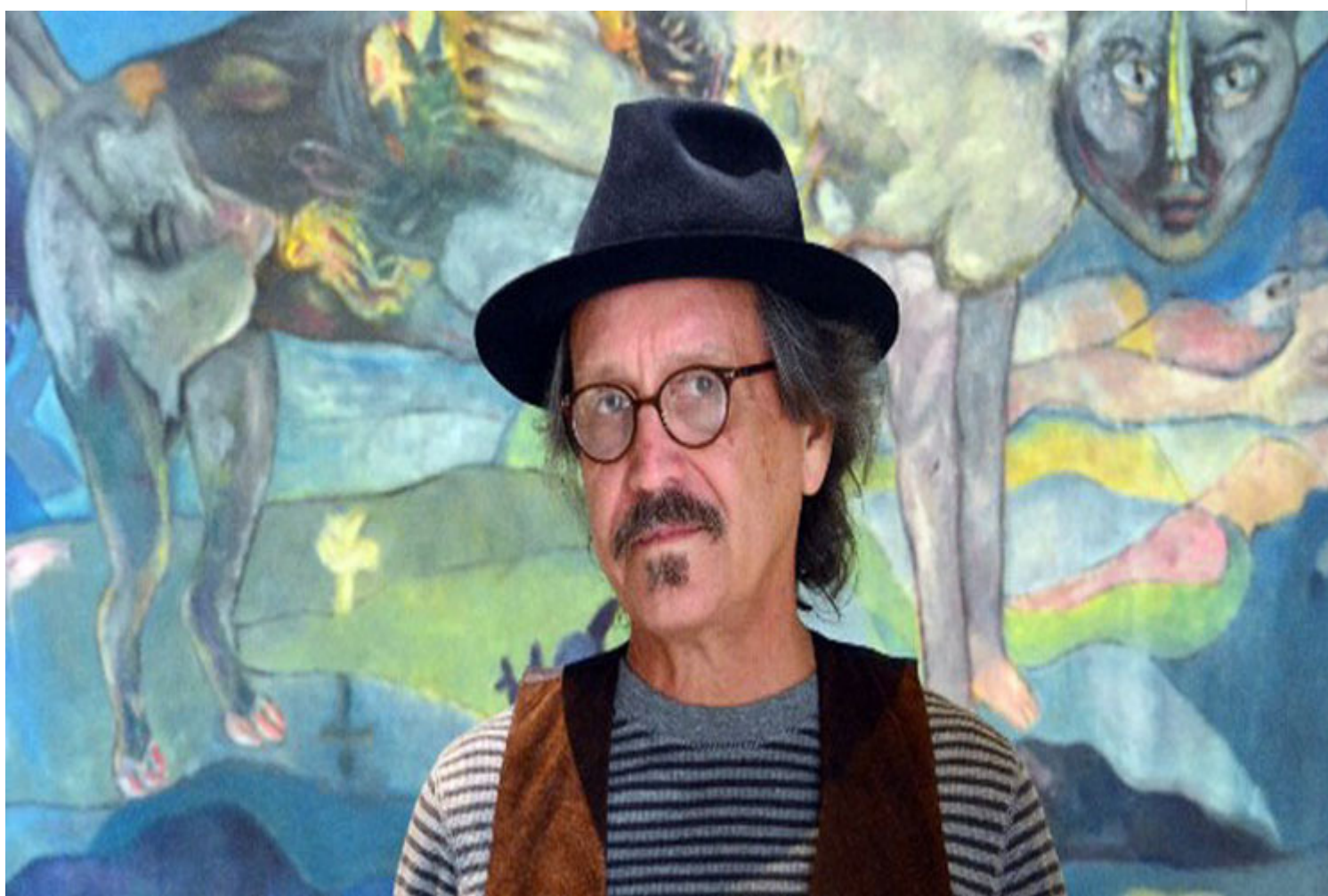


Cuba's regrets the passing of Puerto Rican patriot Elizam Escobar



Elizam Escobar

Havana, January 16 (RHC)--The Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) sent a message of condolence to the Puerto Rican Committee of Solidarity with Cuba for the death of independence fighter, painter, poet, and art professor Elizam Escobar.

In a letter, ICAP's president Fernando Gonzalez LLort said that Escobar, loyal to the Puerto Rican Independence Movement's ideals, devoted his life to defend the demands for justice and sovereignty of his homeland, a reason for which he was charged with seditious conspiracy in 1980.

He was sentenced to 68 years of imprisonment by the US government. As a result of the demands of the Puerto Rican people and international solidarity, he was released in 1999 along with other political prisoners of the Armed Forces of National Liberation (FALN) and the Popular Boricua Army (EPB-Macheteros).

After his release in 1999, said Gonzalez, Escobar returned to his pen and paintbrush to leave his people the best of his literature and visual art.

"We will always remember him as an artist committed with the ideals of dignity, justice, and the sovereignty of his people," the letter read.

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