

# Our voice

**I**n this issue, three writers analyse the perspectives for fundamental changes in Mexico based on greater pluralistic citizen participation in politics and elections, the recent change in the government, as well as the financial crisis together with the austerity programs adopted to overcome it. Soledad Loaeza, Carlos Monsiváis and Lorenzo Meyer share their reflections on the need for working to achieve a structural change in our political system.

Citizens have been insistently demanding that the Chiapas conflict be resolved by political means through negotiations. In Mexico we hear an increasing variety and richness of voices. Civil society has gotten involved and is seeking peaceful change. On February 12 elections were held in the state of Jalisco, in which the National Action Party (PAN) won the governorship and, for the first time, a majority in the state legislature. In May, elections will be held in Guanajuato and Yucatan, and we hope that these will be characterized by fairness and a high level of citizen participation.

Timothy E. Anna writes that Mexico, the United States and Canada are products of the European colonialism which imposed itself on the autochthonous states, and that when these nations won independence they chose federalism as their form of political organization. Federalism, he maintains, allows many voices to be heard and participate in the process of national identity.

A referendum will shortly be held in Quebec, so that its inhabitants may decide whether they want to continue to be part of Canada or become an independent country. Both in Robin Berting's article and in the piece on the international

conference about "Electoral Processes in Mexico, the U.S. and Canada, 1994, Evaluation and Perspectives," organized by CISAN, the likelihood is posed that the Quebecois will vote "no" on independence from Canada.

Yucatan is the site of the museum we feature on this occasion. Housed in a lovely Colonial building, the Yucatan Atheneum Museum of Contemporary Art (MACAY) will have its first anniversary this April. Carlos García Ponce, president of the MACAY Cultural Foundation, is carrying out exceptional work in rescuing and promoting our artistic and cultural values.

Elsa Rea presents us with an interesting article on the tlacuilos of the 16th century. The cultural and ethnic mixing we call mestizaje led these painter-scrivener of pre-Hispanic codices to learn the trade of scribes in the European tradition. We present some beautiful examples of that syncretism.

With regard to cultural dissemination, David Maciel has made a review of the development of Chicano cinema, based on an analysis of the most representative films. He leads us from the origins through future perspectives, showing how most Chicano cinema has been produced independently—a situation which is likely to continue given that the big studios do not consider these films economically attractive.

Another panoramic view presented in this issue deals with the contemporary Mexican short story. Lauro Zavala says there are more readers of this genre than of novels, because of its brevity and its mimicry of other quotidian genres such as journalistic and letter writing. He notes that abroad, interest in Mexican short stories has grown over the past ten years, giving rise to the

publication of several anthologies of translations. He dedicated his article to Edmundo Valadés, in memoriam.

Valadés was a great promoter of this genre in Mexico, through *El Cuento* (*The Story*) magazine, which he founded in 1939. Apart from a few periods of economic crisis, he continued to publish it until his death at the end of last year. He was always involved in supporting and stimulating young talents. In *Voices of Mexico* we render him a well-deserved tribute.

We do the same for Eduardo Mata, the internationally renowned Mexican conductor and composer. From 1966 to 1975 he directed our university's Philharmonic Orchestra, and this period is considered the orchestra's best. From 1977 to 1993 he was the artistic director of the Dallas Symphony Orchestra, whose musical quality won it a Grammy nomination. His accidental death left unfulfilled a season schedule of eight concerts this year in his capacity as principal conductor of the Symphony Orchestra of Rome, and certainly a greater legacy of compositions as well.



The National University of Mexico (UNAM) promotes the artistic and cultural splendor of Mexico. Thus we are proud to acquaint our readers with the UNAM Choreographic Workshop,

which was founded in 1970. Since that year Gloria Contreras has carried out magnificent work, through the creation of choreographic

pieces and various teaching methods for promoting the appreciation of dance and music.

April 17 marks the third centenary of the death of a great woman: Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz. Her scientific curiosity and thirst for knowledge made her one of the most erudite figures of her era. She is considered the last great writer of the "Golden Century." Her beauty and intelligence awakened envy. When Sor Juana was forced to sell all her books and scientific instruments, she lost not only her freedom to study but her interest in life as well. ❧

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