

# *José Mujica: ‘We are indebted to culture and Martí’*

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Former Uruguayan President, José Mujica, delivered a lecture on Cuban National Hero, José Martí, at the Havana based Casa de las Américas cultural institution.

On the occasion of the 57th edition of the coveted Casa de las Américas Literary Prize, the current Uruguayan senator spoke about Martí and culture, Martí as a revolutionary, a writer, an essayist, in love, and his humanistic ideas. Mujica said that those who call themselves leftists should go to Martí searching for intellectual tools that can be used for today's struggles, calling the Cuban National hero a bridge between the Latin America's founding fathers and the challenges of the future.

‘We are indebted to Martí’, he noted, ‘my generation thought that if we managed to change production relations and distribution, we would create the physical conditions for the emergence of a new man, and we fell short, we forgot about the formidable role of culture’. However, he referred to culture rather than fine arts, to culture as a natural phenomenon of stories and traditions created by people, about the culture that, in his words, ‘has taught us to

live together’.

The Casa de las Américas Literary Prize was called for the first time in April, 1959, with the objective of encouraging and spreading literature on the continent. This time, the literary award has been called in the categories of short story, theater, essay, non-fiction Brazilian literature, Caribbean literature in French or Creole and an award for the aboriginal cultures of the America

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