student Association) and Spanish Club have been paying tribute to Hispanic people and cultures with diverse programming for decades,” said Byron S. Tucci Professor of Hispanic Studies Carolyn Nadeau.

On Oct. 11, [spoken-word poet Melissa Lozada-Oliva](#) will be speaking/performing at 4 p.m. at Hansen Student Center. Lozada-

Oliva is a Guatemalobian (Guatemalan-Colombian) American poet and screenwriter whose most recent publication “Dreaming of You” is about bringing Mexican-American singer Selena back to life through a seance and the consequences that follow.

This event, which is part of the 2022-23 University Theme the Power of Place, is free and open to the public and is sponsored by the English Department; International and Global Studies; World Languages, Literatures, and Cultures; and the Office of Diversity and Inclusion. There will be a book signing after Lozada-Oliva's presentation.

IWU kicked off Latinx Heritage Month on Sept. 13, with a showing of the film “Siqueiros: Walls of Passion.” This documentary “exposed and illustrated the wonders of David Alfaro Siqueiros' murals,” said Raylene Gomez Hernandez, assistant director for the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

“Siqueiros is a famous Mexican social realist muralist whose work is considered an artistic cultural legacy for both Mexican-American and Latinx heritage. His works helped multiple revolutionary movements to advance, to be seen, and to be known across different and diverse socio-cultural spheres. As such the documentary follows his journey from his artistic youth to his heavy involvement in politics, dispute art and social movements,” Gomez Hernandez said.

ODI's main focus for this event was to showcase the richness behind Latinx heritage that is still prevalent and prominent in today's culture.

ODI also hosted an event on Sept. 27 titled “An Evening With Professor Tellez.” Professor Michelle Tellez “is a scholar and activist who has been committed to advancing projects of social justice, resistance and exploring the human experience for the last 25 years in her field,” Gomez Hernandez said.

Tellez's presentation illustrated “the richness and importance of research and the study of Latinx culture and history,” said Gomez Hernandez.

The University also hosted a Tango Live Concert on Oct. 7 featuring the Bandoneon Orchestra from Champaign-Urbana. Event-goers listened to Argentine tango music, participated in Milonga (social dance) lessons and tried Argentinian food.



Poet Melissa Lozada-Oliva will visit campus for a performance at 4 p.m. on Tuesday, Oct. 11, at Hansen Student Center, followed by a book signing.

*By Maria Harmon '23*