

Migrations: The Guiding Thread for Cervantino 2019

Canada and the State of Guerrero Will Be Guests of Honour at the 47th Edition of the *Cervantino* International Festival

- **Festival attendance increased by 4%**
- **The digital cultural program was viewed more than 2,243,074 times on the official portal**
- **45% of the program activities were for children and families**

The 47th edition of the Festival Internacional Cervantino, which will take place October 9-27, 2019, will have Canada and the State of Guerrero as its guests of honour. Both guests will present a series of performances that relate to the 2019 festival's central theme of Migrations.

This announcement was made by the Festival's General Chair, Marcela Diez Martinez, who on behalf of the Federal Secretary of Culture, Maria Cristina Garcia Cepeda, acknowledged the great work and collaboration of India and the State of Aguascalientes at this year's edition, which just ended. Martinez also stated that next year's Festival will offer great artistic and cultural performances from its guests of honour.

"We are a mestizo people par excellence, and we wouldn't be here if it weren't for migration. Today, the world is seeing many groups of peoples immigrating for political, economic and personal reasons. Mexicans head north in the search of a better life, Central Americans come to Mexico, and more than 91,000 migrants have arrived in Europe via the Mediterranean Sea. Migrations define the historical evolution of peoples," she stated in a press conference following a preliminary overview of the Festival's 46th edition.

Canada, a country populated by people from around the world, will present artistic performances that relate to the theme of Migrations at next year's festival. Music, theatre, and dance from the northernmost country in the Americas will converge at the Festival to reflect on people's movements across borders in the Americas and around the world.

The State of Guerrero will bring oral traditions, dance and music, which illustrate the cultural diversity of one of the most historically rich states in Mexico. It is also one of the entities with the greatest mobility of people.

The preliminary overview of the 2018 Festival reported 367,249 attendees, which represents a 2% increase of visitors to Guanajuato and a 4% increase of attendees to the Festival.

A total of 192 performances in 50 fora took place during the Festival, and 34 nations were represented. A total of 35 visual arts exhibitions were featured, as well as a travelling cultural program called *El FIC en la República Mexicana* (The Festival Internacional Cervantino in the Mexican Republic) which brought 160 performances to 38 cities across the country.

Another highlight was the interaction with the Festival's digital platforms: a total of 2,243,074 interactions with the digital cultural program were recorded, as well as 604,424 followers on

Twitter and 24,631 on Instagram. The streaming service recorded 2,793 users. More than 600 media representatives oversaw the Festival's media coverage.

The ceremony was attended by the General Chair of the Festival Internacional Cervantino; as well as Adriana Camarena de Obeso, General Chair of the *Instituto de Cultura de Guanajuato*; Luis Felipe Guerrero Agripino, President of the *Universidad de Guanajuato*; Alejandro Navarro, Mayor of Guanajuato; Roberto Cárdenas, Director of Planning and Analysis at the Secretariat of Tourism; Rodolfo Mauricio Leyva Castrejón, Secretary of Culture of the State of Guerrero; and Simon Brault, Director and CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts.

Adriana Camarena de Obeso, General Chair of the *Instituto de Cultura de Guanajuato*, expressed her gratitude towards artists and said that, "for the current edition, the State of Guanajuato invested more than 28 million pesos [approx. CAD 1.8 M] in the improvement of infrastructure and participated in the organization of the Festival through two main areas: first, the presence of 997 artists from Guanajuato in 11 musical performances, six theatre performances and three visual arts exhibitions; and second, the collaboration of more than 3,000 staff members in 18 teams, who oversaw the logistics of the Festival."

With regards to the State of Guerrero's involvement in next year's event as a guest of honour, Rodolfo Mauricio Leyva Castrejón, the State's Secretary of Culture, noted that a strong partnership will be formed with Canada and they will discuss how to collaborate and make the 47th edition of the Festival unforgettable.

Speaking on the theme of the 2019 Festival, he said, "Canada is a place that has been recognized for defending human rights and for opening its doors to immigrants. The State of Guerrero is recognized as the cradle of Afro-Mexican culture, Judaism in Mexico, and many great artistic creators."

Simon Brault, the Director and CEO of the Canada Council for the Arts, reminded the audience that Canada was the guest of honour at the Festival in 2002, as was Quebec in 2009. He affirmed that his country has seen many changes since then, which will be reflected in the program it presents.

"In Canada, we're deeply inspired by immigration—Canada was formed through immigration. Back home, we truly understand what it means to migrate from one place to another, and as far as culture is concerned, we clearly perceive movements and fusions between different styles."