

Omara Portuondo sings to Havana on its 500th anniversary



Havana, September 6 (RHC) – The musical video *Sábanas Blancas* dedicated to Havana on its 500th birthday, featuring Omara Portuondo, is ready. Directed by award-winning video and filmmaker Joseph Ros, the video is the result of the alliance between the Cuban Music Recording and Editing Enterprise –EGREM–, the island's oldest record label, and the capital's Provincial Culture Division. The audiovisual work will premiere next Friday, October 11, on digital platforms and on national TV shows.

Sábanas Blancas (White sheets) - the very popular song created by Gerardo Alfonso - was recorded by the so called 'Diva of the Buena Vista Social Club Project' and 'la novia del feeling' (the bride of feeling) in her album *Omara Siempre* (EGREM, 2018), an album that won a Special Prize at the Cubadisco Music Awards last year, in addition to a nomination to the Latin Grammy. The new arrangement by Alain Pérez combines elements of several Cuban music genres, such as 'rumba', 'son' and 'timba'. Osain del Monte and Rolando Luna participated in the recording, among other prominent musicians from the country. According to director Joseph Ros, the musical video's filming took place from late 2018 to April, 2019, and it was hard to combine the times of Omara and those of other musicians and performers involved, such as Gerardo Alfonso, Michel Mirabal and the Compañeros de Batea Street Dancers.

'The main ambition with which I assumed this work was to show the real people that make up the soul of this city,' says Joseph Ros, 'because Havana is, first of all, its people and also all the architectural beauty, all the color and the permanent dialogue with the sea.' The 30-year-old filmmaker is happy to have had

the opportunity to direct the most recent Cuban singer's filming and video experiences, including the making of her album Omara Siempre (Omara Forever) and her beautiful musical video released last June.

Born on Calle Salud 708, in the heart of Central Havana, Omara Portuondo will turn 89 this month to the pride of Cuban culture. The singer and performer has announced she intends to sing while she is strong enough and audiences want to listen to her, which is why, she is involved in an international tour that has taken her to the United States, Europe, Asia and in the next few days back to Mexico. Her most recent studio work Siempre tu voz (Always your voice) was released in May, also under the EGREM label. A Cubadisco Special Prize for 2019, Siempre tu voz is a very celebrated album that pays tribute to Benny Moré in his centenary and that she shares with the Failde Orchestra.

Portuondo has a packed recording schedule because in recent days she has accepted Cimagfunk's invitation to sing in his next single entitled Potaje, while preparing for another album, musically produced and arranged by Roberto Fonseca. Next November Omara will travel to Las Vegas to receive the Award for Musical Excellence granted by the Latin Recording Academy, adding to the list of Cuban artists who have won the award, including Juan Formell, Pablo Milanés and Chucho Valdés.

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