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## Havana's Carnival: Every Float Needs a Driver

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In times of carnival, while floats, dancers, and extras deliver their performances on a par with the lights and choreographies stealing the spotlight, few notice the float drivers.

Nonetheless, they play an essential role in carnivals.

Angel Luis is a living proof of that. He is the driver of the *Guaracheros de Regla's* float. **CubaSi** interviewed him on the last day of the Havana's Carnival.

This driver, who lives in Campo Florido, Habana del Este, did not know the legendary *Guaracheros de Regla*—this carnival paid tribute to the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this overseas municipality— would be bestowed the Honorary Award of the Havana Carnival and the Seal 500<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Havana.

Anyway, Angel Luis (47) was enthusiastic as every single day of this carnival, dedicated to the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the city and the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Benny (Moré).

The daily routine of this professional driver takes place quite distant from music and lights. He works on his tractor at the agricultural company Bacuranao, devoted to livestock and miscellaneous food crops, awarded last year with the Labor Deed Flag bestowed by the Confederation of Cuban Workers (CTC).

For five years in a row, the colors of his life have changed in times of the carnival of Havana—he told CubaSi. The cruel sunlight that strikes him in the crop field is temporarily changed into the

reflectors and light bulbs of the float he drives.

"I like this job a lot. They are the *Guaracheros* and party is guaranteed. I enjoy dancing and music. And I have a lot of fun while driving."

I asked him to narrate his best and worst experiences in the carnival while driving. He said: "sleepless nights are the most challenging thing. We go to bed at 6 am after working for more than 12 hours."

"It is true there is rivalry, fights. But everything is relative. I love carnivals. I would like them to last all year long."

In his own words, Angel Luis stated this carnival has been well organized and citizens have joined the fun. "Girls dancing have been the best of all."

"My wife is not jealous." "Dancing groups are well trained."

He has nothing to do with the float staging. His job is to maintain the readiness of his tractor, its beauty and cleanliness."

**Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz/CubaSí Translation Staff**

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