

SPARCnews

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FIRST LADY OF MEXICO TO INAUGURATE WORLD WALL

Armando Durón, President of the Board of Directors of the Social and Public Art Resource Center (SPARC), has announced that Sra. Cecilia Ocelli de Salinas, wife of the President of Mexico, has accepted SPARC's invitation to inaugurate the exhibition of Judith Baca's World Wall at the Museo del Chopo in Mexico City on August 4th of this year.

Widely known in Los Angeles as President of last year's Artes de Mexico Festival, Durón called the World Wall exhibition an important milestone in SPARC's development. "Going to Mexico City, where public art in the twentieth century was born, is an opportunity to show what we have done with that legacy."

Judith F. Baca, Artistic Director of SPARC and premier muralist of the World Wall, was equally elated at the news. Baca declared that the "World Wall represents a leap in the evolution of public art because rather than being in one place where people have to travel to see it, the World Wall travels the globe. And the fact that our muralism is based on an interracial model of production, flowing out of SPARC's Los Angeles neighborhood projects, marks a new stage in Mexican-Chicano relations."

SPARC is a multicultural arts center founded in 1976 that produces murals and other forms of public art. SPARC's alternative gallery space features work by women and underrepresented ethnic artists. The major projects for which it is nationally recognized include the Great Wall of Los Angeles in the San Fernando Valley, and the Great Walls Unlimited: Neighborhood Pride mural project, which this summer will complete 56 murals throughout Los Angeles under contract with the city's Cultural Affairs Department. Due to the city's budgetary problems, that program is presently under threat of suffering a substantial cutback. SPARC has been encouraged by the groundswell of public appeals to the City Council to save the Great Walls program.

The World Wall grew out of artist Judith Baca's interracial neighborhood mural project, which involved negotiating among different social groups, and aims to present a higher level of international global concerns to audiences throughout the world. At its present stage, it includes six of an eventual installation of fourteen 10' x 30' panels, calling attention to the need for world peace and conversion of military resources to human-based technology. Thus far the World Wall has traveled to Finland and Russia, where it acquired new panels by Finnish and Russian artists, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC, East Los Angeles, Santa Barbara, and now Mexico City, where artist Felipe Ehrenberg will contribute an additional panel. Future venues include Canada, South Africa and Korea.

The World Wall will be on display at the Museo del Chopo from August 4th to September 5th. For further information, call 310 822-9560.

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