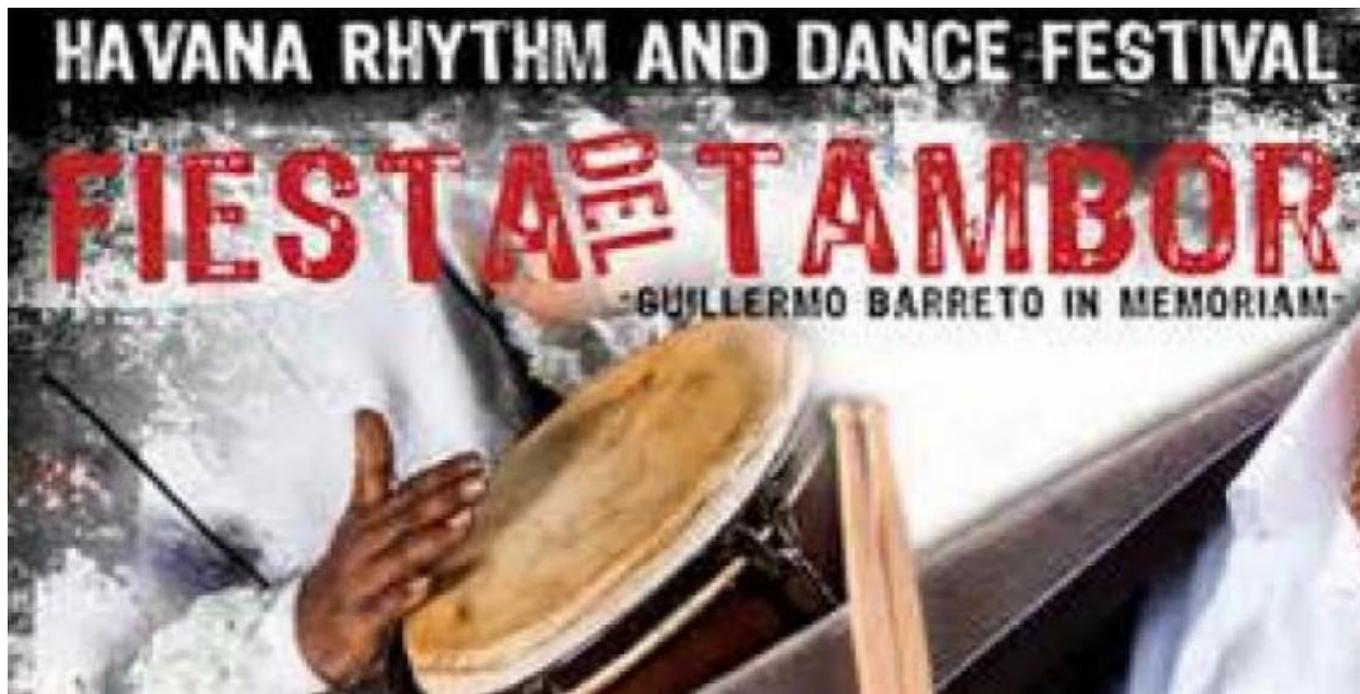


Drum Festival to Delight Rumba fans in Cuban Capital this month

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Under the auspices of the National Popular Music Center and the general direction of maestro Giraldo Piloto, the drum fiesta is set to gather performers from Britain, Japan, Spain, Canada, the United States, Venezuela, Peru, Chile and Cuba.

The opening will take place at Mella Theater on March 1st with the show *La danza y el tambor* (Dance and drum), designed by renowned choreographer and National Dance Award Laureate, Santiago Alfonso, who will present dancers from the National Folk Dance Ensemble, the Irene Rodríguez Company, Habana Compás Dance, Rakatán, the Salsa, Mambo y Cha Cha Cha troupe and his own company.

US musician Wally de los Reyes has confirmed his participation in the gathering, as well as Canadian Aldo Mazza, Spain's Kike Terrón, José Montaña, Manu Masaedo and Nasrine Rahmani, the Chilean Rodrigo Iter quintet and the Japanese group Kono, which has worked on the island for a long time along with its Cuban colleagues. But the event's highlights are, without a doubt, Peru's Alex Acuña and Pete Lockett from England.

Acuña, 71, worked in the bands of Elvis Presley and Diana Ross and the fusion jazz band Weather Report and is now one of the best Latin jazz battery players at present. Specialized in playing the drums of the cultures of India, Lockett has collaborated in more than 50 albums with important figures, such as Bjork, Peter Gabriel, Jeff Beck and Nelly Furtado.

The Drum Fiesta program also includes "rumba" sessions at the Mella Theater gardens and jazz at the Occidental Memories Miramar, dance at the Casa de la Música de Galiano nightclub and master lectures at the Avenida Movie Theater.

Edited by Damian Donestevez