

Broadway celebrates Cuban music with Buena Vista Social Club

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Photo: Prensa Latina

Havana, Jan 15 (RHC) The heart of the New York theatre circuit is beating to the rhythm of Cuban son with a musical that celebrates the history of the emblematic band Buena Vista Social Club.

The show, directed by Saheem AI, will be on stage until the end of January and takes the audience to the streets of Havana in the early years of the triumph of the Revolution, while also transporting them 40 years later.

The music, history and legacy of the Buena Vista Social Club are the inspiration behind this play based on the 1997 Grammy Award-winning album of the same name, which seeks to

capture the essence of the iconic Cuban group, according to CNN en español.

The playwright of this production, Marco Ramírez (Drama Desk Award for *The Royale*), stressed that the aim of the production team was to find the spirit of the story.

The documentary already exists, but now we wanted to create a new story in which this Caribbean and Cuban music could be felt, in other words, to maintain the essence of these rhythms," Ramírez said.

The musical is in English, but the melody is in Spanish, with a very good band from this city, and all that authentically Cuban rhythm and beat, the writer added to the site.

The dances in this staging are also very genuine and reflect the two important eras explored in the play.

These two periods refer to the Cuban Revolution which, with its changes, transformed the trajectory of the band's musicians; the other event is the recording of the historic album in the 1990s, turning the Buena Vista Social Club into an international phenomenon.

Dance is treated as a character because it also moves the story, the page said.

Choreographer Patricia Delgado said that from the beginning they wanted to use dance as a universal language to convey the deep feelings of these songs.

Our intention was also to mix a bit of ballet, contemporary dance, Afro-Cuban, as if to transport us to that period in the 1950s," she explained.

We wanted to take music out of the body and make it move from the 50s to the 90s, and from the 90s to the 50s, and so on in a cyclical way, she said. Another of the choreographers is Justin Peck, Tony Award winner for *"Carousel"* and for his staging of Steven Spielberg's *"West Side Story"*.

The musical focuses on the lives of four of the band's main members, among them Compay Segundo, played by Julio Monge, who said it was an honour to play the great guarachero and one of the group's most beloved personalities. (Source: Prensa Latina)



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