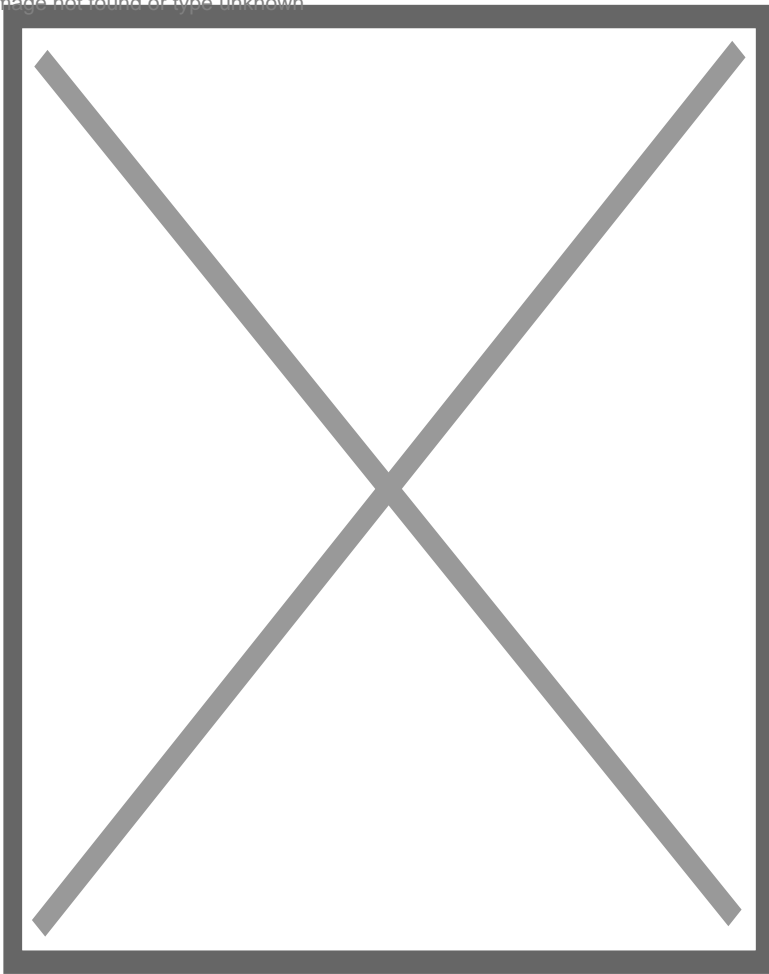


Death of Johnny Ventura is irreparable loss for Caribbean culture

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Santiago de Cuba, July 29 (RHC)-- The death of Dominican singer Johnny Ventura constitutes an irreparable loss for Caribbean culture, said Cuban intellectual Orlando Vergés, director of Casa del Caribe, in Santiago de Cuba.

In a phone conversation with Cuban News Agency, Verges spoke highly of Ventura's vast legacy, his creativity and the popularity he enjoyed, taking Dominican and Caribbean music and art to big stages the world over.

The director of Casa del Caribe lamented Ventura's sudden death and said it ruins joint projects he had with Cuban artists, particularly in Santiago de Cuba.

He recalled Johnny Ventura's performance in Cuba in July of 2015, in the framework of the 35th Caribbean Festival.

At the time, Ventura gave two big concerts at Teatro Heredia in Santiago de Cuba, along with singer Maridalia Hernández and La Gallera orchestra. The Dominican merengue singer was also granted the Illustrious Visitor Distinction, granted by the Municipal Assembly of People's Power in the eastern Cuban territory.

The director of Casa del Caribe said that Johnny Ventura was an admirer of Cuba and leader Fidel Castro. He treasured a photo of him with Fidel, taken during the Cuban leader's visit to the Dominican Republic, at a time when Ventura served as mayor of Santo Domingo.

Born on March 8th, 1940, Ventura recorded more than 100 discs during a prolific career of more than 60 years in music.

The multi-award winning musician was awarded 28 gold and two platinum records, one Latin Grammy in 2004 and a Grammy for Excellence for his career in 2006.

Johnny Ventura's last Cuba visit was in 2016, when he travelled briefly to Havana to receive the Special Cubadisco Prize he won that same year for his album "Tronco Viejo".

More recently, the legendary Dominican musician collaborated in the latest album of Magic Sax, a Cuban sax quartet based in eastern Santiago de Cuba.

Entitled 'Imprescindibles', the album includes the track 'Perdone usted' written by Cuban National Music Prize laureate Enrique Bonne and performed by Johnny Ventura.

Juan Chacón, leader of Magic Sax, said that the Dominican singer was excited and honored to record a tune authored by Bonne.

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