

Arnaldo Rodríguez: “sowing encouraging actions”

By: Giusette León García / CubaSi

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And so it goes for this popular Cuban musician “ignoring shadows against hatred and lies” and so he sings again to the Committee for the Defense of the Revolution (CDR).

“The new song *SIEMBRA* (SOW), which celebrates the CDR’s 60th anniversary, was precisely inspired in the campaign addressed to the Cuban families to sowing whatever piece of soil available in our backyard. What I love the most about this idea is the incitement to people to raise awareness on the need to self-management and thereby resolve little or bigger problems. That is the core idea of the song. Faith, hope, unity...,” said Arnaldo to **CubaSi**.

He is fearless about being on the side of this large mass organization in Cuba, which groups us as a family and has fulfilled so many tasks in the last sixty years, and has inspired us to dance and play domino, and has fostered the idea of having a sip or two of rum and *caldosa* (NT: Cuban soup prepared with a variety of tubers, fruits and meats) each month of September in our neighborhoods.

“You are bound to be typecast by some people. I believe the main reason is that two of my songs (*45 razones* and *Hay un Barrio* —written and performed to the CDR’s request) have had a profound effect on people. So much so that we perform both in our live concerts, carnivals, wherever we play.”

However, this promoter of the Cuban culture does not remain silent and reminds us right away a very valuable tradition which he, as a songwriter, is part of:

Contrary to what some people believe, Arnaldo is not the only one who has written for the organization in the last few years. There have been many artists and bands contributing to this purpose. “Before me, the list of artists leaving their signature as songwriters in the CDR’s celebrations is really long. In fact, Eduardo Ramos’ song performed by Sara González and *Experimentación Sonora del ICAIC* remains an anthem in the organization.”

A long and successful career as a singer-songwriter guarantees he may well assume any project. Nonetheless, this is not the sole reason why he performs these songs:

“They have trusted my artistic vision when it comes to addressing some issues and thus, mass organizations call

us to contribute with our art. This possibility has given me prestige and recognition, but also repeated and grievous offenses. But I am happy to know most people love what we do.”

In fact, in recent days, while defending the role of cultural institutions in Cuba, expressing his happiness to live and work in Cuba, he was subject to heavy attacks in social networks, especially in his **Facebook** profile:

“It really took me by surprise to see some reactions against comments I have posted in social networks. Perhaps I addressed some sensitive, tricky issues, which I certainly did in an open and sincere way. I am not much of a public speaker. The best of all is that my post supporting Alexander Abreu became a supporting pillar of revolutionary reaffirmation. Even though several days have passed, supportive remarks and comments, solidarity and pro-patria expressions abound in this post. It has been tremendously encouraging to see other artists assuming a common supportive stance.

And with all this Cuban tradition, we are going to celebrate, from our homes this year, the anniversary of the CDR to the rhythm of *El Talismán*...

“We wrote the song based on the style of the Caribbean music characterizing the signature of *El Talismán*. The song has its own video clip. We addressed the subject of the pandemic as well as the Cuban efforts facing Coronavirus. Under the direction of Henry García and together with *El Talismán*, the clip features La Colmenita, Compañía Revolution, Free Dance, actress Gretel Cazón and actor Luis Damián. It is very funny song, which has a message to convey.”

Translated by Sergio A. Paneque Díaz / CubaSi Translation Staff