

# *Famous Cuban entertainers: La Colmenita*

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Founded on the idea that every child should get to experience the feeling of being centre stage and receiving a round of applause, La Colmenita, or 'The Little Beehive', is a cultural and artistic project made up of performers between the ages of five and 14.

The goal of the internationally acclaimed children's theater troupe is to use dance, music and acting as a way to develop each child's creativity so they can achieve their greatest potential, individually and as a group. Their success has inspired "beehives" all over the world.

Twenty years after humble beginnings, similar children's theater companies have opened in Spain, Venezuela, Panama, Colombia, Argentina, the Dominican Republic and Mexico.

"The focus is all about the kids," says founder and director Carlos Alberto Cremata Malberti. "If a spectator looks up to see the lighting and sound technicians, they will see children beside them.

All of the world's children belong to La Colmenita," says Malberti.

Malberti continues to drive the project forward by taking the theater group to schools for children with visual or auditory challenges, as well as to children with Down syndrome, cancer, learning difficulties and cerebral palsy, as a form of therapy.

La Colmenita puts a charming Cuban twist on classic songs by the Beatles and childhood tales like Little Red Riding Hood, Cinderella, Pinocchio and Alice in Wonderland; singing and acting to the rhythmic sounds of Caribbean music.

In 2007, La Colmenita became the first and only theatre group in the world to be recognized as Goodwill Ambassadors by UNICEF for all of the good work they have done on behalf of and with children.

Their home base in Havana is the The Theatre of the Third Order or El teatro de la orden tercera on Oficios between Muralla and Teniente Rey streets in Old Havana.

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