

BOOK PRESENTATION | Tuesday, June 9, 2009 – 12:00 noon

Presented by the Consulate General of Mexico in Houston and
Literal Magazine



The Last Prince of the Mexican Empire By C. M. Mayo

Among other presenters, John Mason Hart, Professor of Mexican History at the University of Houston, and Rogelio García-Contreras, Professor at the University of Saint Thomas, will introduce the author and provide a historical context for the book's subject matter.

C. M. Mayo has been living in and writing about Mexico for many years. Her story collection, *Sky Over El Nido*, won the Flannery O'Connor Award for Short Fiction. She is also the author of a widely acclaimed travel memoir and is an avid translator and editor of contemporary Mexican literature.

Location: Consulate General of Mexico
Free admission | RSVP: culturaleshouston@sre.gob.mx
Light lunch will be provided

Consulate General of Mexico

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The Last Prince of the Mexican Empire is a sweeping historical novel of Mexico during the short, tragic, at times surreal, reign of Emperor Maximilian and his court. Even as the American Civil War raged north of the border, a clique of Mexican conservative exiles and clergy convinced Louis Napoleon to invade Mexico and install the Archduke of Austria, Maximilian von Habsburg, as Emperor. A year later, the childless Maximilian took custody of the two year old, half-American, Prince Agustín de Iturbide y Green, making the toddler the Heir Presumptive. Maximilian's reluctance to return the child to his distraught parents, even as his empire began to fall, and the Empress Carlota descended into madness, ignited an international scandal. This lush, grand read is based on the true story and illuminates both the cultural roots of Mexico and the political development of the Americas. But it is made all the more captivating by the depth of Mayo's writing and her understanding of the pressures and influences on these all too human players. Her prose makes the reader taste the foods, smell the spices and flowers and feel the heat of Mexico. Mayo writes for the senses and for the ages. *The Last Prince of the Mexican Empire* is a story both sweeping and intimate, of geopolitics, the glamour of royalty, and the grit of military command, of the arrogance of power, the dark labyrinths of ambition, and, above all, of a child who was not, in the end, a prince, but a little boy who belonged to his parents.

And What Readers have said about C.M. Mayo's Previous Work...

This book... may go on to find its place, very naturally, as one of the outstanding contemporary works on this country",
David Huerta, *El Universal*, Mexico City.

"This is a book to throw in a suitcase or mochila (backpack) on the way to Mexico or just settling into a favorite patio chair. It will open your eyes, fill you with pleasure and render our perennial vecinos a little less distante." **Los Angeles Times Book Review**

"This delightful anthology . . . allows readers who do not have roots in Mexico or who have never traveled there a glimpse into the rich diversity of people and landscape. For travelers, these selections enhance exploration and offer vistas beyond the scope of the usual tourist guide. For other readers, they provide a clearer understanding of the cultural and social forces that shape today's Mexico. Highly recommended." **Library Journal**

"Discovering it was like opening a door and walking into a brightly lit room filled with all kinds of literary treasures".
Mexico Connect

"This delicious volume has lovingly gathered a banquet of pieces that reveal Mexico in all its infinite variety, its splendid geography, its luminous peoples. What a treat!" **Margaret Sayers Peden**, editor, *Mexican Writers on Writing*

"Mayo's work is reminiscent of Flannery O'Connor's." **Booklist**

"C.M. Mayo writes some of the most exquisitely fashioned, perfectly measured prose alive in the world today." **Naomi Shihab Nye**

"The evocative descriptions and ironic commentaries on the relationship between cultures make this an enjoyable and important novel, particularly relevant for these times." **Literal Magazine**

"Epic in scope...impressively researched...Mayo's reanimation of a crucial period in Mexican history should satisfy history buffs and those in the mood for an engaging story brimming with majestic ambition." **Publishers Weekly**