FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Press Contact:
Juan Carlos Aguirre
212-587-3070
jaguirre@manoamano.us

A BENEFIT FOR MANO A MANO HONORING LILA DOWNS
DEDICATED PROMOTER OF MEXICAN AND INDIGENOUS MUSIC

New York, N.Y., September 7, 2012—**Mano a Mano: Mexican Culture Without Borders** announces a benefit honoring Lila Downs, an innovative singer who for almost two decades has used her knowledge of traditional Mexican music to celebrate Mexican culture throughout North America.

For her tireless efforts, Mano a Mano will be presenting Ms. Downs with the 2012 Yoloxochitl Award at a reception on Wednesday, October 10th, 2012. Meaning "Flower of the Heart" in Nahuatl, the most widely spoken pre-Columbian language in Mexico, the award is given annually to an honoree for their exceptional dedication to the promotion of Mexican culture in New York and beyond. This benefit will enable Mano a Mano to continue offering its free and low-cost cultural programming to members of the community, including Mexicanidad, a series of classes on Nahuatl, music, dance, art and other aspects of Mexican culture.

The festivities will start with a VIP reception from 6-7 pm. Guests will be able to meet Ms. Downs, and enjoy food and signature cocktails created exclusively for the VIP reception by Julian Medina of Toloache and Yerba Buena Restaurants. During the celebration, Honorary Chair and Celebrated Chef Zarela Martinez (previous recipient of the award) will lead chefs from proclaimed New York City Mexican restaurants in presenting some of their specialty dishes including Casa Mezcal, Chavela's, El Almacen, Fonda, Hecho en Dumbo, La Palapa, Tacombi and Rosarito Fish Shack. Genesis Brands in conjunction with Mezcal from Oaxaca will offer an exclusive tasting of artisanal mezcales and La Neworquina will offer their famous hand made Mexican sweets. After the award Ms. Downs will sing a song. A silent auction, and a presentation by the group Jarana Beat will conclude the evening.

Lila Downs was born in Oaxaca, Mexico, and divided her childhood between Mexico and the U.S., graduating from the University of Minnesota in voice and anthropology. Highlighting indigenous origins has always been an important aspect of her music, as well as the topics of political and social justice, immigration, and transformation. She strives to make a meaningful connection with her diverse audiences through her music and performances. www.liladowns.com

Mano a Mano: Mexican Culture Without Borders is a New York-based non-profit organization dedicated to celebrating Mexican culture and promoting the understanding of Mexican traditions in New York through Mexicanidad, an arts and culture program, and annual celebrations of holidays. www.manoamano.us

Event Information: Wednesday, October 10, 2012
at the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics
20 Cooper Square, 5th Floor
6-7p VIP Reception with Lila Downs
7-9p Benefit
Tickets: $100 for Celebration/$150 for Celebration and VIP Reception
Please purchase at: www.manoamano.us/en/lila-downs.html

#####