

Latino Festival Warms Hearts, Blends Cultures

By JOEL LOBENTHAL

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Art, dialogue and infectious drum-and-maraca rhythms wove the rich tapestry of “Corazon Latino: The Latino Heritage Culture Festival” at the New York Culture Center today.

The festival celebrated the traditions and diversity of Latinos in the United States, as well as the challenges they face.

We sought to create a project that would unify — without homogenizing — the many cultures from which Latinos in the United States descend, said Norma Romero, SGI-USA member and organizer of the daylong event.

Attendees were treated to a performance by a children’s chorus, cultural and historical exhibits, a multimedia presentation, authentic cuisine, and a puppet theater — they could even take a crash course in the tango.

The festival was designed to appeal to members and non-members alike. A panel of speakers emphasized the power of culture and education to integrate the individual within society as well as transform human perceptions of reality.

Poetry, Mozart and folk dance sought to show visitors that education and high culture, contrary to some popular opinion, are important to Latinos.

“I want people to know that everyone is equal,” Master of Ceremonies E. Chachi Huesca said. “We are all Buddhas.”

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