JoJazz Festival 2014 Dedicates Concert to Pablo Milanes in Havana

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Havana's *Lazaro Peña* Theater will welcome artists William Roblejo, Rolando Luna, *Aire de Concierto*, Zule Guerra, Yanet Valdes, Sexto Sentido and others, who will perform classics by the Cuban singer-songwriter, as well as a lesser known piece composed by Milanes and Chucho Valdes.

The JoJazz Festival will be held from November 13 to 16 and, like every year, young musicians will have an opportunity to showcase their talent in two categories: performance and composition.

Soloists and small and large bands will perform jazz classics or improvise pieces during the day at the *Sala Avenida* of the theater. In the afternoon and eveningss, they will meet with friends, music students and artists who received awards at previous festivals to jam at the gardens of the *Mella* theater.

The JoJazz festival was founded at the close of the 1990s. It began as an informal gathering and evolved into a solid festival, welcoming performers from nearly all of the country's provinces and foreign invitees, who enrich the competition and nightly concerts. As an event, it serves as a barometer for the state of jazz being performed by the youngest on the Cuban stage.

Even though musicians who choose to play jazz are no longer stigmatized in Cuba (as was the case in the 1960s), it is still not officially included in the syllabus offered by the country's music

schools. That said, the number and talent of the performers who compete at the festival grows every year, a sign that curiosity over jazz continues to haunt the island's music academies, and many are the young artists who receive important international awards.

On Sunday, November 16, following the awards ceremony, a concert titled *Los Pianos JoJazz*, with Alejandro Falcon, Jorge Aragon and Alejandro Meroño (and guests), will be held to close the festival.

Edited by Ivan Martínez