



A study of

¡Azúcar!

The Life and Music of Celia Cruz

at the

National Museum of American History

Office of Policy and Analysis
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC

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Acknowledgements

In October 2005, the Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) conducted a study of *¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz* at the National Museum of American History. The results, in this report, are based on in-depth interviews with visitors, and a survey of visitors exiting the museum. Zahava D. Doering had overall responsibility for the study and conducted the qualitative interviews. David Karns analyzed the quantitative data and assisted Zahava in writing this report. Amy L. Marino provided support in data collection, supervised and trained the survey contractor, reviewed and designed the report. I would like to express my appreciation to these OP&A staff and to the visitors who gave us their time. I would also like to recognize the support of NMAH staff members Judy Gradwohl, Associate Director for Public Programs, Magdalena Mieri, Director, Program in Latino History and Culture (PLHC), staff in PLHC that helped with survey planning, and Marvette Pérez, Curator of Latino History and Culture, for her comments and suggestions.

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Executive Summary

The results from a study of visitors exiting from the National Museum of American History (NMAH) during October 2005, a time when the *¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz* was on view, show that:

- § Eleven percent of visitors identified themselves as Latino/Hispanic heritage. This is a significantly higher percentage than found in previous studies.
 - » Compared to other visitors, more Latino/Hispanics were first-time visitors.
- § In rating four temporary exhibitions at the NMAH, the highest ratings went to *¡Azúcar!* (17% rated it Superior and 42% Excellent).
 - » Over twice as many Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors rated *¡Azúcar!* Superior, compared to non-Latino visitors (33% vs. 14%).
 - » The ratings are lower than those given the overall NMAH visit (19% rated it as Superior and 52% as Excellent).
 - » Qualitative interviews provide evidence that the audience found the exhibition moving, enjoyable, and educational.
- § Slightly over half (53%) of all visitors felt that “the full range of American ethnicities, communities, and cultures” is represented at NMAH, and another third (35%) felt that “almost all are represented.”
 - » Qualitative interviews, with a non-representative sample of visitors, conducted at the exit of *¡Azúcar!* underscore the public’s appreciation of an exhibition that reflects the diversity of the country’s population.
 - » Qualitative interviews also suggest that there is wide acceptance of bilingual labels.

she really represents what we do when we come to this country. She came and she made her dream come true, so she has earned her right to be here [in this Museum].¹

Introduction

Since May 18, 2005, a cacophony of sounds has surrounded visitors coming up the West Elevator of the National Museum of American History (NMAH). As they reach the second floor, the beat becomes more pronounced. Just in front of the escalator is the source of the music: the spacious opening to *¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz*, one of NMAH's newest exhibitions.

The Smithsonian Office of Policy and Analysis (OP&A) conducted a two-part study of *¡Azúcar!* over the past several months. The purpose of the study was to solicit visitors' reactions to this exhibition, including their level of satisfaction with it, as well as to explore visitor reactions to an exhibition focusing on specific cultures and groups. One part was surveying visitors exiting NMAH during four weekends in October. In a brief, self-administered, questionnaire visitors were asked to indicate what drew them to NMAH, which of four recently opened exhibitions they had visited (including *¡Azúcar!*), their level of satisfaction

1 From an interview with a Latina visitor to exhibition.

with the overall visit and with the four specific exhibitions, as well as their assessment of the extent to which various ethnicities, communities and cultures were represented in the museum's exhibitions and programs.² A second part of the study consisted of open-ended interviews with visitors exiting *¡Azúcar!* The interview focused on their experiences in the exhibition, familiarity with Celia Cruz, and perception of exhibition themes and approaches, including the bilingual labels.

Following a description of the exhibition, this report summarizes the results from the survey and the interviews.

The Exhibition: ¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz³

Celia Cruz's career spanned six decades beginning in Havana, Cuba, to recognition as a world-renowned artist in the United States. She was one of the few women to succeed in the world of salsa and was known as



La reina de salsa, the Queen of Salsa. Celia Cruz died in 2003, of a brain tumor, at the age of 77. During her career, *La reina* recorded more than 80 albums, was nominated for more than a dozen Grammy Awards, and collected five Grammys,

2 See Appendix A—Methodology. The four exhibitions are described in Appendix B. Appendix C includes frequencies, by question, for all visitors, as well as for Latino/Hispanics and Not-Latino/Hispanics.

3 Description based on the online exhibition: <http://americanhistory.si.edu/celiacruz/> accessed December 8, 2005 and exhibition text panels.

the Presidential Medal of Arts, and three honorary doctorates.

The retrospective exhibition, curated by NMAH's Marvette Pérez, Curator of Latino History and Culture, is organized in chronological order, and highlights moments in Cruz' life and colorful career through photographs, personal documents, costumes, videos, and music. The exhibition, as noted above, is called "¡Azúcar! *The Life and Music of Celia Cruz*." "Azúcar" literally means "sugar," but according to Pérez, it served as Cruz's "battle cry" and an allusion to African slaves who worked Cuba's sugar plantations.

The exhibition, consisting of ten sections, begins with Celia Cruz's early childhood in Cuba (*Celia's Early Years*).⁴ "Celia Cruz was born Ursula Hilaria Celia Caridad Cruz Alfonso in 1925 in Santos Suarez, a working-class Havana neighborhood." Her father, believing that singing was not an honorable profession, wanted her to be a teacher. She persisted and pursued her dream. In this section there are pictures of her as a baby, making her first communion, and as a young singer in the '40s, singing *son* and rumba, Cuba's native rhythms.

"By the 1950s, Havana was internationally famous for its nightlife, filled with clubs and theaters. Cuban music had become influential worldwide, especially in the United States. Among the great cabarets, the Tropicana epitomized the pinnacle. The nonstop entertainment included buxom dancers, outrageously costumed entertainers, and Afro-Cuban-themed musical reviews." Performing at the Tropicana meant an entertainer had arrived. Celia Cruz was invited to perform there several times during the 1950s (as documented in the section *Celia at the Tropicana*).

From there, the exhibition traces her move to Mexico and her defection to the United States in 1961 (*Exile*). During the 1940s and 1950s, she traveled to Latin America and the United States with different bands and musical reviews. At the end of 1959, she accepted a one-year contract to perform in Mexico. She left Cuba in 1960, eighteen months after Fidel Castro came to power in Cuba, and never returned. The exhibition includes a picture of her leaving the country, standing by an airplane. She tried returning to Cuba, when her mother died in 1962, but Castro refused her entry into the country.

There are photographs of her with Tito Puente, the New York-born Puerto Rican composer, band leader and arranger. (*Salsa Music Scene: Latin New York in the 1960s and 1970s*). This part of her story is told with archival video footage, photos, costumes, wigs, shoes, music videos and a 12-minute documentary of her life. A section (*Walking Towards the Future*) contains custom-made heel-less platform shoes, many with rhinestones. "Nieto, a Mexico City shoemaker created shoes for Celia Cruz for more than forty years. The flat, bottom surface camouflages the heel and makes it look as if the wearer is about to take off and fly."



The clothes Cruz celebrated are a key element of the exhibition (*The Dressing Room: A Transforming Space*). The dresses on display are variations on a common theme: a style worn by rumba dancers called *Bata cubana* with billowing sleeves and long, ruffled trains. The fashion is part Spanish colonial and part Afro-Cuban. Included are her headpieces, the beat-up Fendi bag she always car-

⁴ Names of exhibition sections are in italics and in parentheses. Quotations are from exhibition text panels.

ried on her travels and the dashboard-sized saint figurines she always packed along.

The golden era of salsa lasted from the late 1960s to the early 1980s (*Salsa and Dancing*). During this time the best-known musicians came under the umbrella of one record label: Fania. Cruz found the style that would define the rest of her career in the 1970s, working with Fania. In this environment, “Celia Cruz was often the only woman in the male-dominated world of Afro-Latin music, especially salsa (*A Woman Among Men*). From her early days to her days with the Fania All Stars, she was the only *sonera*. This is of particular importance, since a big part of being a salsa singer is the ability to improvise in the call and response section of the song—an African musical tradition.”

As noted, “Celia Cruz was honored many times during her long career. She earned five Grammy Awards, many Gold Records, and countless other honors and Lifetime Achievement awards. She received three honorary doctorates, from Yale University in 1989, Florida International University in 1992, and the University of Miami in 1999. She was a White House guest of five presidents (*Tributes and Achievements*). ... In 2002 she established the Celia Cruz Foundation, dedicated to raising funds for cancer research and to providing scholarships for young Latino music students.”

“Celia Cruz died on July 16, 2003, after battling brain cancer for several months. The news of her passing appeared on the front pages of major newspapers and in magazines, as well as on the major Hispanic and American TV networks. Her wish was to have two funerals, in Miami and in New York. In both cities, it was one of the largest funerals ever, attended by dignitaries, musicians, actors, politicians, and, the public. More than 250,000 mourners went through the Freedom Tower in Miami and over 150,000 through the Frank E. Campbell Funeral Chapel in New York (*Final Transition*).”

Fall Visitors to NMAH

Compared to summer, early fall is generally a quiet time on the National Mall. School has resumed, so fewer families travel to Washington, DC. Visitors from outside the United States are beginning to arrive in large numbers. Visitors who combine visits to family and friends with visits to the National Mall plan trips for late November and the December holidays. But pleasant fall weather and turning leaves provide a draw for local and regional visitors. According to figures from the Smithsonian’s Office of Protection Services, a total of about 87,333 visits were made to NMAH on the days of the survey, an 11 percent decrease from October 2004.

Following the U.S. Bureau of the Census convention, visitors were asked to mark both a racial category and to indicate if they were of Latino/Hispanic origin. Whites (81%) and African Americans (8%) were the two largest racial groups. Eleven percent of visitors indicated that they were of Latino/Hispanic origin, with those with Central/South American origins forming the largest group. This is a higher percentage than found in the 2004 Smithsonian-wide survey and higher than observed in other recent studies.⁵

The Pew Hispanic Center found, in a recent research report, that the combination of racial self-identification categories selected on surveys by Latinos defines their perception of the degree to which they feel included or not included in mainstream society.⁶ Latinos who described themselves as “white” appear to feel more included than those who skip a racial categorization or choose another minority descriptor. Interestingly,

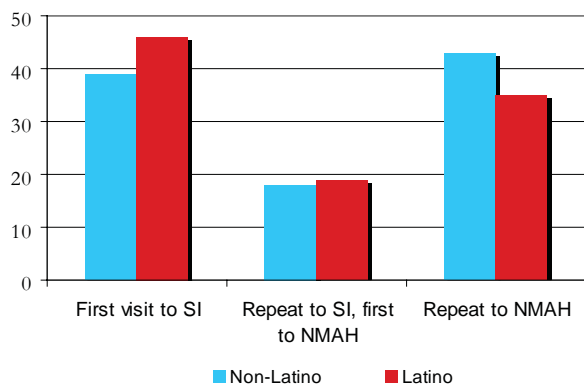
5 Office of Policy and Analysis, *Results of the 2004 Smithsonian-wide Survey of Visitors*, October 2004.

6 Tafoya, Sonya. (2004) *Shades of Belonging*. Washington, DC: The Pew Hispanic Center.

this feeling may change from situation to situation reflecting an instantaneous feeling of inclusion or exclusion. Using the racial-ethnic data from the survey allows us to classify visitors who indicate Latino/Hispanic heritage into two subgroups, those who consider themselves members of the mainstream culture (culturally assimilated) and those who do not (culturally not assimilated). Applying this definition to the study data indicates that Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors are about equally divided into the two groups (52% and 48%, respectively).

Two out of five (43%) of all the visitors were making their first visit to the Smithsonian and, by extension, to NMAH, and a similar percentage were repeat visitors to the museum (39%). Nearly another fifth (17%) were first-time visitors to NMAH, although they had visited other Smithsonian museums previously (see Appendix B for supporting data). Two-fifths (40%) indicated that they came to the museum to see something in particular.⁷ Among Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors, as shown in Figure 1, the percentage making a first visit was larger and fewer had previously

Figure 1. First and Repeat Visitors



⁷ Although offered the option, not all visitors recorded what they came to see. About 94% of those who said they came to see or do something in particular in NMAH on the day of the visit provided a useable response.

visited NMAH. More were coming to see something in particular (48%) than among the overall visit population. About a third (34%) of Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors who named a specific reason for their visit, named *iAzúcar!*.

Adults constituted most of the NMAH weekend visitor survey population — primarily with other adults (61%) but no children, the remainder with children (16%), alone (18%), or with an organized group (5%). Men (49%) and women (51%) visited in essentially equal proportions.

Senior citizens (60 years and older) and early Baby Boom visitors (51-59 years old) formed the smallest groups of visitors (17% and 15% respectively). Members of the later Baby Boom Generation (40-50 years old) formed the largest group (27%). Younger visitors, Generation X visitors (29 to 39 years old) and Generation Y (28 years old or younger) formed the next largest groups (21% each). The demographic characteristics of Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors did not differ significantly from other groups.

When residence is examined, we find that the vast majority of visitors live in the United States (90%). Although widely distributed across the country, half (51%) were from the Southeast and Mid-Atlantic regions.

Visitors to Special Temporary Exhibitions

Visitors entering any museum, especially a large one, make choices about where to go, what to see, and what to do. In other words, visitors do not visit every section of the museum. The percentage of visitors seeing small, special exhibitions is small compared to the better-known, permanent, large exhibitions. Location within the

building, the title, and eye-catching objects, all contribute to ‘accidental’ visitation.⁸

In October 2005, between thirty and forty-one percent of visitors visited and rated each of four exhibitions included on the questionnaire. Most frequently visited and rated was *Whatever Happened to Polio?* (41%), followed by *iAzúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz* (36%), *Disneyland: The First 50 Years (Disney)*(33%) and *Smithsonian Magazine: Through Our Readers’ Eyes (SI Magazine)* (30%). To put these percentages into perspective, a previous study showed that the two major exhibitions visited and rated by the highest percentage of visitors were *First Ladies* (67%) and *The American Presidency* (65%), followed closely by *Price of Freedom* (58%) and the *Star-Spangled Banner* (57%). Except for a small number of visitors, the four exhibitions included in this study were not destination exhibitions. Of the visitors who indicated coming to see or do something specific in the museum (40% of the total), eight percent named *iAzúcar!* and six percent named *Polio*. Another group of visitors indicated coming to see various icons of popular culture, but nobody named *Disney* specifically. The visitors who indicated *iAzúcar!* as a special destination were disproportionately of Latino/Hispanic heritage.

8 As another recent study shows, three-fifths (57%) of visitors rated major exhibitions located on all three floors of the museum and another 14 percent rated exhibitions on the second and third floors. Exhibitions on other combinations of floors (e.g., first and second floors or first floor only) were rated by smaller numbers of visitors (less than 10%). Office of Policy and Analysis, *Visitor Ratings of Exhibitions at the National Museum of American History*, July 2005.

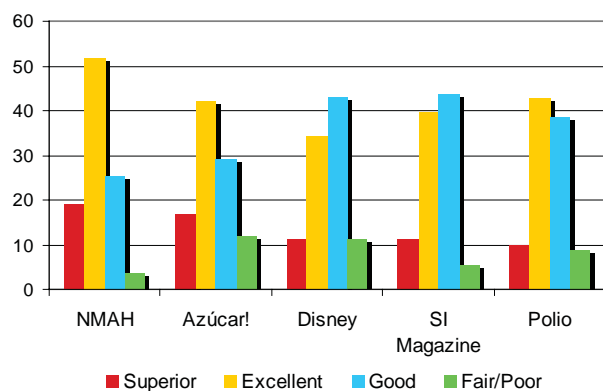
Rating the Special Exhibitions

The rating scale used in this study (“Poor,” “Fair,” “Good,” “Excellent” and “Superior”) has been used by OP&A for several years, in various museums and in the 2004 Smithsonian-wide survey. In this analysis, “Poor” and “Fair” are combined as one category, as they represent a small number of visitors. (See Appendix B for the full ratings for exhibitions discussed here.)

Among the exhibitions listed, the highest ratings went to *iAzúcar!*, followed by *Disney*, *SI Magazine* and *Polio* (17%, 11%, 11% and 10% superior, respectively).⁹ The ratings are lower than those visitors gave to their overall visit; where 19% rated it as superior [Figure 2]. When we focus on *iAzúcar!*, we find most [46%] of the visitors who rated it superior also rated their visit as superior.

The exhibition ratings clearly indicate that *iAzúcar!* resonated with Latino/Hispanic

Figure 2. Rating of NMAH and Special Exhibitions



9 All of these ratings are lower than those accorded the museum’s major exhibitions previously. The *Star-Spangled Banner*, *Price of Freedom*, and *First Ladies*, had 37 percent, 31 percent and 27 percent of visitors who saw them, respectively, rating them as superior. Office of Policy and Analysis, *Visitor Ratings of Exhibitions at the National Museum of American History*, July 2005.

heritage visitors. Over twice as many Latino visitors rated it superior, compared to non-Latino visitors (33% vs. 14%). And, within the Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors, those who were classified as “feeling culturally not assimilated” were considerably more likely to rate it as superior compared to those classified as “feeling culturally assimilated” (47% vs. 13%). These data support the view, that visitors classified as “culturally assimilated” rated the exhibition the same way as non-Latinos.

Representation at NMAH

Of interest both to the Program in Latino History and Culture at NMAH and to the museum more broadly is the public perception of the extent to which NMAH represents the story of all Americans. The last paragraph of the Museum’s Mission statement states,

More than ever before, the National Museum of American History today works to ensure that our collections, exhibitions, research, publications, and educational programs all support the Museum’s basic mission—to inspire a broader understanding of our nation and its many peoples—and to make our exhibitions and programs as accessible as possible to all visitors.¹⁰

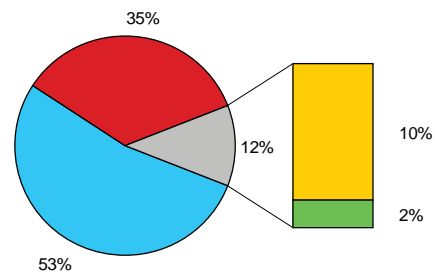
On the survey questionnaire, we asked visitors to indicate if “the full range of American ethnicities, communities and cultures” is represented in the museum. Overall, slightly over half (53%) felt that “the full range is represented,” and another third (35%) felt that “almost all are represented.” Put another way, nearly nine of ten visitors (88%) feel that the museum is meeting its mission. However, the remainder (12%) felt differently (Figure 3).

¹⁰ See <http://americanhistory.si.edu/about/mission.cfm> (accessed November 29, 2005).

Visitors were afforded the option of indicating which ethnicities, communities and cultures could be better represented; i.e., everyone who gave a response other than “full range is represented” could name specific underrepresented groups. About a third who could have indicated a group or groups that were under-represented failed to indicate an under represented ethnicity, community, or culture; a few felt that they had not seen enough of the museum to judge how well different groups are represented. The rest of the responses included a broad spectrum of ethnic, religious, cultural and national groups, as well as groups identified by means of physical disability (e.g., blind), and sexual preference. The most common mentions, in decreasing order of frequency were: Native Americans, Asian cultures (including Asian Americans), specific European groups (Italian, Irish, Northern and Eastern Europeans), and Latino/Hispanic. A few visitors mentioned immigrants in general as underrepresented.

There were no significant differences between Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors and other visitors in the response to the question about representation in general. However, understandably, when asked to name which ethnicities, communities and cultures could be better represented,

Figure 3. Is the full range of American ethnicities, communities and cultures represented in this museum?



■ Full range is represented ■ Almost all are ■ Some are not ■ Many are not

Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors were more likely to name Latinos/Hispanics as an underrepresented group.

In the in-depth interviews, non-Latino/Hispanic visitors spoke about the issue of representation in reference to the *¡Azúcar!* exhibition:

I really appreciate the fact that there's this Cuban woman and that there was this huge exhibit for her at an American institution. So I thought that was really amazing and it's fabulous.

Actually as we were coming in, my husband and I were saying that we always like coming into this building because there is always something different. And I like that you are reaching out to the diversity that America represents.

I think that she was a good part of American culture—especially coming out of Cuba right when Castro came in.

Well, I thought the idea [of the Museum] was to present all types of cultures and that's what you're doing.

I was very impressed. Um, I liked the fact that it's exploring the ethnic diversity present in America and celebrating the music of one of the great salsa performers. Well, I think it is particularly important that we're embracing Latin American culture because there's such a large influx of Latin American peoples coming into our nation and I think it is very important to celebrate that.

Several visitors approvingly saw the exhibition as a way “to increase your audience, to bring probably more Latin American participants into the museum.”

Among Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors, the exhibition evoked considerable pride. When asked how she felt about seeing *¡Azúcar!*, one Latina commended,

At first I wasn't quite sure what it was, but after having walked through all the other exhibitions I understand why. There is a very large Latin community [in the United States] and she really represents what we do when we come to this country.

She came and she made her dream come true so she has earned her right to be here.

Similarly, a Mexican American teenager from California, in Washington on the way back from a Future Farmers of America convention, came upon the exhibition and felt that it was the best part of the trip and something to tell her family about:

Wonderful, it was like an experience I thought I would never experience on this trip. And she really inspired everybody. It was really a big deal when she died. It was sad for us. And on her music she would always mention the word 'azúcar' and that was really good. Well it's like an opportunity that when I back home, I would tell my mom that I saw it and she would be really happy. And I hope everybody comes and sees it.

Experiences in *¡Azúcar!*

In view of the large percentages of all visitors, Latino/Hispanic heritage or not, who rated *¡Azúcar!* as “Excellent” or “Superior” when exiting NMAH, OP&A conducted personal interviews to understand the ways in which visitors connected with the exhibition. Over a period of several weeks, a cross section of visitors was interviewed at *¡Azúcar!*. These interviews were conducted with a convenience set of respondents; i.e., where the respondents were selected at the convenience of the researcher, rather than being selected following rigorous sampling procedures. Overall OP&A spoke with 21 adults, 5 teenagers and 3 children between 8-12 years old. The interviewees included three people who identified themselves as having Latino/Hispanic heritage. The visitors live throughout the United States (e.g. Vermont, Kentucky, California and Indiana, as well as outside the United States (Canada, Scotland). In the remainder of this report, the focus is on the drawing power of the exhibition, impressions, and the bilingual labels, and the

overall exhibition experience. Where the speaker is one of the Latino/Hispanic heritage interviewees, this is noted.

For some visitors, the exhibition was a first introduction to Celia Cruz. Some entered the exhibition, either upon coming off the west elevator or while walking about the second floor, and realized they were “in the wrong exhibition;” i.e., they were not in the “classic” Popular Culture area. Many, frequently encouraged by children, quickly left to search for the ruby slippers, Kermit the Frog or Muhammad Ali’s boxing gloves before experiencing much of the exhibition. The less harried and hurried among them stayed and looked around, as these non-Latino/Hispanic visitors comment:

I knew it was about Latin music from the sound. I didn't know the artist or anything, so I just wanted to see what was there.

I think that what drew me in was the music because we walked in and walked across. The point that I took away from it that she was really the first woman of salsa in Latin music. I hadn't realized that salsa started so early in terms of being in the fifties and sixties.

My daughter wanted to see the ruby slippers and she was whining the whole time coming in. The ruby slippers were right next door -- and of course the music drew us in and my daughter then was fascinated with all of the dresses.

Well, we were on the top floor and we wanted to see the musical instruments and we saw this and were enchanted and went in.

Actually we were looking for a particular exhibit and then we happened to walk into this. I recognized the face, as I was telling my friend Julie. We just walked around and we were fascinated by it actually.

Some visitors had heard a little about Celia Cruz, but the exhibition provided context and information,

I think I have heard about her on NPR. And of

course I have known her voice. It was just somewhere in the back of mind, I don't own any of her albums or her recordings, she had been there somewhere in my head.

I think I heard her name when she past on, on the radio or something. And I heard her songs but I didn't realize who she was.

A visitor from Kentucky had a very personal reason for seeing the exhibition,

I have friends from Costa Rica and from Cuba and I thought it would be wonderful to see it and share with them. I will first check if they are familiar with her and then share a little bit about just how dynamic an entertainer she clearly was. I would like to hear some of their stories. I would like hear what they know about her because I have heard her name, but wasn't really familiar with her.

Once in the exhibition, the immediate reaction of visitors was delight in the visual aspects,

My girlfriend and her daughter particularly enjoyed the fashions and the shoes; they were enchanted by that. And, I really like the inter play of music and fashion. One thing I tend to forget is how much the role of costuming and makeup really is part of any performance.

I liked her dressing room. I thought that was very interesting to see her robes, her wigs, the hat pieces that she wore. It gave you an insider's look at getting ready for the concert and having to put on all that stuff to get out.

As will be elaborated in depth in a companion study,¹¹ the experience of Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors was frequently quite personal, emotional and a source of pride. An interview with a couple from New York, in their early-30s, is illustrative. He, an Anglo lawyer, read about the ¡Azúcar! exhibition in their Washington, DC hotel room and suggested they visit. She was born in the United States, spent her teen years with

11 Ramon Rivera-Servera, a Postdoctoral Fellow at NMAH, is undertaking a study of Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors.

in the Dominican Republic and came back at twenty:

I really enjoyed it. Actually the photos depicted her very accurately. Her costumes and her music ... it's very exciting to see all her hard work, are [on] display in this community. I love her music and I have danced to it quite a few times, and the show is just a happy place. And now she's dead [but] you don't feel that from going through the exhibition—just as she probably would have liked.



The woman was impressed with seeing the ornate dresses, shoes and “seeing the real thing.” The exhibition vividly recalled her own very personal experience when Celia Cruz died:

I cried when I first saw the funeral in 2003. Now, on one of the TV's here, they had a video showing people just walking through viewing her casket. I cried again.

Among all visitors, the bilingual signage was either considered an increasingly prevalent aspect of the American landscape or an acceptable recognition of heritage and culture. For visitors in the museum, it was primarily about recognition. One Latina visitor said,

I am bilingual and it doesn't interfere with my ability to assimilate into the American culture. I

am very proud of being an American but I am as proud of being a Latin and knowing Spanish and understanding my culture. You can't be part of anything unless you understand who you are and where you come from, and I think that one thing doesn't interfere with the other.

Typical American and international visitors comments include:

I did notice, and you know what, and I didn't really make such a big issue of it because we are so used to seeing two languages in Canada.

I guess we see it a lot in Texas so you start taking it more for granted.

One visitor thought there should be more translation, and that it is a practical thing. He had wanted a translation of the Celia Cruz funeral clip:

If the clip of her funeral would have been in English, we could have understood what was going on. That was the only drawback I saw. I am sure a lot of Spanish speaking visitors would enjoy other exhibits if they were in Spanish.

A comment from a visiting teacher, clearly voiced approval:

I noticed that you had it [text] both in English and in Spanish. I thought it was a great idea. I could see where it would be very helpful. I would think that she would be very popular with Spanish speaking people from, certainly from Central America, and to be able to come in and read it in Spanish, would make it a little more real, a little more personal.

A somewhat different take came from a visitor who felt that the Spanish signs were out of respect for Celia Cruz:

Because she was from Cuba, I'm sure that was her first language. It was trying to appeal to her as an individual. It shows that Spanish was her first language, that Cuba was the country that she came from. Obviously it will be in Spanish also, not just to be polite, but to be politically correct I'm sure.

Observing visitors in the exhibition space, OP&A interviewers noticed their upbeat demeanor and

pleasant dispositions as they exited. While very few visitors took advantage of the music to dance to in the exhibition, one father captured the atmosphere when he said,

I might just grab my daughter later, go through there and dance through it again. I don't know if I can do the dances, but I can teach her a little.

And, like the Latina quoted at the start of this report, many visitors saw the exhibition as reflecting the best of the country:

Her soul was beautiful but what was interesting was that when you looked at her, like her face wasn't beautiful. So our idea of beauty today is like Jessica Simpson. But here is this woman who is a little bit larger and she made her dreams come true. She talked about the types of dreams on the other side of this wall and I think that's like this ...



Summary and Conclusions

The results from a study of visitors exiting from NMAH during October 2005, a time when the *¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz* was on view are quite positive:

§ **Eleven percent of visitors identified themselves as Latino/Hispanic heritage.**

This is a significantly higher percentage than found in previous studies. The results also show that, using an indicator developed by the Pew Hispanic Center, approximately half of these visitors could be considered “culturally assimilated” and the rest not. Compared to other visitors, more Latino/Hispanics were first-time visitors and, within this group of Latino/Hispanics, more of those not culturally assimilated were visiting NMAH for the first time and more were coming to *¡Azúcar!*. The exhibition undoubtedly drew new visitors to the museum.

§ **In rating four temporary exhibitions, the highest ratings went to *¡Azúcar!*** (17% rated it superior and 42% as excellent). The ratings are lower than those given the overall visit (19% rated it as superior and 52% as excellent). When we focus on *¡Azúcar!*, we find that most [46%] of the visitors who rated it superior also rated their visit as superior.

Over twice as many Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors rated *¡Azúcar!* superior, compared to non-Latino visitors (33% vs. 14%). And, within the Latino/Hispanic heritage visitors, those who were classified as “culturally not assimilated” were considerably more likely to rate it as superior compared to those classified as “culturally assimilated” (47% vs. 13%).

§ **The public is quite positive in its assessment of NMAH with respect to its representation of the “the full range of American ethnicities, communities and cultures.”** Overall, slightly over half (53%) of all visitors felt that “the full range is represented,” and another third (35%) felt that “almost all are represented.”

Qualitative interviews, with a non-representative sample of visitors, conducted at the exit of *¡Azúcar!* underscore the public’s appreciation of exhibitions that reflect the diversity of the country’s population. They also suggest that there is wide-acceptance of bilingual labels and, in fact, that most of the public take the presence of bilingual labels for granted.

Looking beyond the study, these data suggest that NMAH should continue to develop exhibitions focused on the experience of specific American ethnicities, communities and cultures. Clearly, exhibitions about the Latino/Hispanic experience should be part of the exhibition topics. NMAH might consider a temporary exhibition series that features emerging immigrant groups in the Washington area. If located in thematically appropriate areas of the museum, such exhibitions would draw new visitors as well as general visitors. For example, *¡Azúcar!*’s placement in the Popular Culture area meant that visitors coming for the “classic” Popular Culture exhibitions were exposed to it.

Although based on qualitative data, rather than quantitative survey results, we can infer that there is public acceptance for the inclusion of bilingual signage. It may be appropriate to experiment with bilingual signage in other areas of the museum.

Appendix A. Methodology

The Survey. OP&A designed and tested the one-page self-administered questionnaire used in the study. The questionnaire asks exiting visitors to rate their overall visit and specific individual exhibitions they saw, including *¡Azúcar!*. The exhibitions to be rated, in addition to *¡Azúcar!* were recently opened temporary exhibitions (described in Appendix B). An English questionnaire was printed on one side of the page with a Spanish questionnaire on the other.

Previous studies have showed that visitors can identify exhibitions based on their names and specific key words—even exhibitions about topics that are not well known. Between October 1 and October 30, on weekends, contractor staff trained by OP&A in standard survey procedures, intercepted eligible visitors exiting onto Constitution Avenue and the National Mall.¹² The study excluded visitors under the age of 12 and persons who were exiting NMAH in an organized group. The survey results, therefore, are based on a sample of “voluntary” visitors to the museum, although it includes some visitors who came to the National Mall museums with organized groups (e.g. tours), but who visited NMAH as individuals.

Of the 1,358 visitors selected to participate, 901 completed questionnaires, for a cooperation rate of 62 percent.¹³ The majority of the question-

naires completed were in English; a handful (15) in Spanish.

The Open-ended Interviews. Another phase of the study consisted of open-ended interviews with a ‘convenience set’ of visitors and students. In this approach, the researcher makes does not attempt to insure that this sample is an accurate representation of some larger group or population although an effort may be made to include diverse types of visitors. In this study, OP&A staff stood at the exit of the exhibition and intercepted visitors as they left. More than half of intercepted visitors indicated that they had not visited the exhibition. Because of the exhibition’s location, they had wandered in believing that it was part of the “classic” Popular Culture area, and then exited when they found that it was not.

A total of 29 visitors who had seen the entire exhibition were interviewed: 21 adults, 5 teenagers, and 3 children between 8-12 years old. The interviewees included three people who identified themselves as having Latino/Hispanic heritage. They lived throughout the United States (e.g. Vermont, Kentucky, California and Indiana), as well as outside the United States (Canada, Scotland). Generally, only one interview was conducted with a member of each visiting group. Sometimes, a visitor indicated that their companion had a different perspective on the exhibition. In that case, an effort was made to interview the companion, as well. Most of the interviews were recorded and transcribed. In a few cases, the interviewer took notes.

12 Survey sessions were rotated between the two exits.

13 The survey data were weighted to control biases due to the number of visitors on more and less crowded days and visitors who choose not to participate as well as those who cooperated. Thus, the results presented in this report are statistically representative of NMAH visitors during weekends in the month of October 2005. If every visitor exiting NMAH were interviewed, there is a 95 percent probability that the survey percentages will be within three percent of percentage for the entire population (given the sample size).

Appendix B. Exhibition Descriptions

Disneyland: The First 50 Years.¹⁴ This small exhibition, on the East side of the museum's first floor, commemorates Disneyland theme park's 50th anniversary. Two ride cars from Disneyland's most iconic attractions, "Dumbo the Flying Elephant" and the "Mad Hatter's Tea Party," along with objects from the park's opening day are included.

Whatever Happened to Polio? This exhibition, located on the West side of the museum's second floor, marks the 50th anniversary announcement that Jonas Salk had developed a vaccine to prevent polio. It tells the story of the polio epidemic in the United States, the vaccine developments, current world efforts to stop polio transmission, and the story of survivors and their influence on American society. It also looks at some of the changes in American medicine in the 20th century and the impact disease can have on society as a whole.

Smithsonian Magazine: Through Our Readers' Eyes. This exhibition includes the 50 finalists of the 2005 Smithsonian Magazine Photo Contest for amateur photographers, selected from more than 30,000 entries from all 50 states and from 92 countries. The Smithsonian Magazine's 2nd Annual Photo Contest, resulted in a grand prize winner as well as a winner from each of five categories: The Natural World, Travel, Culture and the Arts, People, and Americana.

¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz.

Over the course of a career that spanned six decades and took her from humble beginnings in Havana, Cuba to a world-renowned artist in the United States, Celia Cruz became the undisputed Queen of Latin Music. Combining a piercing and powerful voice with a larger-than-life personality and stage costumes, she was one of the few women to succeed in the male dominated world of salsa music. *¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz* highlights important moments in Cruz's life and career through photographs, personal documents, costumes, videos, and music.

¹⁴ Descriptions from the NMAH website, <http://americanhistory.si.edu/>, accessed December 6, 2005.

Appendix C. Supplementary Tabulations (In Percent)

1. Based on your visit today, please rate your overall experience at the American History Museum.

Rating	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Poor	0	2	0
Fair	3	2	2
Good	25	20	26
Excellent	52	56	52
Superior	19	20	20
Total	100	100	100

2. Is today your first visit to the Smithsonian?

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Yes	43	46	39
No, but my first visit to this museum	17	19	18
No, and I have visited this museum before	39	35	43
Total	100	100	100

3. Was there something in particular you wanted to see or do in this museum today?

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Wanted to see or do something specific	40	48	40
No	60	52	60
Total	100	100	100

3A. What did you want to see or do? *

Exhibition	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
First Ladies	8	9	8
Popular Culture	4	3	4
The American Presidency	4	0	4
Military History	4	1	4
Celia Cruz	3	15	2
Price of Freedom	3	1	3
Polio	3	3	3
Ruby Slippers	2	0	2
Julia Child	2	0	2
Star Spangled Banner	2	2	2
Transportation	1	1	1
Brown vs. Board of Educ.	1	0	1
Music	1	0	0
September 11	1	0	1

* Respondents could give more than one response. Answers given by less than 0.5% available on request.

4. Please rate your overall experience with each of the following new exhibitions.

4A1. What ever happened to Polio?

Saw exhibition	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Saw	41	49	39
Did not see	59	51	61
Total	100	100	100

4A2. Rating for What ever happened to Polio?

Exhibition rating	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Poor	1	2	0
Fair	8	7	8
Good	39	32	39
Excellent	43	55	42
Superior	10	5	11
Total	100	100	100

4C2. Rating for Disneyland: The First 50 Years

Exhibition rating	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Poor	4	0	4
Fair	8	11	7
Good	43	31	44
Excellent	34	53	33
Superior	11	6	13
Total	100	100	100

4B1. Smithsonian Magazine: Through Our Readers' Eyes

Saw exhibition	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Saw	30	31	29
Did not see	70	69	71
Total	100	100	100

4D1. ¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz

Saw exhibition	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Saw	36	59	32
Did not see	64	41	68
Total	100	100	100

4B2. Rating for Smithsonian Magazine: Through Our Readers' Eyes

Exhibition rating	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Poor	1	0	1
Fair	4	4	4
Good	44	25	42
Excellent	40	64	39
Superior	11	7	13
Total	100	100	100

4D2. Rating for ¡Azúcar! The Life and Music of Celia Cruz

Exhibition rating	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Poor	3	2	3
Fair	9	6	11
Good	29	20	28
Excellent	42	39	44
Superior	17	33	14
Total	100	100	100

4C1. Disneyland: The First 50 Years

Saw exhibition	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Saw	33	39	32
Did not see	67	61	68
Total	100	100	100

5. In your opinion, is the full range of American ethnicities, communities, and cultures represented in this museum?

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Full range is represented	53	48	54
Almost all are represented	35	35	35
Some are not represented	10	11	9
Many are not represented	2	6	2
Total	100	100	100

6. What American ethnicities, communities, or cultures would you like to see represented better in this museum? *

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Native Persons	6	6	5
Asian American	4	6	3
Northern European	2	5	2
African American	2	2	2
Latino/Hispanic	2	12	1
Irish	2	0	2
Italian	2	2	2
Middle Eastern	1	2	1
Indian (Asian)	1	2	1
Popular Culture	1	1	1
Immigrants	1	0	1
German	1	0	1
Rock & Roll	1	0	1

* Respondents could give more than one response. Answers given by less than 0.5% available on request.

7. With whom are you visiting today?

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Organized tour	4	8	4
Adults	61	61	61
Adults & tour	1	1	1
Youth	10	8	11
Youth & Adults	6	7	6
Alone	18	15	16
Alone & organized tour	0	0	0
Total	100	100	100

8. Where do you live?

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Metro Washington	11	17	12
Southeast	21	19	24
Mid Atlantic	19	27	20
Midwest	13	6	16
New England	6	8	6
Mountain Plains	9	12	9
West	11	12	12
Country other than U.S.	10	*	*
Total	100	100	100

* United States respondents only

9. What is your gender?

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Female	51	58	52
Male	49	42	48
Total	100	100	100

10. What is your age?

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
75 years & over	3	2	3
70 to 74 years	2	5	2
65 to 69 years	4	7	4
60 to 64 years	7	6	8
55 to 59 years	8	6	9
50 to 54 years	9	8	9
45 to 49 years	13	7	14
40 to 44 years	12	15	12
35 to 39 years	11	10	11
30 to 34 years	8	6	7
25 to 29 years	11	14	10
20 to 24 years	8	6	8
15 to 19 years	3	7	3
12 to 14 years	1	1	1
Total	100	100	100

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
Depression (84 & older)	0	0	0
WWII (78 to 83)	1	1	2
Postwar (60 to 77)	15	18	15
Early Baby Boom (51 to 59)	15	12	16
Later Baby Boom (40 to 50)	27	25	28
Generation X (29 to 39)	21	21	19
Generation Y (20 to 28)	17	15	17
Millenials (12 to 19)	4	7	4
Total	100	100	100

11. Are you of Latino/Hispanic origin? (United States respondents only)

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
No	89	0	100
Yes, Central/South American	3	29	0
Yes, Cuban	1	7	0
Yes, Mexicano/Chicano	2	21	0
Yes, Puerto Rican/Caribbean	3	23	0
Yes, Other	2	21	0
Total	100	100	100

12. What race do you consider yourself to be? (United States respondents only)

	All respondents	Latino/Hispanic	Not Latino/Hispanic
White, Not Latino	73	0	82
AfAmer/Black, Not Latino	8	0	9
American Indian, Not Latino	1	0	1
Asian, Not Latino	2	0	3
Native Alaskan, Pacific Islander, Not Latino	1	0	2
Other, Not Latino	2	0	3
Multiple Races, Not Latino	1	0	2
White & Latino	6	58	0
AfAmer/Black & Latino	0	8	0
Multiple Races & Latino, Other	5	0	0
Latino & No Race	1	15	0
Total	100	100	100

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Cover

Bata Cubana: Performing with the bata cubana at the Cuban Independence Day celebration at Bayfront Park, Miami, May 20, 2001. *Photo courtesy of Omer Pardillo-Cid.*

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Celia Cruz: Portrait with Afro hairstyle, 1960s. *Photo by Herrera Studios, courtesy of Omer Pardillo-Cid.*

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Silver Shoe: Single silver shoe with aluminum swan heel and rhinestones. *Photo by Smithsonian Institution, courtesy of the Celia Cruz Foundation.*

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Bata Cubana: This orange dress was worn by Celia Cruz at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York in 1985. *Photo by Smithsonian Institution.*

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Celia Cruz in Green Dress: Cruz performing at Madison Square Garden, 1994. *Photo by Bernardo Tapia, courtesy of Omer Pardillo-Cid.*



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