



FORT MASON CENTER
SAN FRANCISCO

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September 28, 2011

Stacey Aldrich, Board Chair
Mimi Morris, Executive Officer
California Cultural and Historical Endowment
900 N Street, Suite 370
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Ms. Aldrich:

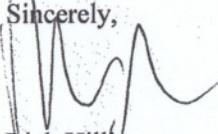
On behalf of Fort Mason Center I would like to express my support of The Mexican Museum's request for funding for planning expenses related to the construction of a new home in San Francisco.

The Mexican Museum has been an important part of Fort Mason Center since the very beginnings of the center. Their vibrant programs and world-class art exhibitions have drawn many visitors to our cultural center, and we consider them to be a very important partner in our mission to provide thought-provoking programs and events supporting the evolving cultural fabric of San Francisco.

In the past, The Mexican Museum suffered through a period of economic difficulties. For many years the museum owed Fort Mason Center a significant amount in unpaid rent. However, under the board leadership of Mario Diaz and Nora Wagner (museum Co-Chairs), the efforts of the entire museum Board of Trustees, and with the hiring of Jonathan Yorba as the CEO in 2010, all of that changed. As a result, the museum has paid down \$175,000 of its outstanding debt of \$260,000 and has kept current on rent payments. The Museum not only re-opened its galleries to the public but also invested in capital improvements at its Fort Mason Center location by building a new visual arts gallery and education lounge in order to better serve the community. In addition, The Mexican Museum has steadily increased its days and hours of operation. With the opening of the current exhibition—Colección Tequila Don Julio—the museum has again taken its place as one of Fort Mason Center's premier destinations and has demonstrated that it is a sustainable organization that enjoys broad community support.

Although we value The Mexican Museum as a long-standing resident of Fort Mason, we understand its need for a larger venue to showcase its magnificent collection and to present programs benefiting the Latino community of the Bay Area. We urge you to grant The Mexican Museum's funding request.

Sincerely,


Rich Hillis
Executive Director