

# *Two decades of a movement for Cuban culture*

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By María Josefina Arce

Twenty years ago, on the 20th of October, Cuban Culture Day, the José Martí Brigade of Artistic Teachers was founded, which has tirelessly, and regardless of material shortages, taken our culture to every corner of Cuba.

Through their daily work, the members of this youth movement encourage respect for artistic creation, educate and transmit values, especially to the youngest.

Created on the initiative of the historic leader of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro, the Brigade is present in prisons, oncology wards and children's homes throughout the country.

More than nine thousand young people make up the Brigade, which the Cuban Minister of Culture, Alpidio Alonso Grau, has described as the standard-bearer of Cuban culture.

It has also spread its experience to other sister nations, such as Venezuela, where it is an essential pillar of the Misión Cultura Corazón Adentro, launched in 2008 by the late President Hugo Chávez with the support of Fidel.

It is an initiative that includes dance, cinema, theatre, music and plastic arts, and has had a great social impact, especially in the poorest sectors that were marginalized before the Bolivarian Revolution.

Over the years, the work of Cuban and Venezuelan instructors has helped to save the customs, traditions and knowledge of the South American nation.

The creation of the Bolivarian Beehives, a socio-cultural project aimed at promoting values among children and their families, is one of the highlights of their work.

Taking into account the context and peculiarities of Venezuela, this beautiful work is inspired by the Cuban children's theatre company La Colmenita, which was born more than three decades ago and has taken its art to other countries around the world.

Twenty years of a movement that has taken our culture to different corners of Cuban geography, educating and sowing values in communities to build a better society.

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