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## Culture Must Build Bridges, not Ambushes

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Cuban culture is just one, and it's made up, among other identifying features, by the best expressions of art and literature created by Cuban artists and writers, regardless of their place of residence.

The cultural policy of the nation sees it like this. It's a matter of principle, which does not even exclude the works of artists who don't sympathize with the Cuban revolutionary process.

This country doesn't assume its culture as a chance flag, as a catch, as a bargaining chip in the political sphere. Culture, as understood here, will always build bridges. And the recent history of relations between Cuba and the United States there are plenty of examples in this regard.

Just last year, a large delegation of Cuban artists and groups performed at the Kennedy Center, in Washington, in a very successful festival that highlighted the strength of Cuban culture and its historical links with the best of the North American culture and its audience.

That festival, obviously, did not please certain ultra-conservative sectors, who considered it a political act, although there was no talk, no song, nothing political was danced.

They are the sectors that accuse Cuba of politicizing their art, while demanding that all Cuban artists who perform in the United States define themselves politically, that they attack the Cuban government and the cultural institutions of the State.

They are the ones who launch campaigns against artists who, in one way or another, support that system of institutions that, ultimately, is the backbone of the great artistic and literary fabric of the nation.

Some creators, even famous creators, have unfortunately bowed to these pressures. Others, served by rather limited talents, are part of an unscrupulous circus specialized in boycotting.

The only answer, the most dignified, is to keep making art.

Not the guided art that they say is made in Cuba. Guided art (it's hard to call it art), is what's usually done in some stages in Florida.

You have to come to Cuba, you have to watch what's presented in theaters, in concert halls, what's exhibited in galleries, what's written, what is composed, what is debated ...

That is the art that Cuba defends. And artists have the right to defend it too, creating here, for Cubans, and creating for the world.

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