



## MEDIA ADVISORY

The Kennedy Center

presents

### ***Artes de Cuba* Press Preview and Festival Opening Performance**

**Tuesday, May 8 at the Kennedy Center**

**WHAT:** *Artes de Cuba* Press Preview  
**WHERE:** The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing arts (2700 F St. NW)  
**WHEN:** Tuesday, May 8 at 11:00 a.m. (art preview) and 8:00 p.m. (opening performance)

**ART PREVIEW DETAILS:** Alicia Adams, festival curator and Vice President of International Programming, invites you to preview the Kennedy Center's unprecedented festival celebrating the vibrant arts and culture of Cuba. Press are invited to get a sneak peek at the art exhibits with the artists as they work to continue preparing for the festival and talk guests through their creative process. Print and on-camera interviews will be available with:

- **José Parlá**  
Born in Miami, Florida, to Cuban immigrants, José Parlá is a critically acclaimed, multidisciplinary artist whose oeuvre spans painting, large-scale murals, photography, video, and sculpture. Among his many public works is a commission by One World Trade Center for his monumental mural painting, *ONE: Union of the Senses*, the largest painting of its kind in New York. For *Artes de Cuba*, the internationally recognized Parlá will present an installation combining sculptural works and two paintings: *Nuevo Rumbo* and *Amistad América*.
- **Emilio Perez**  
Emilio Perez has created a site-specific, multi-channel video installation for *Artes de Cuba* inspired by the rhythms of Cuba and the New York-born, Cuban American painter and muralist's personal history with the island. Perez's abstract composition merges photos and artwork he made in Havana with architectural surfaces to create animated paintings set to a score by Andrew Yeomanson, aka DJ Le Spam. In 2016, Perez's "Dream Season" lit up Times Square for three minutes as a part of *Midnight Moment*, the world's largest digital art exhibition. *Sombras Silvestres* is his second experiment in the genre.
- **Celia Ledón**  
On the "frontier of fashion" (*Vanity Fair*), Cuban designer Celia Ledón fuses fashion and art in show-stopping creations that have graced haute couture runways, theater stages, and art films. Her installation features 11 costume art pieces by Ledón, including a work commissioned for *Artes de Cuba*. The costumes on display have been made from natural fibers as well as such unconventional materials as rubber rugs for cars, film tapes, trash bags, and the tops of soda cans.

- **Roberto Diago**

At just 37, Havana-born Roberto Diago has long been one of Cuba's most critically acclaimed and commercially lauded artists. With a focus on raw subject matter, including deep reflections on race, slavery, and religion, Diago works across media and found-art installations. For the festival, the celebrated artist will debut his *Permanent History*. This cluster of small, simple houses suggests Marianao, the working-class Havana neighborhood where Roberto Diago grew up. Despite the lingering imprint of their past, says the artist, "communities that have experienced slavery and inequality strive to overcome that legacy and face the present with dignity."

- **Roberto Fabelo**

Absurdist Cuban painter, sculptor, and illustrator Roberto Fabelo is a member of "the generation of sure hope" that emerged in the 1980s, credited with reinvigorating the country's creative environment. He's the recipient of the prestigious Alejo Carpentier medal, Cuba's highest honor for artistic achievement. With *Mundos*, accumulations in the shape of the Earth are Fabelo's commentary on urgent problems facing society today. Stacks of everyday cookware in *Torres* suggest that assuring man's daily sustenance is a towering achievement. In *Ronda Infinita*, figures walking along the rim of a cauldron evoke man's ongoing struggle for survival. With *Cafedral*, coffee pots erected into a cathedral position the beverage as a symbol of cultural identity.

- **Yissy**

Yissy Garcia and her group BandanCHA follow the routes of Latin jazz, funk, and electronic music. Born in Havana's Cayo Hueso district and the daughter of percussionist Bernardo García, founder of Irakere and Arturo Sandoval's band, Garcia began her career as a member of the women's salsa band Anacaona. She has quickly become an iconic figure of female percussion in Cuba and beyond, having performed with the likes of Dave Matthews and Esperanza Spalding, and has been likened to "the Cuban version of Terri Lyne Carrington" by *Tom Tom Magazine*. Her band recently delivered its freshly minted debut album *Última Noticia*.

- **Ivan Giroud**

Ivan Giroud, president of the Havana Film Festival, is considered one of the most qualified specialists in Latin American cinema. The International Festival of the New Latin American Film in Havana (aka Havana Film Festival) takes place every year during the first half of December. From the late 1970s to the present day, this festival enchants world audiences and attracts numerous producers, directors, actors, and enthusiastic fans to Havana. For *Artes de Cuba*, Giroud has selected six films to highlight the history of the festival, which celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2018.

**Opening Performance Details:** Limited space is available for broadcast media to capture footage of the opening performance with performances by the Latin Grammy Award®-winning "Diva of Buena Vista Social Club" Omara Portuondo, Cubadisco Award-winning pianist Rolando Luna, the Havana Lyceum Orchestra, jazz composer and dazzling pianist Aldo López-Gavilán, acclaimed composer and musician Yosvanny Terry, piano sensation Jorge Luis Pacheco, the renowned Orquesta Miguel Faílde, and Grammy®-nominated Aymée Nuviola. Limited tickets for reporters interested in attending are also available.

Media RSVPs are required. All events are free and open to the public.

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