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Cuban National Hero inducted to New York Writers Hall of Fame

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Jose Martí, Cuba's National Hero, was included as new member of the New York Writers Hall of Fame in recognition to his work as poet, essayist, journalist and politician.

Thus, the Cuban creator became the second Hispanic writer to enter the exclusive room, after the Puerto Rican poet Julia de Burgos did it in 2011, according to Cubadebate website.

The proposal was promoted in recent times by Esther Allen, a Martí scholar and translator, and the Cuban-American historian Ada Ferrer, of New York University, both scholars and promoters of his work.

The induction to the select group took place during a ceremony, in which Ferrer and Lisandro Perez, a Cuban American sociologist and professor at John Jay College, were in charge of the opening speeches.

The New York Writers Hall of Fame is a project of the Empire State Center for the Book that annually grants membership to several writers, living or dead, who have marked the cultural history of that great city.

Some of the most famous members are Walt Whitman, Herman Melville, Washington Irving, Henry James, Edith Wharton, Elizabeth Bishop, Marianne Moore, Mary McCarthy, Langston Hughes, James Baldwin, among others.

This year, along with Marti, five other writers were inducted, two of them also deceased: Ira Gershwin (1896-1983) who wrote many well-known songs with her brother George Gershwin; and E.L. Konigsburg (1930-2013), author of books for children.

The other three authors are the historian and journalist Russell Shorto (1959), Pulitzer Prize-winner novelist Colson Whitehead (1969) and Jacqueline Woodson (1963), current United States Ambassador for Young People's Literature.

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