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THIS MONTH'S FEATURE



radio bilingüe

National Latino Public Radio Network

Línea Abierta - or "Open Line" - is the first and only live national Spanish-language talk show in U.S. public media, featuring rousing conversations every weekday with national Latino newsmakers from politics, arts, culture, social movements, the media and more – with regular audience call-in participation.

Celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, *Línea Abierta* is produced by the Radio Bilingüe National Latino Public Radio Network, and is the flagship program for Radio Bilingüe's 24/7 stream of Latino-oriented music, information and cultural programming available free of charge to all public radio stations through ContentDepot and PRSS. It airs live every weekday 12:00 pm PT - 1:00 pm PT or can be rebroadcast any time in stations' schedules.



About the Creator:



Samuel Orozco

Samuel Orozco is the creator, executive producer and veteran host of *Línea Abierta*, with decades of news-breaking interviews with guests from legendary Latino icons to unknown heroes. Samuel is founder and director of Radio Bilingüe's 30-year old national Latino news service that currently includes the popular Spanish weekend magazine *Edición Semanaria de Noticiero Latino*, also available on Radio Bilingüe's 24 hour feed.

Samuel is known by thousands of listeners as a leading journalist and analyst and artful conversationalist on national topics from immigration to health to popular culture. He has hosted guests as diverse as President Obama to Nobel Peace Prize winner Rigoberta Menchú, literary legend Eduardo Galeano, recent farmworker organizing leaders Lucas Benítez and Gerardo Reyes of Florida, MacArthur Fellow

Sandra Cisneros, mystery writer Lucha Corpi, and Nobel Chemistry Prize winner Miguel J Molina, early discoverer of climate change.

Respected Latino journalists working in public and commercial media today were trained by Samuel in Radio Bilingüe's newsroom over the decades. Samuel began to develop his interest in letting people tell their own stories while growing up in a union family in a bustling railroad town in Sonora, Mexico. He was a student leader and an activist in Mexico's popular education movement of the 1970s. Soon after immigrating to California's San Joaquin Valley in 1980, he responded to a call for "volunteer citizen newscasters" at Radio Bilingüe, the recently born community radio station launched by young Mexican-American students, farmworkers and artists in Fresno.

Within a few years Samuel had turned the effort into a national service, responding to the dearth of quality Latino or Spanish news in public or commercial media. Today, Radio Bilingüe's news and public affairs programs are used by more than 70 stations, with many awards and recognitions.

Samuel rotates the *Línea Abierta* hosting duties with Graciela "Chelis" Lopez, a well-known San Francisco Bay Area community radio host and figure on the Latino arts scene, and Martha Elena Ramírez, a veteran Mexico City-based radio journalist.



Graciela "Chelis" Lopez

Q & A

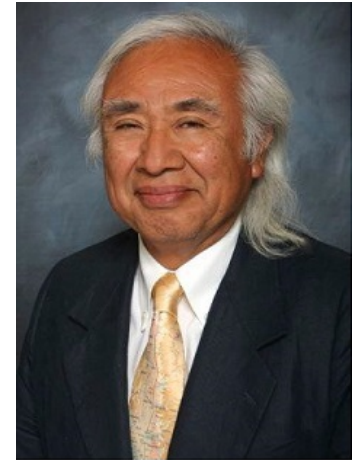
SHOWCase spoke with Samuel Orozco, executive producer and host of *Línea Abierta*,

and Hugo Morales, Radio Bilingüe co-founder and executive director.

How did this show come about? What was the impetus for creating it?

Línea Abierta was created in 1995 as the flagship program for *Satélite Radio Bilingüe* – our 24/7 bilingual satellite programming service that ensures a content stream is available at all times for the nation’s Latino public radio stations and all stations seeking to serve the burgeoning Latino communities of their service areas.

At the time, Radio Bilingüe’s news team had a 10-year track record producing national radio specials that attracted affiliates around the nation, including the first bilingual coverage of presidential conventions in 1984, and live broadcast of the first Congressional hearings on border violence.



Hugo Morales

After the Corporation for Public Broadcasting provided seed money for the launch of *Satélite Radio Bilingüe* in 1993, Samuel and his team developed *Línea Abierta* based on these previous specials as a vehicle to fill a huge need: regularly interconnecting Latino audiences around the country every weekday directly with newsmakers and one another. Hugo Morales introduced it as “Where the National Latino Conversation Starts.”

Who is your primary target listener? Who is going to appreciate this show the most?

The program is produced primarily by and for Spanish-speaking Latino audiences and any Spanish speakers who are eager to keep up with news, cultural developments, deeper angles and diverse perspectives on issues of top concern to Latinos.

Radio Bilingüe primary listeners range from recent Latino immigrants to very established bilingual Latinos who prize Spanish and their cultural heritage. *Línea Abierta* frequently and proudly speaks directly to the concerns of working class people, invites them to express their views nationally, and connects them with guests such as their elected representatives, their cultural heroes, and people like themselves who are doing amazing things in their communities.

Other significant listening segments that call in regularly to the program include college students, educators, academics and civic leaders.

Why would/should stations be interested in running your program?

Stations committed to including their local Latino community in the “public” of their services can rely on *Línea Abierta* or *Edición Semanaria* as great additions to their schedules. Some are using Radio Bilingüe programming to reinforce the development of their own locally produced Latino programming. Some English format stations have initially expected a challenge in airing a Spanish program or block, but many have discovered that Spanish-speaking listeners come faithfully to look for their scheduled hour(s), while the English audience quickly figures out how to tune back in for their favorite programs.



**Las Cafeteras Performs
Live on Radio Bilingüe**

As Radio “Bilingüe,” some talk programs are bilingual and some music programs are in English or languages other than Spanish. Radio Bilingüe’s unique public affairs programs include *Rockin’ da House*, mixing music and information for the bilingual English-Spanish youth demo, and *La Hora Mixteca*, featuring music and information in Spanish and indigenous Mixtec, a major population group in farm worker communities of the United States.

One of Radio Bilingüe’s top rated music programs is the Spanish-English *Onda Tejana* on Saturday afternoons, connecting the passionate Tex-Mex / Tejano music community from the Rio Grande Valley of Texas to the San Joaquin Valley of California to Laramie Wyoming and beyond. Other diverse musical program offerings from Radio Bilingüe include Mariachi, Norteño, Salsa, Afro-Caribbean, Jazz, Alter Latin, Rock en Español, World music and more—enjoyed in all languages.

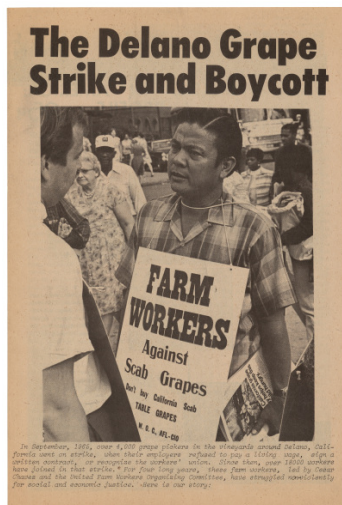
Can you give an overview on one particular show that you thought was especially good? And any special plans for Hispanic Heritage Month?

Every month is Latino Heritage Month on Radio Bilingüe. And we have recently run some wonderful *Línea Abierta* shows that would be great for partner stations to re-air as part of their own Hispanic Heritage Month offerings -- or at any time.

For example, we were overjoyed this summer when our long-time Radio Bilingüe friend and collaborator Juan Felipe Herrera was named Poet Laureate of the United States – the first ever Latino in this prestigious and beautiful role. Earlier this Spring, Juan Felipe joined *Línea Abierta* to introduce his work “the most incredible and biggest poem on unity in the world” and invited listeners around the country to call in and contribute with a word, phrase, poem or *corrido* (ballad).

Our on-air community was totally engaged, with some moved to tears as they expressed the need for unity on immigration, education, poverty and family. We had Juan Felipe join us on *Línea Abierta* again in September to mark his inauguration as poet laureate and give details of his tenure’s signature project: *La Casa de Colores* and his “epic poem” on *La Familia*.

Huelga! – Strike! - To mark the 50th anniversary of the historic Delano Grape Strike, considered the birth of the farmworker justice movement, *Línea Abierta* broadcast rare



special interviews with top actors from the event – including legendary United Farm Worker leaders Dolores Huerta, Eliseo Medina and Gilberto Padilla as well as Luis Valdez, founder of El Teatro Campesino. They shared their memories of the events that led to the historic walkout by Filipino and Mexican workers and the strike that lasted for more than five years and set in motion historic changes around the nation, including the impact it had in their

own lives.



Juan Felipe Herrera

Thousands of past *Línea Abierta* programs are available online.

To review episodes from the last year, click <http://radiobilingue.org/en/rb-programas/linea-abierta-2/>

To review episodes from prior years, click <http://www.archivosderb.org/>

What are some topics or issues you plan to address in future episodes?

We are currently developing a pilot for a series on music that sings and reflects the immigration experience of new arrivals who have helped develop the cultural identity of California, in collaboration with the Alliance for California Traditional Arts and the Smithsonian Institution.

We will assuredly continue our tradition of following the national election campaigns as well as important initiatives where Latino voters will play a deciding role in states around the nation.

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