

Celebrated Mexican archaeologist wins major Spanish award

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Archaeologist Eduardo Matos Moctezuma stands over a newly discovered platform at the archaeological site of Templo Mayor in Mexico City, Mexico, Oct. 6, 2011. Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, a celebrated Mexican archaeologist who led the excavation of the Great Aztec Temple in Mexico City, won this year's Princess of Asturias award in the social sciences category, the Spanish foundation behind the prizes announced Wednesday May 18, 2022. Credit: AP Photo/Marco Ugarte, File

Eduardo Matos Moctezuma, a celebrated Mexican archaeologist who led the excavation of the Great Aztec Temple in Mexico City, won this year's Princess of Asturias award in the social sciences category, the Spanish foundation behind the prizes announced Wednesday.

The dig at the shrine, which was discovered by accident in 1978 after being buried under the city's main plaza since the 16th century, was a landmark event in the archaeological world and drew intense interest as it proceeded for more than 20 years.

That excavation, and others, represent "exemplary episodes of the scientific development of archaeology and a fruitful dialogue with the past, between separate cultures and between human and social sciences," the Asturias Princess Foundation, which is named for Spanish Crown Princess Leonor, said in its citation.

It also cited the "extraordinary intellectual rigor" of the 81-year-old Moctezuma, who has written several books as well as more than 500 articles, catalogues and guides.

"Due to his scientific intelligence, his ability to communicate and his social commitment, Eduardo Matos Moctezuma and his body of work provide an inspiration for future generations of social scientists and citizens," the citation said.

The 50,000-euro [award](#) (\$52,600) is one of eight prizes, including in the arts, communication and sports, handed out annually by the foundation.

The awards are among the most prestigious in the Spanish-speaking world. An awards ceremony typically takes place in October in the northern Spanish city of Oviedo.

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