



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



EXHIBITION: *AfroMexican Journey: Yanga, Slavery, & Freedom*

DATE: February 20-July 13, 2025

RECEPTION: 6:00 pm, Thursday, February 20, 2025

PLACE: Museo de las Americas, 861 Santa Fe Drive, Denver, CO 80204

HOURS: Tuesday-Friday, 12 pm-6 pm; Saturday & Sunday, 12 pm-5 pm

CONTACT: Cristina Del Hoyo, Communications & Media Manager at communications@museo.org

Mask by Baltazar Castellano Melo

DENVER, CO—Museo de las Americas and Latino Arts Project with support from the Consulate General of Mexico in Denver are proud to present their first exhibition of 2025, ***AfroMexican Journey: Yanga, Slavery & Freedom***. Curated by historian, art collector, and founder of Latino Arts Project, Jorge Baldor, the exhibition centers on Gaspar Yanga, an enslaved Gabonese prince who escaped, organized a community of freed slaves, and mounted a rebellion against Spanish rulers in 16th-century Mexico. Yanga eventually secured freedom for his people, becoming the first to gain freedom through negotiation. The exhibition will be open **February 20 through July 13, 2025**, with an opening reception from **6:00-9:00 pm on Thursday, February 20**. Alongside the exhibition, Museo's *ConnectArte* lecture series will feature international artists, historical presentations, and musical tributes.

AfroMexican Journey reveals Yanga's life, highlighting his historical importance and presenting him as a symbol for the suppression of the African diaspora in Mexican history. Museo's Executive Director, Claudia Moran identifies Jorge Baldor as instrumental in highlighting this important subject: "The work of Jorge Baldor—the only art collector I know who has dedicated years to collecting works by AfroMexican artists—has been instrumental in reconstructing this vital piece of Mexico's historical puzzle. AfroMexicans were effectively erased from the national narrative until recently. Through this exhibition, we're not just displaying art; we're restoring a critical part of our cultural heritage that has been systematically overlooked."



Yanga in his Rio Blanco Palenque by Edgar Alegre Reyero, Mural Reproduction

Part art exhibition, part archival display, curator Baldor has paired AfroMexican artists working in diverse media with historical documents. Featured artworks include paintings, sculptures, stained glass, painted palm leaves, and carved jicama, exploring the AfroMexican experience. Several historical documents will be displayed for the first time, including the negotiations between Yanga and the Spanish Crown and documents that established Yanga's colony of San Lorenzo de los Negros—now called Yanga—as the first free colony in the Americas.

Reaching beyond Mexico, the exhibition draws important connections to other communities founded by formerly enslaved people. By tying together communities throughout the Americas, *AfroMexican Journey* explores the global history of the Atlantic Slave Trade, humanizing the 10 million Africans who were forcibly removed from their homelands.

The Consul General of Mexico in Denver, Pável Meléndez Cruz, highlights that “this unprecedented and astonishing exhibition in Colorado will be very relevant for the recognition, visibility and promotion of the contributions of the AfroMexican population in our history and culture”.

As curator Baldor notes, “The story of Yanga and the AfroMexican journey is a tale of resilience, courage and cultural preservation that has been hidden for centuries. Latino Arts Project is dedicated to uncovering these untold narratives. By combining art and historical documents, we aim to humanize these experiences and bring them vividly to life.”

AfroMexican Journey: Yanga, Slavery & Freedom is organized with support from Latino Arts Project, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico, the Bonfils Stanton Foundation, and the residents who support The Scientific Cultural and Facilities District (SCFD).

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About Museo de las Americas

Museo de las Americas is the premier Latin American Art Museum of the Rocky Mountain region. Located in the heart of the Art District on Santa Fe, Museo is dedicated to educating our community through collecting, preserving, interpreting, and exhibiting the diverse arts and culture of the Americas, from ancient to contemporary, through innovative exhibitions and programming. Museo's operating hours are Tuesday-Friday, 12 PM-6 PM, and Saturday-

Sunday, 12 PM-5 PM.

Please contact Cristina Del Hoyo, Communications & Media Manager for more information at communications@museo.org or visit <http://museo.org>.

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Museo de las Americas
861 Santa Fe Drive | (303) 571-4401 | Museo.org



MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday-Friday noon-6pm
Saturday-Sunday noon-5pm
Monday - Closed

ADMISSION

Members: Free
General Admission: \$8
Students, Artists, Military & Seniors: \$5
Kids under 13: Free

Museo de las Americas | 861 Santa Fe Drive | Denver, CO 80204 US

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