

# *Omara Portuondo and Teresita Hernández presented with top Japanese award*

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Havana, August 17 (RHC) – Renowned Cuban singer, Omara Portuondo, and researcher, Teresita Hernández, have been presented in the Cuban capital with the Rising Sun Order, Sun Beams with Rosette, by Japanese ambassador to Cuba, Kazuhiro Fujimura. The top Asian country's award was conferred upon the two outstanding Cuban women by His Highness Japanese Emperor, Naru-hito, in May, the first year of the Reiwa (2019), for their contribution to the strengthening of friendship between the two countries that are celebrating the 90th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

At the ceremony held at the residence of Japan's ambassador to Havana, Fujimura read a congratulatory message sent by Japanese Foreign Minister, Taro Kono, and highlighted the values of the two awardees. For her part, Omara Portuondo, said she has visited the Asian nation more than 18 times since 1969 to delight Japanese audiences with her songs and performances, including a concert held three weeks after the Grand Earthquake in east Japan in 2011. Portuondo also thanked Emperor Naru-hito, the ambassador and the government of Japan for such a decoration, saying that she will surely keep visiting Japan and its people to bring the best of her music and the friendship of all Cubans

Meanwhile, researcher Teresita Hernández, who for 20 years directed the House of Asia Museum from the Havana City Historian Office, has contributed to the mutual understanding between Japan and Cuba, through the organization of multiple cultural events, including the Japanese Cultural festival in Havana and a free Japanese language course open to the public. Hernández also noted that Japan is in her heart and thanked the help given to House of Asia Museum by the Japanese embassy to Cuba, the Japan Foundation and the country's Institute of Chamber and Industry. The diplomat urged both laureates to keep their special links to the initiatives that promote the bonds of friendship between the Asian and Latin American countries.

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