

Time Capsule at Southampton Arts Center: iCuba, Cuba!



!CUBA, CUBA! AT SOUTHAMPTON ARTS CENTER. PHOTO CREDIT: SEAN ZANNI/PATRICKMCMULLAN.COM

AUGUST 20, 2015 BY VICTORIA SILVA

The extensive exhibition *iCuba, Cuba! 65 Years of Photography* opened on August 15 at the Southampton Arts Center in Southampton Village.

The exhibition is a collaboration between Southampton Arts Center and the International Center of Photography (ICP) in New York City and runs through September 7. The opening featured a wonderful Cuban-themed reception, complete with authentic food and décor. But you needn't be too upset if you missed the party, because there's enough of Cuba on display in the photographs to give you a lot of the flavor and atmosphere of our island neighbor.

[VIEW PHOTOS FROM THE OPENING RECEPTION](#)

In fact, the festive atmosphere of the opening reception was in some ways at odds with the photographs in the exhibition, which are likely to stop you in your tracks. In the entrance, political posters adorn the walls, standing as a sign of hardship and rebellion. Don't let the bright colors and bold typography fool you—these posters represent a legacy of entire lives given to a symbolic struggle against enemies real and imagined. Thanks to the ICP and private collections, iconic photographs can be seen here at close range. Among these is “Cavalry,” by Raúl Corrales, a fascinating echo of Eugène Delacroix’s “Lady Liberty Leading the People,” which perfectly captures one nation’s desire to oust all American businesses, no matter how devastating the consequences. The eye is also drawn to images of Castro, Guevara, baseball games in the slums, present-day single mothers in small rooms—these illustrating in their juxtaposition the tension between utopian dream and tragic reality.



A few of the pieces on display in ¡Cuba, Cuba! 65 Years of Photography at Southampton Arts Center. Photo credit: Victoria Silva

All in all, the exhibit contains over 100 color and black-and-white photographs from the 1950s to the present by more than 30 Cuban photographers, including Alberto Korda, Raúl Corrales and Marucha (María Eugenia Haya). There are also works by American masters, including Hamptonites Burt Glinn and Elliott Erwitt, which provide an outsider's view of the mysterious country. Iliana Cepero, a Cuban art historian, critic and curator who left Cuba in 2006 and who now teaches at New York University, the New School and other Manhattan institutions, co-curated the show with Pauline Vermare, a curator at ICP.

¡Cuba, Cuba! 65 Years of Photography! is a timely exhibit, given the fact that the lingering Cold War between Cuba and the U.S. seems to be finally winding down. Perhaps it's time Americans start to think in new ways about the island nation we have alternately exploited and rejected over the last century. Athletically and academically competitive, medically innovative, internationally recognized in ballet, dance, plastic arts and music, Cuba is in some ways a perfect symbol of survival. After all, it survived 54 years while under embargo by the U.S. Come see this multifaceted display of Cuba's history right here in Southampton.

¡Cuba, Cuba! 65 Years of Photography runs through September 7 at the Southampton Arts Center, 25 Jobs Lane, Southampton. 631-283-0967, southamptoncenter.org



Cristobal Herrera



Alex Webb, Rebecca Norris Webb



Xiomaro



Luis Quintanal, Elliott Erwitt