

The Queen of Cuban Country Music, Celina Gonzalez, Dies at 86



Havana, February 4 (RHC)-- Celina González, queen of the country music (música campesina) genre in Cuba, died at the age of 86 early Wednesday morning, according to sources of the Cuban Institute of Music.

The popular singer of songs like "Yo Soy El Punto Cubano," and "Viva Santa Barbara," lost the battle against a long illness.

Celina was born on March 16, 1928 in Matanzas province, and became one of the most recognized voices in folk music on the island, along with her husband Lázaro Reutilio, with whom she formed a successful duo.

Initially, her music was mainly that of the countryside guajiro, with lyrics based on the poetics of décima. The musical form was often that of the "punto cubano." The relationship with Nico Saquito taught her a great deal about the son and the guaracha, and her later work made frequent use of those forms.

She received awards such as the Silver EGREM in 1980, the Cubadisco Honor

Award in 2004, the *Golden Picasso* medal by UNESCO two years ago, among others.



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