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Singer Ely Guerra Will Be a Guest Lecturer at UCLA Today

Written by [Jennifer Velez](#) October 22, 2015

Students at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) will have Latin Grammy Award winning singer-songwriter Ely Guerra as a professor for a day.

The Mexican Alternative music artist has been named a 2015-2016 UC Regents Lecturer, making her the first Mexican woman to receive the position. The UC Regents Lecturer is a prestigious position that allows artists and other non-academic professionals to enhance students' learning at one of the University of California campuses. Guerra has been chosen as a lecturer for the UCLA campus as an effort to explore cultural exchange between Mexico and Los Angeles, the university said in a statement.

The appointment comes at a "very beautiful moment for me," Guerra said.

The artist celebrated 20 years of music making in 2014. Her most recent album *El Origin* celebrates that personal and musical journey with a mix of her own tracks and covers of the traditional Mexican songs that have shaped her. Songs evoke intimate memories in her latest work and she bares them with the piano as her only instrument.



“It is very important for me to come here and show how a Mexican woman of my age can keep working on an idea or on a dream,” Guerra said. “At the end I am working on my dream.”

Guerra, who has been praised for her artistic activism, will teach at the university during a class on Mexican literature, film and music where she will talk to students about some of the social, political and cultural topics she has covered and written about in her work. The artist will mainly speak of the human rights, indigenous rights and the environment issues in Mexico she covered in her 1999 album *Lotofire*.

“It’s very important for us to communicate our experience to young people. Even though we’re still young in a way, I just trust young people. I love the way they think, I love the way they react to things,” she said. “I think we need to be open to contemporary times and this is why it is important to collaborate because in Mexico things are different than in the United States.”

On Oct. 20, Guerra was also given a commendation from LA signed by the city's Mayor, Eric Garcetti, recognizing her cultural contributions to LA and the world.

"[The] Mexican or Latino community in the United States [is] a strong one and I believe we need to keep thinking of that and [many of us because it's an electoral year] need to be paying attention. We need to be informed. That's the most exciting thing [about being at UCLA] we are exchanging ideas," she said.

Guerra's visit to the school is co-hosted by the Institute of American Cultures, Chicano Studies Research Center and the Department of Spanish and Portuguese. It will take place at 4:00pm today.

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