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Leonardo Acosta

Translated by Mary Jo Porter

From 1959 to date, the ICRT has been characterized as the media and cultural organization (????) that has enjoyed, or rather that has suffered, the punishment of having the most mediocre and/or most blatantly abusive and irresponsible leaders of the country, almost always oblivious to journalism and culture, or indifferent to both professions. The “Papito” Serguera case had the rare privilege of combining each and every one of these “qualities,” added to his anti-historical performance as a diplomat that unfortunately has been forgotten and that was on the verge of alienating our friendship with one of the countries of the Third World most intimately united to Cuba through the revolutionary processes of both countries and the first large-scale Cuban internationalist mission in the face of the cunning imperialist invasion against those brothers.

In the case of Luis Pavón, there are so many open or covert accomplices that it's not worth mentioning them here, but it's indisputable that his permanence at the head of the CNC for much more than a “five-year period” only served to engender or at least prolong a state of “Blood, Sweat and Tears” in the national culture.

But the praise of both characters, now added to that of the frustrated, resentful and vindictive Torquesada and to the disastrous Congress of Education and Culture of 1971, is simply an infamy and an insult to the memory of José Martí, Félix Varela and all our heroes and intellectuals. This makes me think that there are sinister characters behind this true campaign for the rehabilitation of hired assassins who have done so much damage to our country and to the unquestionable world prestige of the Revolution. Who should be summoned for these excesses? I believe first of all, the ICRT. I believe that all journalists, writers, artists, scientists and, of course, the clear political minds that abound in our country, have a duty to unite so that it can be explained to us how it's possible that this lack of tact, respect and sensitivity is allowed, which places us on the level of certain countries of the Southern Cone, under characters such as the disastrous Menem, the champion of neoliberalism, with his laws calling for forgiveness and forgetfulness towards torturers.

Act quickly and with tact and intelligence.

Leonardo Acosta

Leonardo Padura

Translated by Regina Anavy

Colleagues, who says that coincidences don't exist? Now just a few minutes ago, coincidentally, on the "Noon on TV" program, they interviewed the director of the "Impronta" program, nominated for several awards at the television festival, and they spoke—I do not quote verbatim, but truthfully—of the depth and quality of his work, which teaches viewers so much. What a coincidence, right?

The response of Cuban TV to the unleashed controversy and the indignation of so many people seems clear to me.

My solidarity, as you know, and my affections,
Padura

MEMORY AND FORGETFULNESS - (Cult. and Soc.01/07)

By Leonardo Padura Fuentes

Cuban art and society at the center of a debate

The month of January 2007 will be remembered, in Cuba, for the almost summer temperatures that passed through its days. But, more than for these thermal effects of the threatening climate change, I think that it will have to be remembered, necessarily and I would say obligatorily, for the explosion of a burning controversy into which, through alternative email channels, Cuban intellectuals threw themselves with an indignation, fury and responsiveness worthy of the events that generated the debate and, above all, with the lacerating pain caused by the manipulation of a poorly stitched-up physical and spiritual wound which, therefore, never completely closed.

Although I think that all those truly interested in Cuban political and cultural life have a more or less approximate notion of what happened, the deficient management of information on the subject (as other times) still forces a brief but necessary account of the origins and emanations of a debate that, in my opinion, doesn't concern only creators, but also Cuban society as a whole.

When in the first days of the month the television program *Impronta*, dedicated to highlighting personalities whose work has precisely left an imprint on Cuban public and cultural life, brought the poet Luis Pavón Tamayo to its space, an earthquake of indignation and pain ran through the conscience and memory of Cuban creators who, directly and indirectly, for many years, had to pay in their spirits and in their works the most dissimilar and humiliating aggressions of intolerance, repression, censorship (and her natural daughter, the castrating self-censorship), suspicion and fear.

In reality, the aseptic rescue of Pavón Tamayo, about whose performance as a fierce instrument of a repressive policy from the offices of the National Council of Culture, in the first half of the seventies of the last century, nothing was said in the program, was the final straw for a strange and suspicious (we have suspicion in our marrow) tendency to

resurrect in various television programs and always from friendly perspectives, leading characters from the darkest side of Cuban cultural policy of the last decades, as was the case of Armando Quesada (scourge of the Cuban theatrical world in the early seventies, invited to the television space *Open Dialogue*), and Jorge Serguera (ruthless president of national television, interviewed on the program *The Difference*).

The explosive and immediate reaction of several writers and artists, who vehemently and spontaneously expressed their indignation and asked the country's cultural leadership for an explanation for such unexpected and repeated resurrections of those censors-repressors, became the classic snowball that began to roll, adding adhesions, adding stories of victims, asking for clarification of such "casual" rescues and, what is more important, bringing to the fore the effects that, at the time and for many years, the policy applied by those characters from their places of power had and would have for the Cuban artistic work.

The passionate discussion of the intellectuals continued for several days on Internet channels, but without any reflection in the country's official media, until last January 18, when the Secretariat of the National Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba [UNEAC] published a statement, reported by the newspaper *Granma*, the official organ of the Communist Party of Cuba. From the beginning, it affirmed that the UNEAC shares "the just indignation of a group of our most important writers and artists as a consequence of recent broadcasts of three Cuban Television programs: *Open Dialogue*, *The Difference* and, in particular, *Imprint*." It added that "The fundamental concern of the *compañeros* [...] was that the aforementioned programs might respond to an intention and express a trend alien to the cultural policy that has guaranteed and guarantees our unity. It was of the greatest importance to have from the first moment the absolute backing of the Party leadership."

Although for those who weren't aware of the details of the debate (most of the inhabitants of the Island, that is), the solitary statement barely told them that something had happened of which they had no news or background. For those in the know, even when we weren't entirely satisfied with the tone and scope of the UNEAC document, it became clear that an essential issue was included in it: silence and indolence are no longer possible, because a wounded memory doesn't admit new manipulations.

What has been expressed by Cuban creators in recent weeks has served to highlight errors in the country's cultural policy that were never debated or overcome through critical examination, but only through the silent, forgetful rectification that made it possible for many of those who suffered the rigor of the so-called "parametrations" and other repressive methods that marginalized them for long years, a slow rehabilitation in the country's public and cultural life that would allow many of them to even hold important and more-than-deserved honorary awards for their valuable life's work.

However, the imprint that those policies left on the final years of the lives of intellectuals such as José Lezama Lima and Virgilio Piñera, who died in the second half of the 1970s

without seeing their books published again, without being interviewed again and hardly even mentioned (“civil deaths” as Antón Arrufat called it), is more difficult to repair, even though for several years writers like them have become an object of worship and their real “imprint” on Cuban culture recognized time and time again .

While the most heated and indignant part of the electronic debate took place, I was tempted several times to give my point of view, but I was stopped by the certainty that I could add little to what other colleagues had already said and, above all, the fact that that my opinions about the infamy of those years are sufficiently expressed, I think clearly, in almost all my novels, especially *Mascaras* [Masks] and *La novela de mi vida* [*The Story of My Life*], and in several critical works and many interviews.

However, throughout all these days and while the opinions of even personalities not directly linked to the world of art accumulate in my inbox, a concern that has accompanied me for many years has not ceased to haunt me: the loss of memory and the manipulation of oblivion to which we are compelled by those who only aspire to remember figures, data and moments favorable to their positions.

The untimely and unexpected resurgence of apparently buried figures, executors of policies that cannot be pigeonholed in the margins of a still unresolved past, and now presented to the general public without the adjectives that their performance deserved and deserves, is at the very least a biased way (I cannot speak of intentionality, because my knowledge of the intricacies of those rescues doesn't allow me to do so) to go over the past and to rewrite a story by proposing an inadmissible oblivion.

On occasion, we Cubans have been accused of having very little memory, and, with cases like that of these characters, everything seems to indicate that there are those who think so. The immediate and furious reaction of the intellectuals, on the other hand, indicates the opposite. The “imprint” of the coercion of artistic and individual freedoms carried out during those years that Ambrosio Fornet benevolently called the “five-year gray period” (in reality it was more than a five-year period and its color was much darker), the censorship of what today would seem ridiculous to us, the marginalization of artists and students due to their religious beliefs or their sexual preferences are processes and traumas that accompany us to this day.

Moreover, the suspicion that covered every action or opinion not supported by the strictest orthodoxy like a cloak, the exacerbated dogmatism with which the most diverse attitudes were prosecuted, the ease with which we were accused of having “ideological problems” and the consequent fear of being repressed and expelled from work or study centers for reasons that life has overcome, happily, cannot be forgotten, since they are wounds that many of us received. The trivialization of various manifestations of cultural creation, the marginalization of Cuban artists from international “capitalist” activities, the insistence on Sovietizing and indoctrinating creation were processes that weighed down works, lives and the very essence of Cuban culture. The memory of the Cuban intelligentsia and, even more, the collective memory of the country in which we live, needs a review (now it doesn't matter if it's late, as long as it's profound) of the burdens and excesses of that past, as the only alternative to preserve in the future the spaces for

reflection, criticism, opinion, communication and creation gained in the present by Cuban creators and intellectuals.

The creation of the Ministry of Culture, in 1976, certainly marked a turning point in the application of cultural policies in the country. From that moment began a slow recovery of an artistic life still lacerated by dogmatism and opportunism. The 1980s witnessed a fierce struggle to gain space, to validate the possibility of critical art, to recover names and works buried in the previous decade. During the harsh years of the 1990s, among the most oppressive material miseries, Cuban art grew, became stronger, once again occupied spaces in the complex universe of the international market and established, I think definitively, the possibility of making a critical, questioning and incisive work from within the borders of the Island.

This gain has been of such importance and transcendence that today these are the signs that best characterize Cuban artistic creation and explain the very attitude of the intellectuals who live in Cuba of not admitting in silence what many consider a true provocation to the memory and current reality of Cuban art. The consensus around a position of principles is the mark of the times and constitutes the sign of a space for reflection, criticism and even indignation.

Fortunately, the snowball that has broken off from four, five e-mails, between astonishment and indignation, is beginning to put memory in its place and will save from oblivion the infamies of a past in urgent need of a definitive solution. The Declaration of the UNEAC Secretariat doesn't seem to be the end of the debate, as perhaps some thought, but rather an incitement to sustain it. For now, the messages continue to cross the paths of the network, and in public spaces the processes of those years and their consequences in artistic creation, in education, in the Cuban conscience are being discussed.

The controversy over the freedom of creation on the island and the artist's right to work according to his needs and preferences has been unleashed; the critical assessment of the errors made in the application of socialist cultural policy is on the table and the health of our memory and our society itself is being analyzed and, rightly, rescued. More than the end, I trust that we are at the beginning of a necessary examination process for Cuban art and society, so in need of open, truly open, inclusive and incisive dialogues, with everyone and for the good of all.

Leonardo Padura
Mantilla, January 22, 2007

Leonel Brito

Translated by Regina Anavy

I am addressing you perhaps at the wrong time, but better late than never, as the well-known popular saying recommends. The monastic life that I lead in one of the Battle of Ideas programs has made me drastically separate myself from my usual contacts with the cultural world, which is why I have arrived late to the controversy unleashed around the shameful appearance of several people in charge of the cultural policy of the “black decade” and not the “grey five-year period” as Desiderio Navarro has lucidly stated in his “*In medias res publica*”.

I am young (barely in my twenties) and in part I am responding to Arturo Arango's fair complaint about how alarming it would be if those of my generation did not take part in this outrage, beyond the fact that we have not lived through this atrocious and horrifying process, well, as Oscar Llanes affirms well, the exclusion of our presence now would be precisely to reproduce, consciously or unconsciously (we no longer know), those repressive methods such as silencing and marginalization, not known in all their dimensions and edges. It's time to talk, comment, discuss this topic as closed as other aspects could have been in those years.

Take into account, for example, that these names (Luis Pavón, Jorge Serguera and others) are now heard by us for the first time. That is why I think, and with me many young people who do not want under any circumstances to suffer a second part of the swagger (remember that the second parts were never good), that the appearance so often of those sinister little characters, directly responsible for or indirect of embittering the life and work of many intellectuals who advocated a plural thought and taken into account, as it should happen in a true democratic and receptive society towards the opinion of its citizens.

Especially considering the epic and apologetic projection with which they were presented. And it is not only a lack of the most elementary ethics, since I am not talking about that humanistic ethics of which we “flaunt-we” before the world and before ourselves, but also an insensitive aggression to the majority of those who lived through that time, whether they are intellectuals or not, (relatives, friends and people in general) who had to suffer in the most unknown ways dogmatism, opportunism and the misrepresentation of a certain ideology but manipulated to the point of paroxysm, forms that are still unknown to the eye of many of us.

Publicly praising people whose implication in this barbarism doesn't fit the slightest doubt in a political and social context such as today's, is not only a symptom or a syndrome as another of the polemicists said, but also without ghosts or pathological elaborations, a very clear announcement of what could happen in an increasingly uncertain future and that could repeat these new and worse procedures. Therefore, the protest that you have initiated seems to me to be just and irrevocably necessary. They can count on the support of the youngest, of those who begin their walk along a path that can be abruptly cut off, and we are not willing to submit, not because of our parents, nor because of ourselves.

Leonel Brito Coro Discordant

Leticia Córdova

Translated by Mary Jo Porter

After so many years of being gagged, we couldn't expect anything more than this discordant choir in which the voices scramble, one on top of the other; we must respond to the opinion that was issued yesterday, also to the one that was silenced. They barely stop long enough to be read, and they overlap with others that we already collected on our computers or under the covers of some vulgar-looking file. There is everything: some reasonable, others excessive. A necessary set for understanding the damage and pain that we Cubans carry on our consciences.

Just like Galileo Galilei, they showed us the instruments of torture. This time on television. Culture and/or Party officials must have been amazed that the same silence as always did not ensue. You have to be very naive—I know it's a very polite adjective—on the one hand, to swallow the story that it's a matter of an adverse sequence of clumsiness and, on the other, to believe for a second that Cuban television is the place where “belligerent ignorance” is based. Alfredo Guevara must have known this well, because since 1960 he has been calling Cuban intellectuals to please have the lucidity to create following the objectives and the inspiring example of the Revolution: “the only limit to freedom is freedom”—an ingenious phrase in which it's not clear what freedom is, but what its limits are. With the passage of time and the vicissitudes of practice, this call became less obsequious.

Can anyone defend the idea that the *Round Table* is a television program? Is it an initiative of the “ignorants,” who, according to Guevara, conspire against the Revolution?

There's no doubt that the Cuban government has known very well how to keep the people at bay during these 48 years. One of the reasons why many compatriots left was to be able to express their opinion, something that they couldn't do here without regretting the consequences. Power long ago showed how a man's poetry-book and his spirit can be reduced to a pulp. There's the poet Delfín Prats to prove it. With others, it turned them into fairground characters.

Literally.

Those of us who live here must not forget that, wherever we are, we are Cubans, and the country is not only ours because of the circumstance of inhabiting it. Every Cuban has the right to express an opinion on Cuban affairs. José María Heredia does it daily from his transparent verses:

Cuba, Cuba, what a life you gave me, sweet land of light and beauty, how many dreams of glory and fortune I have attached to your happy soil!

We must not forget our past. We urgently need it to be able to decipher our present and face our future.

In the Intervention at the meeting between Fidel Castro and the intellectuals, in the José Martí National Library, in which the issue of artistic creation was discussed, after the ban on *P.M.* in June 1961, Alfredo Guevara expressed: I want to clarify, of course, that I'm not one of those who has fears; from the Revolution I expect only positive things in all fields, including the field of art, including the field of creation, and I believe that with the Revolution we have found all that we need to express ourselves, all of us who have something to say. All of us who want to say something have found the possibility of saying it with absolute freedom and of saying it not in a small group of bourgeois or fans, but of saying it before all our people, the broader public, the public corresponding to the entire nation. Because the revolutionary triumph is the total of the entire nation with its own ends, or at least that is how I understand it, specifically for artists (*Revolución es lucidez* [*Revolution is Lucidity*], Ediciones ICAIC, 1998, page 181).

This appears to be in response to a very brave opinion that was issued at one of these meetings. One man expressed, out loud, that he was afraid. His name was Virgilio Piñera. We would be diminishing the scope of Virgil's statement if we don't stop at an overwhelming fact. In 1952 he had published a strange novel, *La carne de René* [*René's Flesh*], an account of the terrors that beset the flesh. René, the protagonist, has received the inheritance from his father and his grandfather of the cause of flesh. For this reason, his life has been a succession of escapes and an imperious resistance to its call. With his refusal to accept the Cause, René shakes the precepts of an established world. In turn, that order will use all its weapons to persuade him. It's a sinister game in which each man has been a victim, but also a victimizer. It's worth the length of this quote:

"But father," René exclaimed sharply, "I don't see why you have to die." Everything can be fixed. He writes to that boss informing him that he is withdrawing from the persecution.

Withdrawing from the persecution...The persecution is endless; not even death could stop it; stay there to continue it. Haven't you noticed the relay races? When a runner drops the torch, the next one picks it up instantly. Your grandfather gave me the torch; I will pass it to you. You will put it in the hands of your son or, in his default, to the most prominent member of the match. The Cause can't stop running for a single moment.

"Why do they fight?" René asked with great agitation.

"For a piece of chocolate," his father answered solemnly. The boss who now persecutes me, many years ago managed, after a bloody fight, to bring down the powerful and ferocious boss, who had prohibited in his country, under penalty of death, the use of chocolate. This rigorously maintained a prohibition that went back in time for centuries. His ancestors, the founders of the monarchy, had banned the use of chocolate in their kingdoms. They claimed that chocolate could undermine the security of the throne. Imagine the efforts, the struggles that took place for centuries to prevent the use of such nourishment. Millions of people died; others were deported. At last the boss, who now persecutes me, won a crushing victory over the last sovereign, and we had the happiness, very brief, of having our territories flooded with chocolate.

“Tell me, father, in what way did chocolate undermine the security of the throne?”

“Very simple: the founder of the dynasty claimed that chocolate is a powerful food, that the people should be kept in perpetual semi-starvation. It was the best measure for the durability of the throne. Imagine then our joy when, after centuries of horrendous strife, we were able to flood the country with chocolate. The masses, who had inherited this pathetic predisposition to eat it, began to consume it madly. At first everything went smoothly. One bad day the boss began to restrict its use.

Your grandfather, who had seen his father and his grandfather perish from the implantation of chocolate, was categorically opposed to such a restriction. And the first brush with the boss took place. As in all fights that are going to be to the death, there were essential attempts, apparent arrangements. One day we woke up and hope filled us. The boss gave *carte blanche* to the use of chocolate: another day he limited its use to three times a week. Meanwhile the discussions increased.

Your grandfather, the most influential person close to the boss, reproached him for such a disastrous policy, going so far as to call him a “reactionary.” My father openly opposed the government, and the group of chocolatophiles was formed. I was very young then, but I clearly remember a parade under the balconies of the Government House eating chocolate bars. In retaliation, the boss confiscated whatever was left in the country. We didn’t give up and dressed in the color chocolate. The boss, considering that this could incite the people against him, declared us criminals for offending the fatherland, and he ordered a great trial. With great difficulty my father was able to cross the border and seek asylum in a neighboring country. The result of the trials was the death of thousands of our people.

“If they weren’t guilty, why were they executed?” Rene yelled, beside himself.

-Why...? Ask the Boss—and Ramón let out a laugh. It’s the will of the Party that you be my successor both as persecuted and persecutor. They are two diametrically opposed functions. Each requires a different tactic. You will learn both. As in recent times luck has been adverse to us, you must prepare yourself to be the great persecuted of our Cause. My advice is that, without expressly renouncing the job of persecutor, put the emphasis on the very complicated technique of the persecuted. Don’t forget that for the time being, the Cause’s durability depends on flight. A good escaper can cause a lot of damage to the enemy. He who flees does so from two things: from another man like him and from confession (*La carne de René*, Ediciones UNIÓN, 1995).

The rest is known history. Virgilio died in 1979. They say that very few people attended his funeral. In 1968 he had written *Dos viejos pánicos* [*Two Old Fears*]. He had had the bad taste to insist on the theme of fear at a time when the ostentation of *macho* bravado was required.

Now that in a declaration by the UNEAC Secretariat, in a predictable text written in a well-known language, we are summoned not to abandon the flock, to continue to be silent like lambs of the purest lineage; now, when we are threatened with any word we say

meaning an argument in favor of annexation, I cannot forget the scrawny figure of Virgilio, walking towards a microphone to confess his fear: the fear that accuses such guilty unanimity of keeping silent.

Leticia Córdoba
Havana, February 16, 2007

Loly Estévez

Translated by Mary Jo Porter

Respected colleagues:

Through e-mail I have been able to learn in part about the exchange of opinions caused by the appearance on Cuban TV of the program, *Imprint*, dedicated to Luis Pavón, and that of Jorge Serguera as an interviewee on *The Difference*. I don't know the content since I am currently in Spain, invited by the Jovellanos Athenaeum of Gijón. I confess my astonishment when, in some of the messages I received, I saw Quesada's appearance in *Diálogo Abierto* [*Open Dialogue*] several months ago being compared to the aforementioned "events." To two friends who asked me about the matter, I clarified that it was a program dedicated to evaluating the space's five years of work and that it included a previously recorded opinion of Quesada in his capacity as advisor to the Programming Department of Cuban TV, in charge of *Open Dialogue* and other programs.

The fact that the appearance of Quesada was linked several months ago to refer to a specific and technical matter, with the inclusion of Luis Pavón in a space dedicated to people with an intellectual work accepted as capable of making an imprint, and with the presence and statements of Jorge Serguera on *The Difference* didn't surprise me too much: let the first stone be thrown by whoever hasn't allowed himself to be led, like Vicente, where people say.

What does surprise me and motivates me to write these lines is that the UNEAC Secretariat signs a Declaration where it admits to sharing "the just indignation of a group" about three TV programs and mentions in the first place *Open Dialogue*, which, automatically, is implicated in "expressing a tendency alien to the cultural policy that has guaranteed and guarantees our unity"; in the ICRT President's assessment that "serious errors had been made in its gestation and execution" and in "the blunders" that can be exploited to harm the Revolution. I wonder if they took the trouble to review the *Open Dialogue* that they so "generously" describe. Before giving an opinion—and publishing the opinion—you have to investigate.

As director and founder of *Open Dialogue*, I affirm that for six years we have respected Cuban culture and its protagonists. We work on a daily basis not for the award the program received for its category at the First National Festival of Cuban TV with the theme "Where is the newest trova?" nor the Special Prize awarded by critics at the Second Festival (2006) for the space dedicated to "Cultural criticism in the media." Our difficult struggle for the complex task of making television in Cuba breathes thanks to the viewers who respect us and the personalities who attend through their media and want to collaborate with our studio to give us the prestige of their presence and their language. There have been National Awards of different specialties, experts of ample category, officials of culture and the media, consecrated figures and intellectuals and artists who will be protagonists of the future.

I declare that I'm happy to have been during 27 minutes of my life with people who, with their existence and their work, guarantee culture and unity.

I haven't mentioned names so as not to invite forgetfulness, but I suggest that those officially in charge of "assessing" and "declaring" and those who exercise their right to give their opinion, request criteria regarding *Open Dialogue* from people like Reynaldo González and Miguel Barnet (yes, they have been invited to the program), who managed to turn into a work of valid imprint the time of sorrow that caused them a period that is now symbolized in Luis Pavón.

I suggest that we don't mix that which—like oil and vinegar—will end up where it belongs according to natural and social laws.

I suggest not stating that the outrage is from "a group" but instead remember Hemingway and his tip of the iceberg.

I suggest that the cycle of conferences programmed by the singular and wise Desiderio Navarro be joined by the voice of Dr. Isabel Monal, who, together with Fernando Martínez Heredia (and other mediocre, opportunistic and superficial Marxists) could remind us how much the so-called "real socialism" cost to ignore the concepts of Antonio Gramsci; or the time that Lenin dedicated to the cultural debate with the poet Mayakovsky; or the artistic realization in the Paris of the Vanguards and not in the Moscow of the October Revolution of the talents removed by ignorance and irresponsibility in terms of cultural policy of those who succeeded Lenin in the then-besieged and admired Soviet Union.

I suggest, above all, that there be no attempt to put an end to a necessary debate. Light is born from discussion: that is what my mother taught me, a lady educated in an Asturian home amid the prejudices of the first half of the 20th century, who was a volunteer teacher, founder of the CDR and the FMC, and who decided to marry an emigrant Galician, known in Morón for his trade union and communist militancy already at the time that Machado assassinated the labor leader Enrique Varona.

Thanks to those who have read me to the end. And to those who continue to think.

See you soon.

Loly Estévez.
January 22, 2007

Luciano Castillo

Translated by Regina Anavy

Faced with this ignominious “resurrection policy,” we should remember that phrase so recurrent in Cocteau that Carpentier liked to quote: ‘Men of true talent never bother others; those who poison the air that surrounds them are the mediocre and the unsuccessful.’ The poison that those guardians of culture distilled through their pores splashed not a few intellectuals and artists.

Luciano Castillo