Harvard University announces the Inaugural Lecture of the Eduardo Matos Moctezuma Lecture Series, to be delivered by its namesake, Professor Eduardo Matos Moctezuma

Mexico City and Cambridge, MA – September 27, 2017. Harvard University expresses solidarity with the people of Mexico following the earthquake of September 19, and reaffirms its commitment to collaborate alongside the country’s academic community to identify solutions to Mexico’s most pressing problems. As ever, Harvard wholeheartedly supports and values collaboration with Mexican institutions. In an effort to renew its commitment to collaborations with Mexico on research and education, Harvard University has established the Eduardo Matos Moctezuma Lecture Series. This series celebrates the excellence of Mexican archaeology, represented by the figure of Professor Matos Moctezuma. In addition to honoring Mexico’s preeminent archaeologist, the series seeks to convene world-renowned experts on pre-Hispanic Mexico.

The Inaugural Lecture of the Matos Lecture Series will be held on Tuesday, October 3rd at 7pm CDT/8pm EST at the National Museum of Anthropology in Mexico City. Though space is limited, this event will be live streamed. A delegation from Harvard will include Mark Elliott, Harvard’s Vice Provost for International Affairs and Mark Schwartz Professor of Chinese and Inner Asian History, who will preside over the event. Other members of the Harvard delegation traveling to Mexico include Brian Farrell, Director of the David Rockefeller for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS) and Professor of Organismic and Evolutionary Biology, and David Hempton, Dean of the Harvard Divinity School and Alonzo L. McDonald Family Professor of Evangelical Theological Studies and John Lord O’Brian Professor of Divinity. Esteemed attendees from the Mexican government will include Diego Prieto, director of the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH); Antonio Saborit, director of the National Museum of Anthropology (MNA); and Patricia Ledesma, director of the Templo Mayor Museum.

The Eduardo Matos Moctezuma Lecture Series is made possible thanks to the generosity of José Antonio Alonso Espinosa and the initiative of David L. Carrasco, Neil L. Rudenstine Professor for the Study of Latin America at Harvard Divinity School. It is the first such series to be named after a Mexican in Harvard’s nearly 400-year history, and is the product of almost four decades of close collaboration between professors Matos and Carrasco on the excavation and research projects surrounding the Templo Mayor at Tenochtitlan. The Lecture Series comes out of a collaboration between DRCLAS, the Harvard Divinity School, and the Moses Mesoamerican Archive and Research Project of Harvard University. Harvard has received invaluable support for this Inaugural Lecture from Mexico’s Ministry of Culture, through the National Institute of Anthropology and History, the National Museum of Anthropology, and the Templo Mayor Museum.

After Professor Matos delivers the lecture, the exhibit “Voices of Clay” (Voces de Barro) – curated especially for the occasion by Matos himself – will open to the public. This exhibit brings
together nine of the most spectacular clay sculptures from the collections of Mexico’s National Museum of Anthropology and the Templo Mayor Museum. A painting by Mexican-American artist George Yepes titled “El Caballero Águila,” commissioned specially for the Matos Lecture Series, will be presented; it will also serve as the visual identity for the series in the years to come.

Eduardo Matos Moctezuma is Professor Emeritus at the National School of Anthropology and History (ENAH). He received a master’s degree in Anthropological Sciences from ENAH and the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM). Since 1978, Professor Matos has coordinated the Templo Mayor Project, which has gone through five excavation stages, and through which the Urban Archaeology Program has carried out several archaeological digs in the historic center of Mexico City. He taught at ENAH since 1968 and also teaches at the Escuela de Restauración, Conservación y Museografía “Manuel Castillo Negrete.” Matos’ most prominent books include Muerte a filo de obsidiana; Life and Death in the Templo Mayor; Teotihuacan, The City of Gods; The Aztecs; El Templo Mayor de Tenochtitlan; La casa prehispánica; Las piedras negadas; and Estudios mexicas, among many others.

Harvard’s engagement in Mexico is also a response to the interests and generosity of its community of distinguished alumni, friends and collaborators in the country. Harvard is also aided in its commitment to Mexico by the unwavering support of a variety of Mexican institutions, such as the Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnología, and the broader Mexican academic community consisting of both public and private institutions.

With the Eduardo Matos Moctezuma Lecture Series Harvard seeks to expand and strengthen its collaborations with Mexico in order to promote teaching and research focused on the country at Harvard, and to deepen academic exchange between Harvard and Mexico at the level of faculty, researchers, and students. The Matos Lecture Series will take place over five years. Each year an academic committee, including Professor Matos himself, will select a new lecturer for the series. Lecturers will speak in Mexico in the fall semester and then at Harvard in the spring semester.

In short, with the Eduardo Matos Moctezuma Lecture Series, Harvard aims to build and strengthen existing educational and research ties with Mexico.

More about Professor Eduardo Matos Moctezuma: Professor Matos Moctezuma served as Director of the Center of Research and Graduate Studies in Social Anthropology (CIESAS, 1982-1986); Director of the National Museum of Anthropology (MNA, 1986-1987); and Director of the Templo Mayor Museum (1987-2000). He is a member of the Seminario de Cultura Mexicana, the Sociedad Mexicana de Geografía y Estadística, the Sociedad Mexicana para el Estudio de las Religiones, the Academia Nacional de Historia y Geografía, the Academia Mexicana de la Historia, the Academia Mexicana de la Lengua and the Colegio Nacional, among other institutions. Among his many distinctions are: Chevalier dans l’Ordre des Palmes Académiques, Ministère des Universités, Republique française (1981); Chevalier de l’Ordre National du Mérite, Republique française (1982); Officier de l’Ordre des Arts et des
Lettres, Ministre de la Culture, Republique française (1982); Socium ab Epistolis, Institutum Archaeologicum Germanicum (1988); Orden Andrés Bello de la República de Venezuela, as well as honorary doctoral degrees from the University of Colorado and the UNAM. In 2000, Professor Matos was awarded Mexico’s National Prize in Arts and Sciences (Premio Nacional de Ciencias y Artes).

In collaboration with Professor Matos, Professor Carrasco and Leonardo López Luján wrote an intellectual biography of Matos titled Breaking Through Mexico’s Past: Digging the Aztecs with Eduardo Matos Moctezuma (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007). This book, as well as many other books published by Matos, will be sold in the lobby of the Museum on the night of the inaugural lecture.

About Professor David Carrasco: David Carrasco is the Neil L. Rudenstine Professor of the Study of Latin America at the Harvard Divinity School and Professor of Anthropology at Harvard. Carrasco is a Mexican-American historian of religions with particular interest in Mesoamerican cities as symbols. Working with Mexican archaeologists, he has carried out research in the excavations and archives associated with the sites of Teotihuacan and Mexico-Tenochtitlan. His most prominent publications include Religions of Mesoamerica, City of Sacrifice, and Quetzalcoatl and the Irony of Empire, and, as a co-author, Breaking Through Mexico’s Past, and Cave, City, and Eagle’s Nest: An Interpretive Journey Through the Mapa Cuahtinchan No. 2. He is also the editor-in-chief of the three-volume award-winning Oxford Encyclopedia of Mesoamerican Cultures. His most recent publication is a new abridgement of Bernal Diaz del Castillo’s memoir of the conquest of Mexico, History of the Conquest of New Spain (University of New Mexico Press). Professor Carrasco is a recipient of the Mexican Order of the Aztec Eagle, the highest honor the Mexican government gives to a foreign national.

About the David Rockefeller Center for Latin American Studies (DRCLAS): Founded in 1994, DRCLAS works toward increasing the knowledge of the cultures, economies, histories, environments, and contemporary affairs of Latin America; deepening cooperation and understanding among the nations of the Americas; and contributing to democracy, social progress, and sustainable development throughout the hemisphere. To advance this mission, DRCLAS has established a network of offices in Latin America that allow the Center to bring Latin America’s best to Harvard, and Harvard’s best to Latin America. DRCLAS has offices in Santiago, Chile; São Paulo, Brazil; and Mexico City. For more information, visit: www.drclas.harvard.edu.

About Harvard Divinity School (HDS): Founded in 1816, the Divinity School is one of the oldest professional schools at Harvard. It was the first non-sectarian theological school in the United States. It is dedicated to the study of religion and theology and prepares its graduates for academic study of religion and for leadership in professional ministry or religious service, governmental, and social organizations. The HDS faculty includes many of the most esteemed academics in the world focused on various religions. Students at HDS may specialize their knowledge in many diverse religious traditions, including Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, as well as religions of Africa and Mesoamerica. For more information, visit: www.hds.harvard.edu.

About the Moses Mesoamerican Archive and Research Project (MMARP): The MMARP, founded by Professor David Carrasco and Professor Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, is a collection of materials that includes photographs of important archaeological expeditions as well as key
artifacts, sculptures, and pre-Hispanic codices. The collection and a library specialized in the history and cultures of Mesoamerica was developed by a working group of scholars that has met at conferences and other events over the past 30 years. The team at MMARP includes specialists from many countries who study art, archaeology, history, anthropology, religion, and ecology. Results of the work of MMARP include over 30 monographs on American religions and cultures, many co-authored texts, and the Oxford Encyclopedia of Mesoamerican Cultures. Scholars at many institutions use the Moses Mesoamerican Archive to develop courses and publications. The MMARP is directed by the Professor Carrasco and is currently housed in the Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology at Harvard University. For more information, visit: www.mmarp.com.

**About the Ministry of Culture:** Founded in 2015, the Ministry of Culture is the institution in charge of supporting and spreading knowledge about artistic expressions and cultures of Mexico, both within the country and beyond. The Ministry supports education, artistic and cultural research, and provides exceptional spaces and services as infrastructure for culture. In addition, the Ministry promotes artistic production and the development of the creative industries and employs digital technologies to increase access to culture. For more information, visit: www.gob.mx/cultura.

**About the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH):** Founded in 1939, INAH is responsible for research, conservation, and dissemination of anthropological, archaeological, and paleontological patrimony of Mexico with the intention of strengthening national identity and memory. INAH is a world-class institution due to its exceptional quality of research output and professional training. INAH is in charge of 110,000 historic monuments that were constructed between the 16th and 19th centuries, and 29,000 archaeological zones in the country. INAH also manages a network of 120 museums as well as three institutions of higher education. For more information, visit www.inah.gob.mx/es/.

**About the National Museum of Archaeology (MNA):** The MNA is the most important museum of its kind in Latin America. It receives about two million visitors each year, and ranks as one of the world’s best museums. Over fifty years, the MNA has become a symbol of Mexican national identity and embodies the representation of Mexico’s pre-Hispanic cultures. For more information, visit: www.mna.inah.gob.mx.

**About the Templo Mayor Museum:** Founded in 1987, the Templo Mayor Museum opened its doors to exhibit archaeological evidence excavated during the Templo Mayor Project between 1978 and 1982 under the direction of Professor Matos Moctezuma. This project enabled the recovery of remains from the Templo Mayor at Tenochtitlan and adjacent structures. The Museum design is based on the structure of the Templo Mayor, which reflects the worship of two divine bodies: Huitzilopochtli, the god of sun, war, and patron god of the Mexicas; and Tlaloc, the god of rain. Since 2010, the Museum has displayed in the main vestibule a magnificent, multi-colored relief of the goddess of the Earth, Tlatecuhtli, the most significant Mexican sculptural artifact found to date. Additionally, in the central area on the second level of the museum is a sensational finding from the excavation: a giant, circular monolith that depicts the moon goddess, Coyolxuahqui. For more information, visit: www.templomayor.inah.gob.mx.