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President Raul Castro chairs unveiling of Jose Marti's sculpture brought from NY

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Cuban President Raul Castro unveiled here on Sunday a sculpture of Cuban national hero, Jose Marti, a replica of the original one located in New York's Central Park.

Castro was accompanied by First Vice President Miguel Diaz-Canel, other local government and political officials, as well representatives of New York's city government, among other invited American personalities.

In the speech, Havana's official historian, Eusebio Leal, stressed that this statue is an absolute copy in every detail of the original work by the American artist Anna Hyatt Huntington, which was finished in 1958.

The famous sculptor made it at the request of the Cuban government of the time as a gift to the U.S. However, due to political differences, the sculpture was not inaugurated until 1965. It now stands close to statues of other Latin American heroes, Simon Bolivar and Jose de San Martin in the Central Park.

Joseph Mizzi, Chairman of the Bronx Museum of the Arts, stressed the honour he felt at attending the ceremony on behalf of his colleagues.

Mizzi defined the event as a great gesture for the peoples of Cuba and the U.S., and expressed his gratitude at the donations received by over a hundred people for the realization of the project.

"We have shared with friends, close and far, the idea of bringing to Havana an exact replica of Jose Marti's statue in New York, which is our homage to one of the greatest Latin American intellectuals," he said.

The original sculpture is the only one known to date, depicting the figure of Marti at the time of his fall in action at the battle of Dos Rios on May 19, 1895 in eastern Cuba.

It is based on a missing painting by the Cuban painter Esteban Valderrama and weighs three tons, stands 5.67 meters tall, and made in bronze, with a black marble pedestal.

Marti was born on January 28, 1853 and struggled from a young age to free Cuba from Spanish colonialism, until his death in battle at the age of 42.

The 165th anniversary of his birth has been marked with several celebrations this week throughout the country.

The sculpture of Jose Marti is seen during the unveiling ceremony in Havana, Cuba, Jan. 28, 2018. Cuban President Raul Castro unveiled here on Sunday a sculpture of Cuban national hero, Jose Marti, a replica of the original one located in New York's Central Park.

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