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### Cinco de Mayo Parade - by Karen Zapata

Cinco de Mayo is a day of pride and celebration for both Mexicans and Latinos. On May 5, 1862, Mexican forces defeated the invading soldiers of Napoleon in the town of Puebla. Some say this defeat ended European intervention in the Americas; other say it encouraged the French to send reinforcements. Either way, the battle at Puebla that fifth of May signified the people's solidarity and determination. Today, people of many nationalities celebrate Cinco de Mayo with parades and festivals that honor Mexico's challenge to imperialism and that recognize the resistance to imperialism by other Latin American countries.

This May 5, San Francisco's Cinco de Mayo grand parade will begin at

10 a.m. at 24th and Bryant Streets. It will turn down Mission Street and go up to the Civic Center Plaza, culminating in the Cinco de Mayo festival from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. This year's parade features over 50 contingents, including mariachis, Aztec dancers, and beautifully adorned floats. The festival will feature carnival rides, a children's area, two entertainment stages with banda and salsa music, and free health screenings and health information.

New to the festival are an enclosed cafe with traditional Mexican music, and an artisan island where visitors can watch artists work in their different mediums. Admission to the Civic Center festival is \$4 for adults and \$1 for seniors. Children under 12 are admitted free if accompanied by an adult.

San Francisco's Cinco de Mayo festival is hosted by the Mission Economic Cultural Association. This year's celebration honors Latino men. The festival's organizers also stress the importance of recognizing the contributions of Latinos in the face of the recent rise of anti-immigrant legislation and discrimination. Bringing this issue home, five outstanding Latino men will be honored as role models for their work in the Mission community. These five Co-Grand Marshalls are : Captain Al Casciato of Mission Police Station, Bob Gamino a Teacher at Everett Middle School, Mariano Tapia of the Ballet Folklorico, Richard Cordova Administrator of San Francisco General Hospital and Alfonso Maciel owner of Maciel Printing.

The News talked with Grand Marshall Maciel at his 24th Street shop. Born in Jalisco, Mexico, Maciel immigrated to the U.S. in 1964, landing in the Mission District, where he has lived ever since. His political involvement, he explains, came out of his art: "I was printing at that time, and it's impossible to be involved in art and not be politicized." Maciel's early images were created to educate people involved in the movement against the Somoza regime in Nicaragua. These images, he says enthusiastically, "were eventually used for book covers, and one was used as a sign-off for Sandinista TV."

Maciel and many other Mission District activists were the muscle behind the establishment of the Mission Cultural Center for Latino Arts. his involvement in community arts flourished, and in 1978 Maciel became director of the Neighborhood Arts Program. He restructured the organization so that the neighborhoods would decide its programming.

In the early '80s, Maciel had, as he puts it, "the wonderful opportunity to have a mid-life crisis," and he opened Maciel Printing on 24th Street. He is still involved in the Mission Cultural Center, however. "Although I am a businessperson," he explains, "I have centered my working life around the Mission area and the Latino community."

Maciel uses the ideas he developed in community activism to run one of the most successful print shops in the Mission District. "Hard work and perseverance will actually take you somewhere," he observes After 12 year of owning the business, he says, "I still come in here at 5 a.m. because it requires that kind of effort." But Maciel's success has not gotten in the way of his commitment and love of Latino culture and art: "Regardless of whatever success you have attained, you cannot forget who you are, and if you can incorporate who you are with your work life, all the better."

For Maciel, Cinco de Mayo's importance "stems from the fact that it was appropriated by other Latinos as a way of celebrating our indigenous people's victory over an imperial power."

For more information on Cinco de Mayo call MECA at 826-1401

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Cinco de Mayo

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