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**For Immediate Release**

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**The Center for Traditional Music and Dance, the Mano a Mano Committee  
and the Museum of the City of New York present  
POSADAS Y PASTORELAS**

**Sunday, December 19, 2004 - 10:00 am to 5:00 pm  
1220 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan**

**Event is free with Museum admission. Fun for the whole family!**

New York, NY, November 30, 2004. - The Center for Traditional Music & Dance and the Mano a Mano Committee will present POSADAS Y PASTORELAS for the second consecutive year, bringing this festive event to the Museum of the City of New York. The traditional Mexican holiday celebration will include workshops, music, traditional foods and a procession of song and dance that evokes the search for lodging (Posada) by Mary and Joseph. One of the highlights will be the traditional Pastorela, a Shepherds Play presented by Tepochcalli, a theatrical group from Yonkers. The event culminates with a party and the breaking of piñatas.

This fun-filled program will last all day and give New York families an idea of how Mexicans prepare for and celebrate the holidays. All events are free (with a small charge for the photo booth) with Museum admission. Suggested contribution is \$7 for adults, \$5 for children, students and seniors, and \$15 for adults with children. The Museo del Barrio (one block away on Fifth Avenue) is offering Posadas y Pastorelas attendees free admission on this day.

Emily Socolov, Project Director of Mano a Mano: Mexican Culture Without Borders at the Center for Traditional Music & Dance says of the event: "We are thrilled to be collaborating with a cultural institution of the caliber of the Museum of the City of New York. We hope that with Posadas y Pastorelas we begin a close relationship, jointly presenting Mexican culture to the community at large in our great City." Robert Blandford, Director of Public Programs at the Museum of the City of New York was equally enthusiastic: "The Museum of the City of New York is proud to host Posadas y Pastorelas as part of our commitment to celebrating the cultural diversity of our city and the Latino heritage of the East Harlem community, home to the Museum."

**About the Program**

**POSADAS** are popular Mexican celebrations which date back to the colonial period. They commemorate the journey of Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Traditionally, they take place at private homes over nine nights, culminating with the most important *posada* on Christmas Eve. The guests participate in an outdoor procession with special songs. Although they are denied admittance in house after house, they are finally successful in requesting *posada* (lodging) and are joyfully admitted into a local home. There they are given *aguinaldos*, goody baskets containing fruits and candy. The celebration concludes with the breaking of piñatas. This custom is also very popular in the urban Mexican communities throughout the New York area.

**PASTORELAS** are performed in Mexico during the holiday season and have their roots in the early Christian theater of Europe in the middle ages. *Pastorelas* – like other folk dramas - were introduced in Mexico by the colonizers with the goal of converting the indigenous population to Christianity. By Mexico's Independence, performing *Pastorelas* was incorporated into the village tradition and the plays are performed seasonally through the present day. *Pastorelas* are characterized by innocence and candor in their depiction of the battle between good and evil. Their characters are guileless shepherds, angels and the three wise men vs. a host of picaresque devils and demons. Their comic dialogs are spoken in rhyme.



## Schedule

- **10 AM–1 PM Workshops on crafts and cooking.** Visitors can make piñatas and paper poinsettia flowers as well as devils' horns and angels' halos - reminiscent of the *Pastorelas*. And for something truly delectable, visit the cooking workshops where Mexican tamales and the delicious fruit *ponche*, traditional holiday foods, will be prepared. Workshop program is coordinated by Aurelia Fernández Marure and Margarita Larios.
- **1 PM & 3 PM: *Pastorela* – Shepherds Play** with Tepochcalli, a theatrical group from Yonkers
- **2 PM: A neighborhood *Posada* procession.** Headed by a group of actors representing Mary and Joseph on their voyage to find lodging before the birth of Jesus, the procession also includes *concheros* dancers, singing and dancing in a tradition with roots in Pre-Columbian times. The procession will make several stops in the community before returning to the Museum.
- **4 PM: *Posada* party with piñatas, and much more!** The long awaited moment for children and adults, as well. A chance to sing together and break festive piñatas.

## Presenters

**The Center for Traditional Music & Dance (CTMD)** one of the nation's premier traditional arts organizations, builds cross-cultural awareness by nurturing and preserving the performing arts traditions of New York City's immigrant and ethnic communities. The Center develops and presents research-based performance and education programs for general and community audiences, collaborates with cultural institutions, documents traditions, produces audio and visual publications, maintains an extensive archive, promotes performance opportunities and builds support for community-based cultural expression. ([www.ctmd.org](http://www.ctmd.org))

**Mano a Mano: Mexican Culture Without Borders**, CTMD's initiative in the Mexican community of New York is in its third year of presenting major collaborative cultural events in the New York City area. Composed of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans of many generations and occupations, the Committee strives to present the rich range of Mexican cultural forms. Members include Margarita Larios, Aurelia Fernandez Marure, Mayra Garcia, Enrique Gonzalez, Zafiro Romero, Lucia Rojas, Juan Castaño, and Adriana Caballero. Emily Socolov is Project Director. ([www.manoamano.us](http://www.manoamano.us))

**The Museum of the City of New York** embraces the past, present, and future of New York City and celebrates the city's cultural diversity. Its rich collections, active exhibition program, and diverse roster of school and public programs are all dedicated to fostering understanding of New York's evolution from its origins as a settlement of a few hundred Europeans, Africans, and native Americans to its present status as one of the world's largest, most important, and most diverse cities. ([www.mcny.org](http://www.mcny.org))

Support for *Posadas y Pastorelas* was provided to the Center for Traditional Music and Dance by the National Endowment for the Arts Heritage and Preservation Program, New York State Council on the Arts Folk Arts Program, a State agency, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Con Edison, and Citigroup Foundation. Media Sponsor: El Diario/La Prensa

## **Directions:**

**Subway:** #6 train to 103rd St. or #2 or #3 train to Central Park North (110th St)

**Bus:** M1, M3, M4, or M106 to 104th St., M2 to 101st St

Ramp access is available at the 104th St. entrance

**Information:** [www.manoamano.us](http://www.manoamano.us) / 212-571-1555x35 / [esocolov@ctmd.org](mailto:esocolov@ctmd.org) / [www.ctmd.org](http://www.ctmd.org)  
Museum of the City of New York: [www.mcny.org](http://www.mcny.org) / 212-534-1672 /

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