

# *Benny Moré's 101st birthday anniversary to be marked in Cuba*

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August 24th, 2020, marks the 101st birthday anniversary of Cuban singer, bandleader and songwriter Bartolomé Maximiliano Moré, better known as Benny Moré, considered by many as the greatest Cuban popular singer of all time.

On the occasion, Cuban television will broadcast the documentary film 'Los últimos días de Benny Moré' (The last days of Benny Moré), by Cuban filmmaker Damián Pérez Telles.

The audiovisual compiles a series of interviews with renowned Cuban artists and intellectuals a



bout the life and work of El Benny, and his indelible imprint on Cuban music and culture, in general.

Moré was a master of the soneo, the art of vocal improvisation in Cuban son, and many of his tunes developed this way.

Cultural institutions in Santa Isabel de las Lajas in Cienfuegos province will also pay homage to 'El Bárbaro del Ritmo' or 'El Sonero Mayor', as Benny Moré was also fondly called. The program includes the traditional 'Toque de Makuta', a religious ceremony that is a main characteristic of the Kingdom of Kongo.

The maternal great-great grandfather of El Benny was said to be the son of the king of a tribe in the Kingdom of Kongo who was captured by slave traders and sold to a Cuban plantation owner. The ceremony today recalls the times in which six-year-old Benny Moré learned to play and dance to the rhythms of his ancestors.

Agustín Rodríguez Jorge, Culture Director in Santa Isabel de las Lajas municipality told Cuban press that, abiding by rules in place to stop the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, a small representation of family, friends and admirers of the 'El Bárbaro del Ritmo' will converge to pay

him tribute at the local cemetery, where his remains are kept.

El Benny died of cirrhosis of the liver in on February 19, 1963 at the age of 43. His funeral was attended by tens of thousands of people.

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