

## About the Bildner Center

The Bildner Center for Western Hemisphere Studies is a forum for the gathering of academics, students, policy makers, civil society leaders, and other specialists working on contemporary issues in the Americas. Founded in 1982 at the urging of philanthropist *Albert Bildner*, this nonpartisan center generates information, policy and background studies, problem-oriented research, and encourages the formation of networks and intellectual communities.

The Bildner Center seeks to create an international community of people, ideas, and enterprises to forward the understanding of the complexities of social, economic, political, cultural, and ecological life in the Western Hemisphere. The Center fosters research and understanding through a number of programs, both country and theme specific. The broad themes are Democracy and Human Rights, Sustainable and Equitable Development, Integration and Globalization, and Knowledge and Culture. The Brazil Project and the Cuba Project study these two countries in regional, comparative, and global context. Each of these programs invites distinguished scholars and practitioners to participate in an ongoing dialogue to generate greater public comprehension, as well as public policy recommendations.

Mauricio A. Font is Director of the Bildner Center and Professor of sociology at Queens College and the Graduate Center. His books include: *Transforming Brazil: A Reform Era in Perspective* (2003), *Integración Económica y Democratización: América Latina y Cuba* (1998), *Toward a New Cuba? Legacies of a Revolution* (1997).



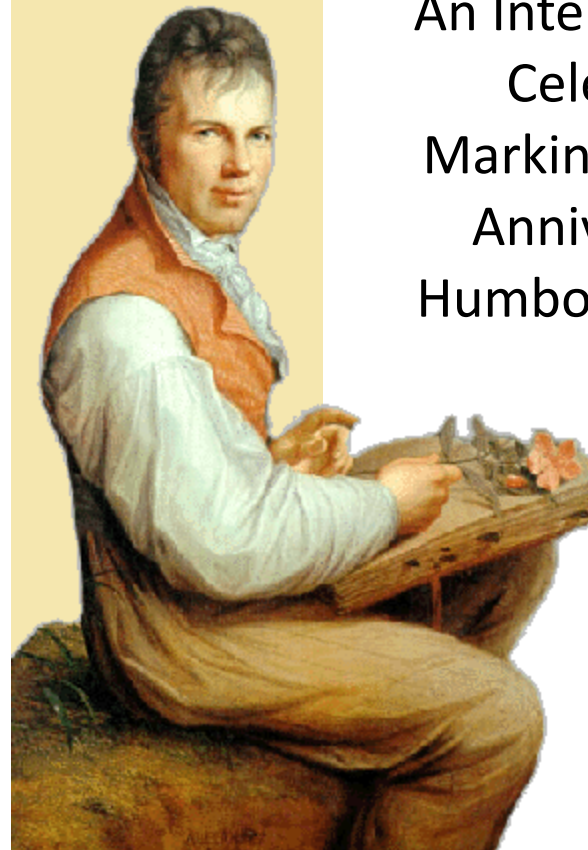
**BILDNER CENTER**

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# Alexander von Humboldt: From the Americas to the Cosmos



An Interdisciplinary  
Celebration  
Marking the 200th  
Anniversary of  
Humboldt's Visit to

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## Alexander von Humboldt From the Americas to the Cosmos

In 1804, Alexander von Humboldt (1769-1859) concluded a five-year journey of exploration and discovery in South America, New Spain (Mexico) and Cuba with a visit to the United States at the invitation of President Thomas Jefferson. This extraordinary expedition established Humboldt as the greatest and most famous geographer and explorer of modern times, and his voyage became the highpoint of a life-long investigation and documentation of the unity of nature. In the course of his American travels, Humboldt collected tens of thousands of specimens of flora and fauna previously unknown to European science. From them grew an exhaustive, thirty-volume account of the journey that Humboldt produced upon his return to Europe. His travel writing is now considered to be groundbreaking. His American experience also moved the politically engaged Humboldt, a man inspired by the Enlightenment and ideals of the French Revolution, to publish books on Cuba and Mexico that offered critiques of colonialism and slavery and strongly advocated on behalf of the native peoples he saw cruelly exploited.

### Conference Program (Preliminary)

#### Thursday, October 14, 2004

12:00-4:00	Registration and viewing of Humboldt exhibition
5:00-5:45	Opening ceremony and reception
5:45-6:45	Welcomes from sponsors Mafred Osten, opening keynote and panel
6:45-7:30	Play: "Wide World"
7:30-9:00	Reception

#### Friday, October 15, 2004

8:30	Registration
9:00-10:30	Session 1
11:00-12:30	Session 2
12:30-1:30	Lunch
1:30-3:00	Session 3
3:30-5:00	Session 4
5:00-8:00	Dinner
8:00-10:30	Lecture on Mendelssohn-Humboldt Cantata by Prof. Rainer Carlebach Performance of the Cantata Reception

#### Saturday, October 16, 2004

8:30	Registration
9:00-10:30	Session 5
11:00-12:30	Session 6
12:30-1:30	Lunch
1:30-3:00	Session 7