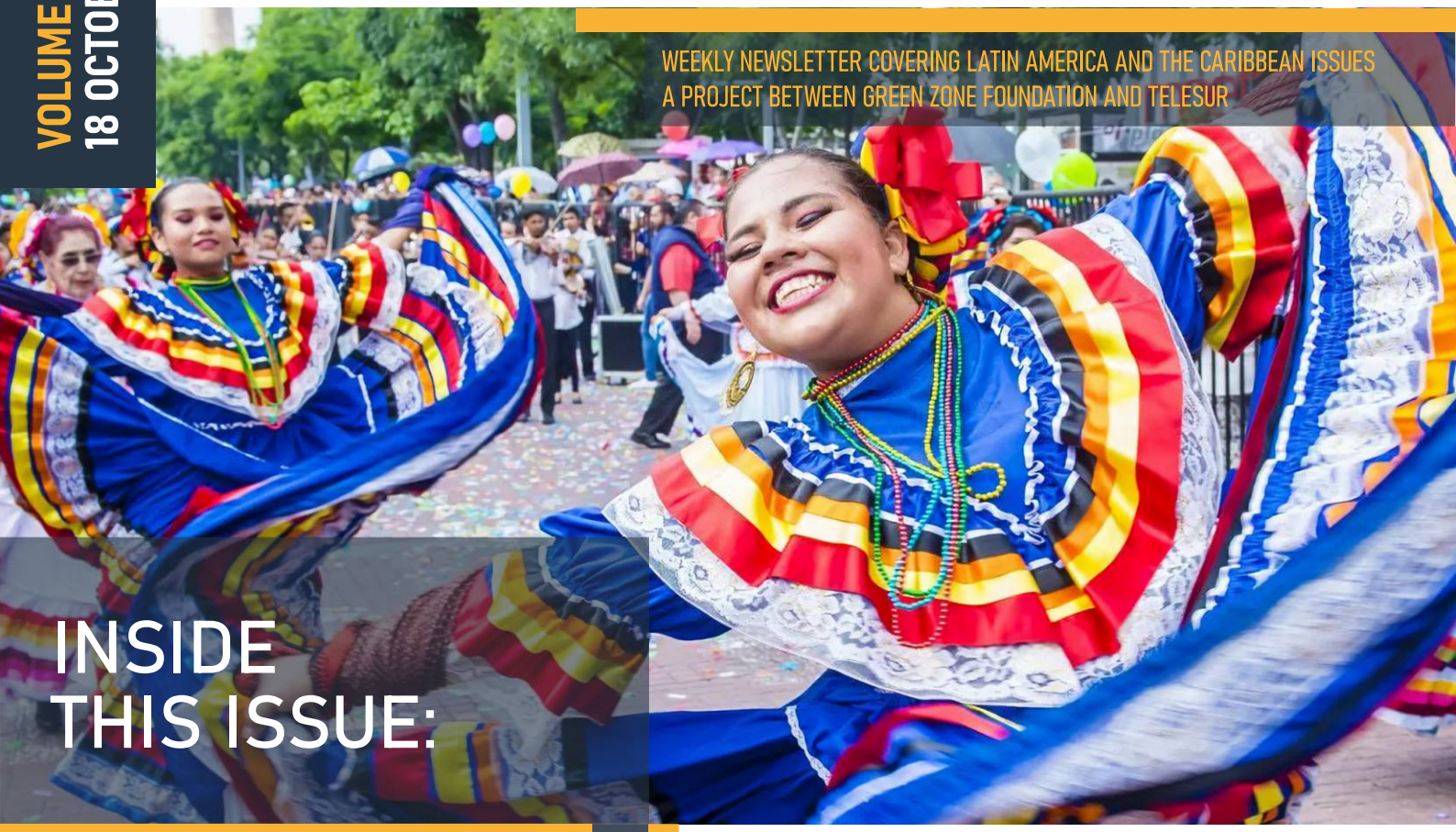
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NEWSLETTER

A VISION OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER COVERING LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ISSUES
A PROJECT BETWEEN GREEN ZONE FOUNDATION AND TELESUR



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MAFALDA AT 61



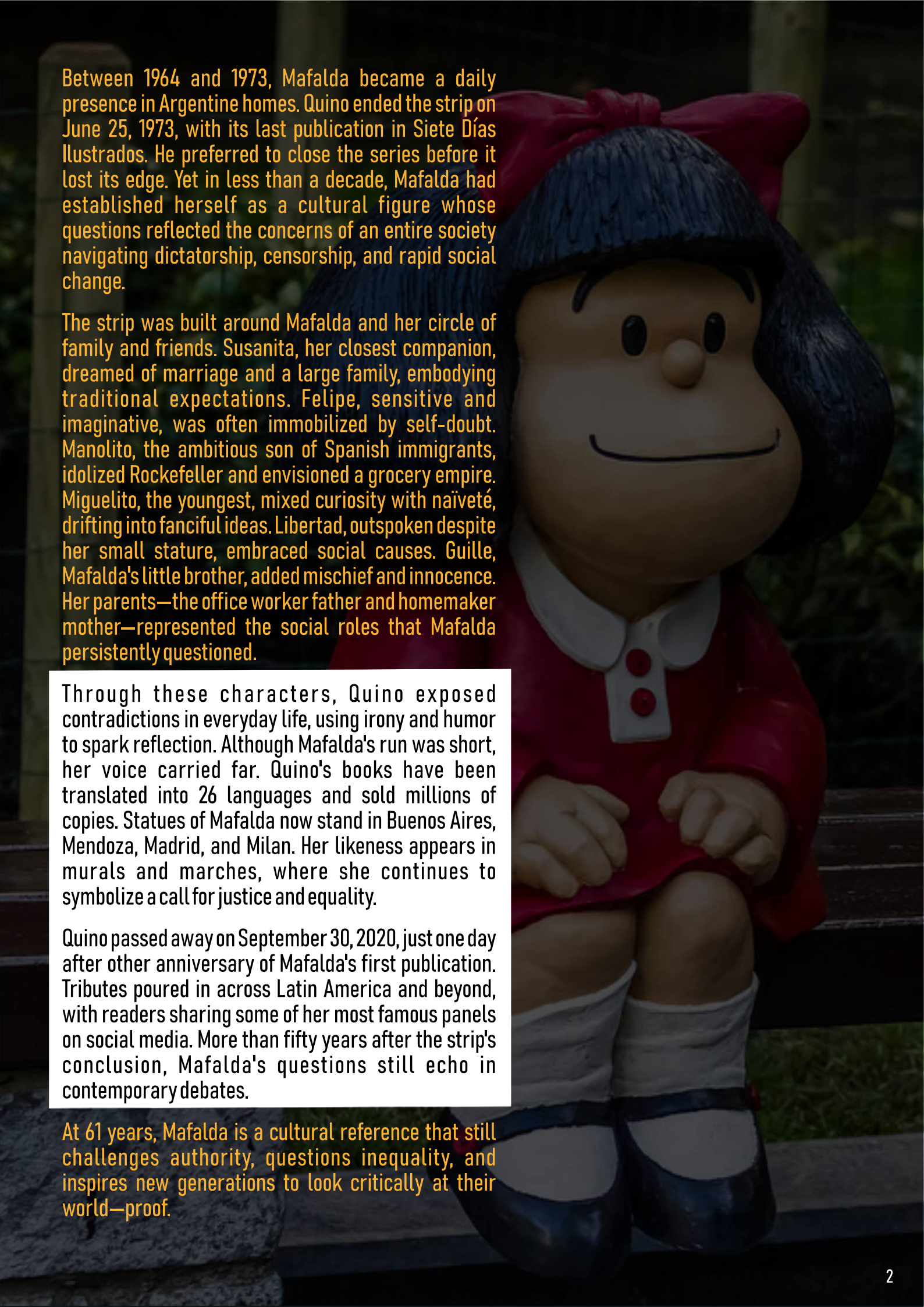
THE LASTING VOICE OF LATIN AMERICA'S MOST ICONIC CARTOON

Six decades after its debut, Quino's Mafalda endures as a cultural touchstone that continues to challenge and inspire across generations.

When Mafalda first appeared in the Argentine magazine Primera Plana on September 29, 1964, few imagined that the strip would transcend its nine years in print to become a defining cultural symbol. Six decades later, the sharp, soup-hating girl created by Joaquín Salvador Lavado Tejón—better known as Quino—continues to resonate across languages and generations.

Mafalda's beginnings were almost accidental. In 1962, Quino designed the character for an advertising campaign for the appliance company Siam di Tella, while working at Agens Publicidad. The campaign was never released, and the drawings were left unused. Two years later, Mafalda found her way into print, making her official debut on September 29, 1964. Quino would later remark that the character had "two birthdays": the day he first drew her in March 1962, and the day she reached the public in 1964.





Between 1964 and 1973, Mafalda became a daily presence in Argentine homes. Quino ended the strip on June 25, 1973, with its last publication in Siete Días Ilustrados. He preferred to close the series before it lost its edge. Yet in less than a decade, Mafalda had established herself as a cultural figure whose questions reflected the concerns of an entire society navigating dictatorship, censorship, and rapid social change.

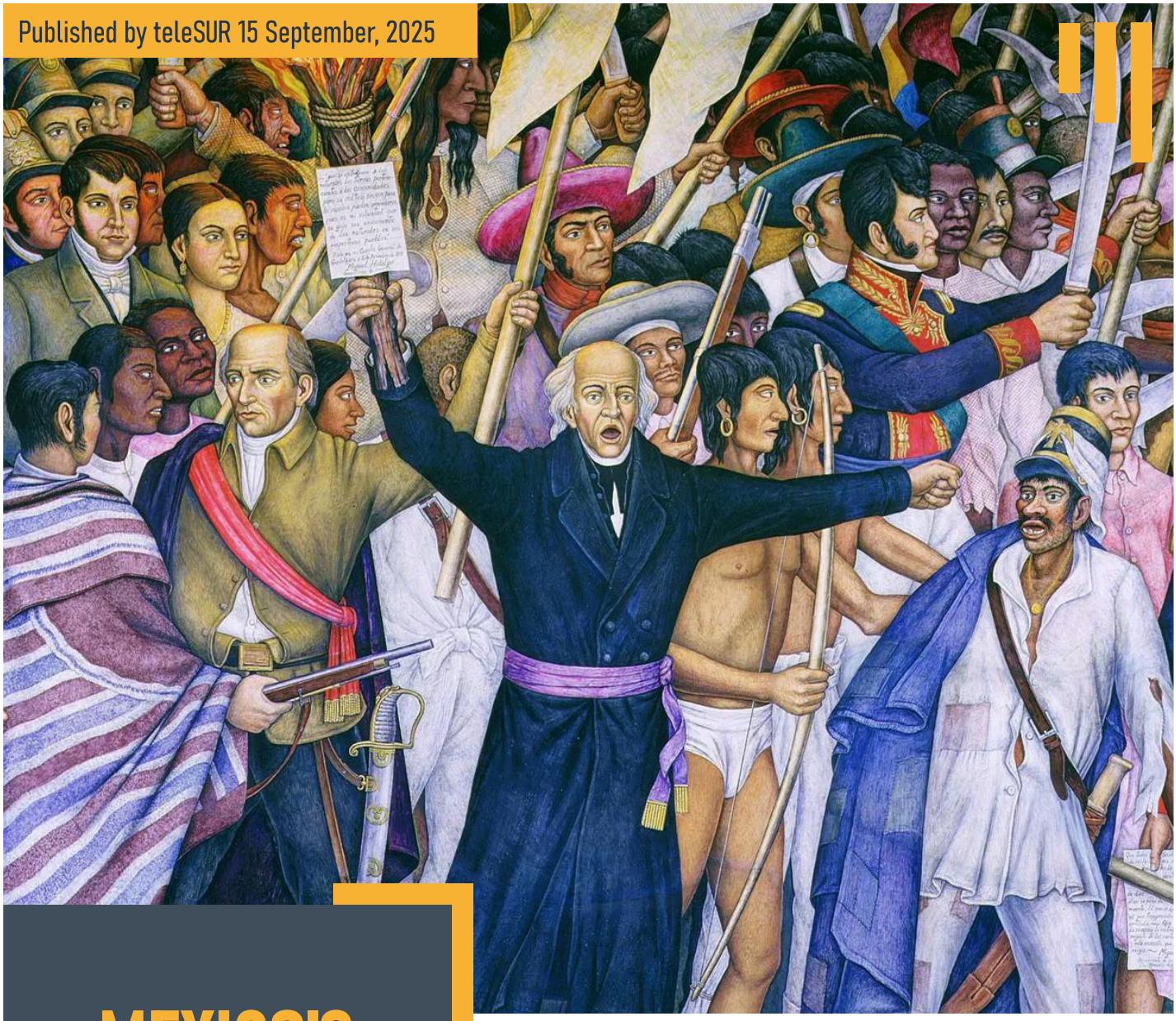
The strip was built around Mafalda and her circle of family and friends. Susanita, her closest companion, dreamed of marriage and a large family, embodying traditional expectations. Felipe, sensitive and imaginative, was often immobilized by self-doubt. Manolito, the ambitious son of Spanish immigrants, idolized Rockefeller and envisioned a grocery empire. Miguelito, the youngest, mixed curiosity with naïveté, drifting into fanciful ideas. Libertad, outspoken despite her small stature, embraced social causes. Guille, Mafalda's little brother, added mischief and innocence. Her parents—the office worker father and homemaker mother—represented the social roles that Mafalda persistently questioned.

Through these characters, Quino exposed contradictions in everyday life, using irony and humor to spark reflection. Although Mafalda's run was short, her voice carried far. Quino's books have been translated into 26 languages and sold millions of copies. Statues of Mafalda now stand in Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Madrid, and Milan. Her likeness appears in murals and marches, where she continues to symbolize a call for justice and equality.

Quino passed away on September 30, 2020, just one day after other anniversary of Mafalda's first publication. Tributes poured in across Latin America and beyond, with readers sharing some of her most famous panels on social media. More than fifty years after the strip's conclusion, Mafalda's questions still echo in contemporary debates.

At 61 years, Mafalda is a cultural reference that still challenges authority, questions inequality, and inspires new generations to look critically at their world—proof.

Published by teleSUR 15 September, 2025



MEXICO'S "GRITO DE DOLORES"

A HISTORIC CRY THAT LIVES AS CULTURAL RITUAL

Mexico's "Grito de Dolores" is celebrated as a cultural ritual that recalls the 1810 independence cry while raising enduring questions about sovereignty, justice, and identity.

On the night of September 15, Mexico commemorates the "Grito de Dolores," the call that parish priest Miguel Hidalgo launched in 1810 to ignite the independence struggle. More than two centuries later, the ritual has become a cornerstone of national identity, blending civic ceremony, popular festivity, and the enduring contradictions of postcolonial sovereignty.

The origins of the Grito were rooted in a society marked by profound inequalities. Colonial rule concentrated power and wealth in the hands of Spaniards born in the peninsula, while criollos, despite their local influence, were largely excluded from high office. Below them, Indigenous communities and mestizos bore the weight of tribute, debt, and exploitation in haciendas, workshops, and mines. In the Bajío region, thousands of so-called "indios laboríos" lived without legal protections, trapped in cycles of forced labor and indebted servitude. Reforms imposed by the Spanish Crown in the late eighteenth century tightened fiscal controls and monopolies, deepening resentment across social groups.

Well before Hidalgo's call, networks of dissent had been forming. Conspiracies in Querétaro and other towns revealed the ferment of ideas about self-rule, fueled by Enlightenment thought, the influence of the French and Haitian revolutions, and the example of other movements in Latin America. When these conspiracies were discovered, urgency replaced planning. In the early hours of September 16, 1810, Hidalgo rang the church bell in Dolores, calling on the people to rise. His words, remembered as the "Grito," crystallized the discontent of a fractured colony and unleashed a war that would last more than a decade.

The uprising carried multiple promises: the abolition of Indigenous tribute, the end of forms of slavery, relief from crushing debts, and the possibility of greater autonomy for local communities. Some changes materialized, especially in territories seized by insurgents, but many aspirations remained unfulfilled. Independence brought political sovereignty, yet entrenched inequalities and external dependencies survived well into the new republic.

Today, the Grito is reenacted each year from the balcony of the National Palace in Mexico City, where the president rings the historic bell from Dolores. The act is replicated in plazas across the country and by Mexican communities abroad, especially in the United States, making it both a domestic and diasporic ritual.

But the meaning of the Grito goes far beyond official ceremony. It is embedded in popular culture: mariachi music, folkloric dance, and traditional dishes like pozole, tostadas, and chiles en nogada. Families gather to celebrate, town squares transform into collective stages, and fireworks light the night sky. In this way, history is not only remembered but performed through sound, flavor, and community.

Successive governments have also reinterpreted the Grito to serve their times, from Porfirio Díaz's nationalist spectacles to the mass rallies of the 20th century, and the present-day ceremonies broadcast nationwide. This political appropriation underscores its dual nature: a tool of state legitimacy and a symbol embraced by ordinary people as part of their cultural fabric.

Viewed from the perspective of the global South, the Grito resonates alongside other independence movements that sought to dismantle colonial domination across Latin America. Yet it also embodies the unfinished tasks of those struggles—social justice, equality, and genuine cultural autonomy. Its legacy is not static: it remains a reminder that independence is both a celebration of freedom and an ongoing demand for deeper transformation.

More than 200 years after Hidalgo's call, the Grito endures as both festivity and critique. It unites Mexicans in joy and memory, while also pointing to the unresolved questions of sovereignty that continue to shape the country's path within the wider story of Latin America and the global South.

Published by teleSUR 12 September, 2025



TV BRICS DOCUMENTARIES HIGHLIGHTED AT BOLIVIA'S "LEONES DE FUEGO" FESTIVAL

Between September 9 and 19, 2025, Cochabamba, Bolivia, shines as the stage for the fourth International Film Festival "Leones de Fuego." This year's program features exclusive documentary screenings created by the TV BRICS media network, the festival's international media partner.

Attendees can explore two notable TV BRICS productions: "Anomaly of the Urals" (2025), a deep dive into gold mining in one of Russia's richest mineral areas, directed by Andréi Porshniak and filmed by Dmitri Golovko; and "Worthy of Applause: New Roles of Actors from BRICS+ Countries" (2024), which highlights the "InteRussia" theater arts internship for international artists, held at the prestigious Russian State Institute of Theatrical Art (GITIS) and supported by the A. M. Gorchakov Public Diplomacy Foundation.

The special screenings lineup also includes "Tromboneros" (2021), "Artistic Life" (2024), "Sandun Impression" (2024), "Joaquín, my Cousin" (2021), "Che's Paths" (2023), and "Mergulho" (2020).

Showcasing the finest Bolivian and Latin American short fiction films, the festival aims to foster exchange between filmmakers, actors, and audiences. The 2025 edition presents a national contest featuring 20 Bolivian short films, alongside an international slate with entries from Brazil, Argentina, and Guatemala.

This celebrated event is produced by a Bolivian film company with backing from the Cochabamba city government. Leonardo Pacheco Fernández, general director of the organizing firm, notes the festival's swift evolution from a local gathering to gaining national and now international stature through partnership with TV BRICS.

Awards in the national category will honor achievements in short film, directing, screenplay, cinematography, acting, production design, music, and audience favorite. The international competition will grant a best short film award plus accolades for social media popularity.

Premieres will take place in two of Cochabamba's premier cinemas, culminating in a grand awards ceremony on September 19 that will bring together directors, jurors, officials, media, and fans.

Latin American cinema has steadily earned global acclaim for its rich storytelling, focus on social realities, and creative filmmaking styles. Filmmakers throughout the region tackle critical themes like identity, inequality, and political unrest, while exploring new genres and narrative structures. Recent works combine cultural traditions with contemporary cinematic methods, resulting in a varied and vibrant film scene that connects with audiences at home and abroad. This wave of innovation has propelled Latin American films onto prestigious award stages and festival circuits, underscoring the region's expanding impact on the international film industry.



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STITCHING HISTORY

THE ARPILLERAS AS TESTIMONY OF LIFE UNDER DICTATORSHIP

Chile's democratically elected left-wing president, Salvador Allende, is overthrown in a coup orchestrated by the Chilean military. The presidential palace, known as La Moneda, is bombed repeatedly. By the end of the day, Allende is dead and Augusto Pinochet appoints himself president. During the following seventeen years, thousands of Chileans face imprisonment, torture, and disappearance under state repression.

In this context, women turned to needle and thread to confront silence and fear. They gathered to sew arpilleras—handcrafted textiles made from scraps of fabric stitched onto burlap—that chronicled their daily lives and the absence of those who were taken.



As both artwork and document, arpilleras occupy a unique place in Chile's history. Each piece functions as a visual record, blending narrative and memory through materials drawn from everyday life. The act of stitching became a way to construct meaning in the midst of uncertainty, preserving stories that might otherwise have been erased.

Beyond their documentary role, arpilleras transformed private gestures into public statements. They bridged the domestic and the political, turning a traditionally feminine craft into a medium for collective expression and communication. Through color, texture, and composition, the makers conveyed endurance and a shared sense of purpose that resonated far beyond their workshops.

Many of these gatherings emerged with support from church-based human rights groups that provided space and solidarity. Finished arpilleras were often smuggled out of Chile, connecting women living under repression with exiled communities abroad. These exchanges built international awareness of the situation in Chile and gave the women's voices a platform beyond their borders.

The authoritarian government of Augusto Pinochet dismissed arpilleras as “tapestries of defamation.” Those discovered by authorities were seized and destroyed. To protect themselves from surveillance and arrest, many women produced their textile works anonymously or identified them only with initials.

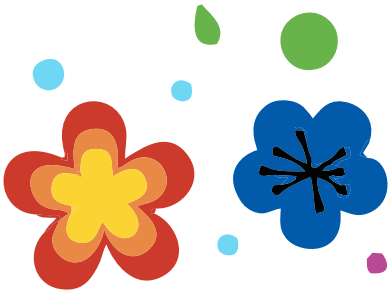
Pinochet remained in power until 1990 and continued to lead the military until 1998. Despite official efforts to obscure the scale of human rights violations, the persistence of arpilleras—their physicality, their reach, and their testimony—made denial impossible. Today, they remain enduring records of creativity, resilience, and the power of art to sustain collective memory.

HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH

HOW LATIN AMERICANS SHAPE THE U.S

National Hispanic Heritage Month is a significant celebration in the United States, observed annually from September 15 to October 15. This month-long celebration honors the cultures, histories, and contributions of Hispanic and Latino Americans. The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week under President Lyndon Johnson and was later expanded to a month-long celebration by President Ronald Reagan in 1988.

The timing aligns with the independence days of several Latin American countries—Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua on September 15, followed by Mexico on September 16 and Chile on September 18. It also includes Día de la Raza on October 12.























Education plays a central role during this month. Classrooms and public programs explore the impact of Hispanic and Latino Americans through lessons, guest speakers, and cultural activities. It's also a time for families to reconnect with their roots, share stories, and preserve cultural traditions for future generations.

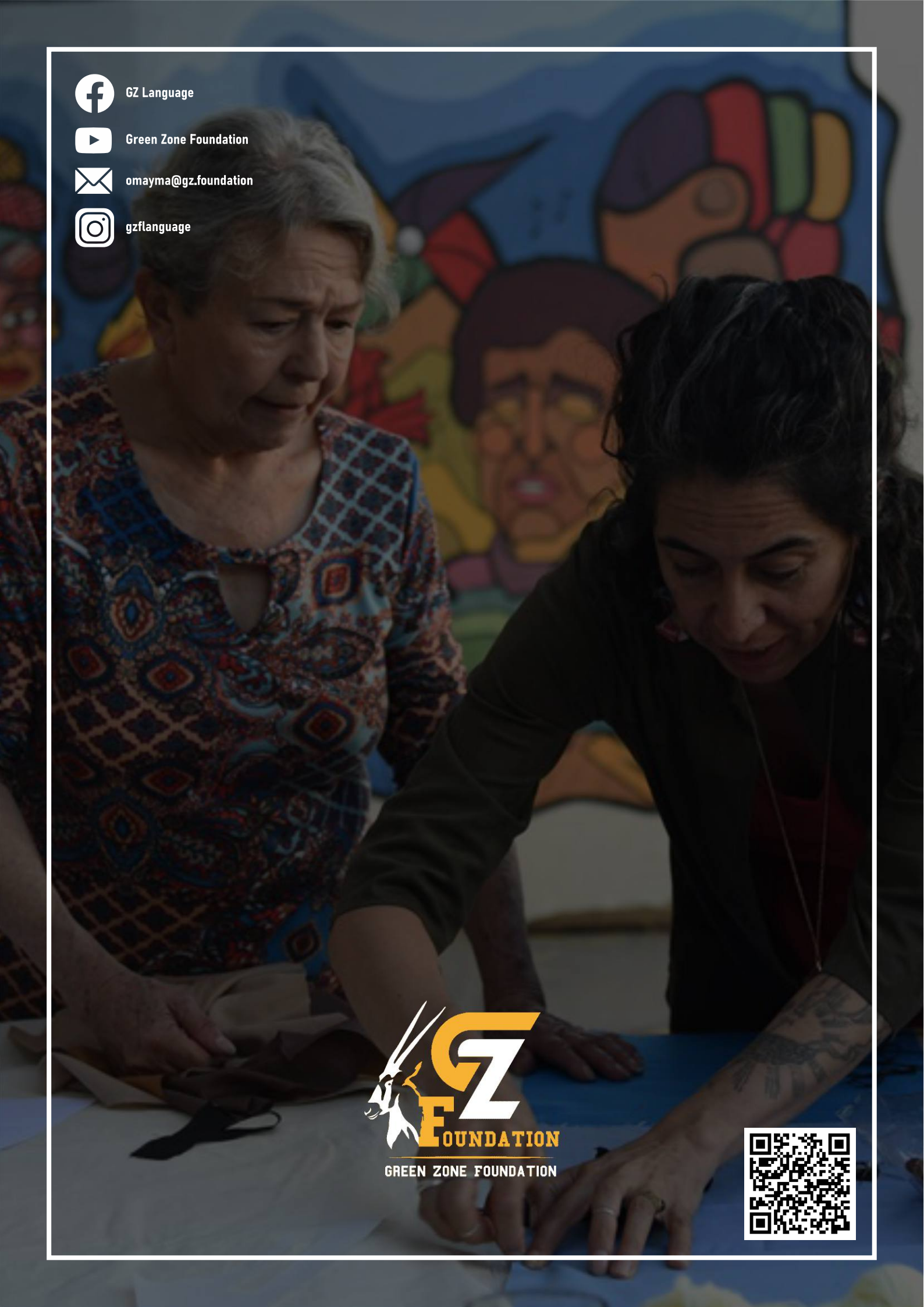
The month not only celebrates heritage but also recognizes the countless contributions Hispanic and Latino Americans have made in every field—arts, science, business, politics, and beyond. Ultimately, National Hispanic Heritage Month promotes cultural pride, unity, and a deeper understanding of the diverse communities that shape the nation.



Latin American immigrants have been foundational to the U.S. economy and society for decades. They have filled critical labor shortages in sectors like agriculture, construction, hospitality and service work—industries where Hispanics represent over 30 % of the workforce Their high workforce-participation has driven growth: by 2023 Hispanics made up about 19 % of the U.S. civilian labor force (roughly 31.8 million people), and they accounted for nearly two-thirds of the net labor-force increase between 2003 and 2023.

The U.S. Latino economy (often referred to as “Latino GDP”) hit about $3.6 trillion in recent years and is projected to surpass $4 trillion.

Observing Hispanic Heritage Month reminds all Americans of the importance of diversity, inclusion, and the shared story of a nation built with the contribution of Latin American communities.



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