

# *Santiago de Cuba hosts Caribbean Festival beginning Wednesday*

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Santiago de Cuba, July 3 (RHC)—The 40th International Caribbean Festival will open its doors on Wednesday with Uruguay as the guest nation. Belizean culture is scheduled to be revered at what is also known as 'La Fiesta del Fuego' or the Fire Fiesta, as well as the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Siboney Studios—a branch of EGREM, the oldest recording company and label in Cuba, which recently marked its 55th birthday.

Orlando Vergés, Director of the Casa del Caribe which sponsors the event, said that the gathering is also set to pay a special tribute to the life and work of legendary Commander of the Revolution Juan Almeida Bosque, a musical composer who promoted the creation of the studios to boost and spread the work of musicians from eastern Cuba. He recognized the performers who habitually participate in the festival, such as Germany's Dorothea Marx with her group Takatum which, he said, is part of the city's setting during the summer festival in Santiago de Cuba; the steel band of El Cobre and its children's and youth band; and emblematic 'congas', street dancers and other popular traditional ensembles.

With the attendance of over 500 artists, performers and academics from 32 countries, the Fire Fiesta is scheduled to begin with a show at Santiago de Cuba's Heredia Cultural Center, where folklore and other traditional, popular, cultural forms will be on hand. The Fiesta del Caribe was set up in 1981 by Cuban ethnologist, historian and writer, Joel James, who also founded the Santiago de Cuba-based Casa del Caribe institution in 1982.

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