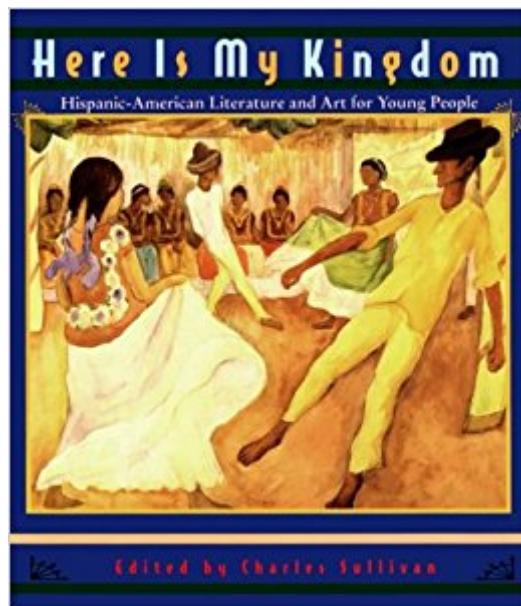


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Here Is My Kingdom



Synopsis

Here Is My Kingdom: Hispanic-American Literature and Art for Young People is a vital and colorful anthology - the first of its kind - that illuminates the many facets of the Hispanic-American experience. To capture the spirit, vitality, and diversity of the Hispanic heritage, Here Is My Kingdom covers a broad spectrum of cultures and origins and spans history from Columbus and Cortes to Cesar Chavez. Through the poems, texts, and illustrations the reader can explore many kingdoms: Spain and Portugal; the Mayas and Aztecs; the kingdom of God; the mythical kingdom of Aztlan, said by some to have existed where New Mexico and Arizona are today. The text and art - by classic, well-known, and even relatively new writers and artists - are brilliantly selected from a vast and rich literary and historical tradition. The art and literature work together here to convey remarkable images of beauty and endurance and feelings of strength and pride. Frida Kahlo's painting Roots accompanies words from the poem "The Roots" by Hugo Salazar Tamariz. A traditional folk rhyme is paired with colorful Mexican folk art. Wifredo Lam's The Jungle appears with "Give Me Back My World" by Rita Geda. The elegant, accessible design and beautifully reproduced illustrations of Here Is My Kingdom let the reader enjoy paintings, folk art, murals, wood-block prints, cave drawing, ancient and contemporary sculpture, and photographs that enhance songs, poems, and proverbs, and excerpts from short stories, essays, novels, and speeches. Biographical notes give background information on all the artists and writers, including places where more of their work can be found. The book's foreword is by Luis R. Cancel, Commissioner of Cultural Affairs in New York City and former Executive Director of the Bronx Museum of the Arts. He gives insight into the complex question of Hispanic-American identity and tells the reader to "remember that the oral and literary traditions of your family, neighbors, and community

Book Information

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Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

To present a survey of the Hispanic American experience and of the art produced by it, Sullivan (editor of the noteworthy anthology of African American art and literature *Children of Promise*) gathers works by more than 100 painters, poets, writers, photographers, activists, scholars and historical figures. This time he builds an even more resonant portrait of a minority struggling to define and maintain its identity. Greats like Picasso, Tamayo, Paz and Rivers share space with folk artists, anonymous ancients and young contemporary artists. Anglos like James McNeill Whistler and Robert Frost add perspective, but the direct experience of Latinos never lapses--a consistent political urgency rises among the frequent flashes of gentle humor and the handsomely reproduced, often sensuous images. The poetry is particularly striking in its steely lyricism. Sullivan brings to this serious task great imagination, flair and sensitivity, and he delivers an inspiring book. Biographical notes included. All ages. Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc.

Gr. 7-12. This handsomely designed, large-size anthology, in the same series as Sullivan's *Children of Promise: African-American Literature and Art for Young People* (1991), brings together Latino poetry and prose with excellent reproductions of paintings and photographs. Inevitably, there are omissions (no Sandra Cisneros or Richard Rodriguez, for example), but there are great contributions by and about classic and contemporary Hispanic authors and artists, from Cervantes and Picasso to popular singer Gloria Estefan and writers Rudolfo Anaya and Judith Ortiz Cofer. The prose excerpts are the least interesting too brief and disconnected but the anthology's best selections reach out from particulars to all of us. As Nicholasa Mohr says here, the more specific you are in your writing, the more universal you become. There's much in translation, and bilingualism and borders are dominant themes, as in Perez-Firmat's colloquial poem about Home (Give the guy a break . . . / Let him stop having to translate himself / to himself / endlessly). Frida Kahlo's famous Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair is here, but there are also some less well known pieces, including the exquisite cover picture by Diego Rivera. This is a fine browsing collection that will introduce teens to the rich diversity of Latino culture. Hazel Rochman

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