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100 years since the birth of Oswaldo Guayasamín

09/07/2019



Excerpts of speech by Fidel during the inauguration of Guayasamín's Chapel of man, Quito, Ecuador, November 29, 2002:

I remember the time very early in the Cuban Revolution, when, amidst hectic days, a man with an indigenous, tenacious, restless face, already well known and admired by many of our intellectuals, wanted to paint a portrait of me.

For the first time I was subjected to the torturous task. I was obliged to stand still, exactly as he said. I did not know if it would last an hour or a century...

I was in the presence of a no less than a great teacher and an exceptional person, who I would later come to know with ever-increasing admiration and deep affection: Oswaldo Guayasamín. He would have been around 42 years old at that time...

Guayasamín was perhaps the most noble and human person I ever met. He created at the speed of light, and his dimensions as a human being knew no limits...

I learned a great deal from my conversations with him. They enriched my conscience regarding the terrible drama of conquest, colonization, genocide and injustices committed against the indigenous peoples of this hemisphere: a lacerating pain that he carried among his deepest feelings. He was very knowledgeable about the history of that drama...

None of this escaped the profound thought, warmth and sense of human dignity of Oswaldo

Guayasamín. He devoted his art and his life to building consciousness, denouncing, combating, and fighting these injustices.

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