

the HORNS PROJECT inc

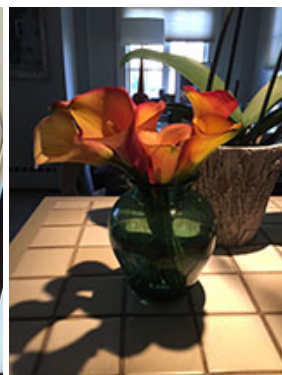
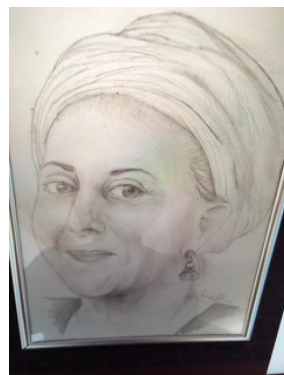
CHANGING LIVES THROUGH MUSIC IN CUBA for **10** YEARS

NOVEMBER | DECEMBER 2020



Celebrating & Reflecting On A Decade

From Our Co-Founder & Executive Director



I have been working in Havana for the past 25 years and for the last 10 as co-founder + executive director of The Horns Project / Horns to Havana. Our instrument repair program, individual instrument donation program, and our teaching programs and educational scholarships fill my heart – especially now – with their amazing successes.

These past nine months of the pandemic have been very unsettling for all of us in so many ways. Fortunately, through technology, we've been able to stay in touch with teachers and students, which we value so much as you can imagine. The music schools in Cuba were closed until last month, but students have managed to catch up on coursework and enthusiastically await our return! With the latest promise of an effective vaccine, we hope to return by late 2021.

I want to take this opportunity to thank my co-workers + collaborators and all of the donors who make our program such a success each year. We began our work in November 2010 – who would have imagined 10 years later that we would be celebrating such deep friendships and commitments to each other. So much gratitude to all.

Please consider [giving an end of the year donation](#) to our nonprofit as your gifts continue to sow seeds of musical possibility and change in the lives of all involved. Check out our updated website, which is now bilingual with the addition of our version *en español*.

Please continue to stay safe during these next challenging months and also enjoy the warmth of holidays remembering all we love.

Warmly,



Susan Sillins

Co-Founder & Executive Director

Give the Gift of Music

Visite Nuestra Sitio
De Web Nueva
En Español

Visit Our New
Spanish Language
Website



& Its Magic At Work

Susan Sillins & Catherine Murphy, Co-Founders of Horns to Havana, Reminisce As The Organization Begins Its 10th Year Celebration



The Beginning. I remember we had just returned from Havana and a few weeks later, I saw you, Eric and Diane at Jazz at Lincoln Center when we went to hear Chucho (Valdés) perform. We started talking about how great it would be to create something that could help the music students we had just seen in Havana. Something that could help them develop long term and give them more access to jazz. We planned for almost a year and put together the fundraiser at Guantánamera so we could bring instruments and artisans down to Cuba in 2011 and that was the beginning of everything. **(Susan)**

The Magnitude & The Magic. And now 10 years later, it's pretty incredible to think about the magnitude – that we have fixed 7000 instruments and donated over 500. Horns has been changing the lives of so many students but also the lives of their families and professors and of us. I'm consistently overjoyed by the surprises of our musical community. We are making global citizens through music. **(Catherine)**

And Family. I think of seeing Rodrigo 10 years ago and now seeing him perform as a leader of his own band. And Pepe and Enrique and all of the great people who kept joining our Horns family and brought new opportunities to grow our program. Just magical really, how deep the connections were before Horns came to life and how much deeper they have grown now. We have fallen in love with so many people. **(Susan)**

Music Is A Language. Horns really has confirmed that music is our common language and a bridge in the world that makes so much possible. We have flown students from Havana to New York City and New Orleans and San Francisco for concerts and classes and cultural exchanges. Most had never been on a plane and didn't speak any English, yet it never failed that we all connected. In New Orleans we gave instruments to students and made them cry from happiness. **The instrument is everything, the pathway. (Susan)**

And let's not forget Common coming to Havana and speaking to our students! That was pretty incredible! **(Catherine)**

And Trombone Shorty this year – that hug and his second line through Old Havana with our students! And that fantastic night when our superband performed at Rose Hall at Jazz at Lincoln Center in Essentially Ellington and wowed everyone. Horns is a collaboration of people who come

Just magic really. (Catherine)

In 2017, Horns Project / Horns to Havana brought the Orquesta Juvenil de Jazz de Cuba, a student jazz band from Havana, Cuba, to attend and perform at Jazz at Lincoln Center's Essentially Ellington competition.

Student Testimonial

Jorge Sergio Ramírez Prieto



"My way of celebrating these 10 years is simply by giving my students every grain of wisdom that Horns to Havana gave me, being a better human being every day, and as a musician and a person, helping and supporting everyone who needs without expecting any kind of benefit in return. I very much wish that this is one more year of many to come and that we celebrate 100 years more, so that each passing generation can fulfill the essential mission of this fabulous project."

"Mi manera de celebrar estos 10 años es simplemente aportando a mis estudiantes cada granito de sabiduría que me aportaron a mí, ser mejor ser humano cada día más, ayudar y apoyar sin esperar ningún tipo de beneficio a todo el que lo necesite desde mi posición de músico y de persona. Deseo muchísimo que este sea un año más de tantos que

Jorge Sergio Ramírez Prieto

Saxophonist and Professor of Music at Conservatorio Amadeo Roldán
Alumni of Conservatorio Amadeo Roldán and Horns to Havana

10-Year Reflection On Our Instrument Repair Program

*David Gage & Judy Epstein Reflect On The Development Of
The Instrument Repair Program*





El Taller and the repair team throughout the years!

We had a makeshift taller at La Ena school the first year I traveled with Horns to Havana. Customs did not allow any of our tools to be released until two days before we were supposed to leave, so we ended up working with the few personal tools we had put in our suitcases like a pocket knife! We made work benches out of abandoned doors that we rested on sawhorses. We had to go to the principal's office just like the students to get water or use the restroom. That first trip was exhilarating and fun and made us realize how inventive Cubans are, and we could be too. We had so much fun that we insisted on returning for nine more years and hope to do so again very soon. The shop has made over 7000 repairs by now. Happy 10 years, Horns to Havana – what an incredible journey!

David Gage & Judy Epstein

Gage String Instrument Repair / Instrument Council Chair & Board Member

Connecting Global Musicians

Bill Taylor On Havana—New Orleans Collaborations



Connecting with Susan and everyone at Horns to Havana created a transformational experience for our students and our entire organization. We brought 10 of our Trombone Shorty Academy students along with some of the finest talent from New Orleans (Soul Rebels, Tank and the Bangas, Anders Osborne, Trombone Shorty) to Havana for a soul-enriching trip in 2020 that enabled two beautiful cultures to come together in musical harmony. We are forever grateful to you for giving us a life-affirming experience we will remember and celebrate for the rest of our lives. We look forward to doing it again as soon as we possibly can!

Bill Taylor

Executive Director of The Trombone Shorty Foundation

Cuba News & Culture

Los Hermanos/The Brothers Premiere Celebrated In Havana



Filmmaker friends Marcia Jarmel + Ken Schneider had their premiere of **Los Hermanos/The Brothers**, a joyous celebration of family, music, and what can happen when borders can be crossed. Nominated for *Best Music Documentary* by the International Documentary Association, the film just premiered internationally at the Havana Film Festival at the Yara Theater. Its first public screening--socially distant--was enthusiastically received, and the film will travel to art houses spring 2021. The filmmakers hope to be present for an encore screening in Havana in March. [Watch the trailer & learn more:](#)

Photographer Greg Hahn Features Havana Millennials in Traveling Exhibit "Havana Youth"



Greg Kahn, a documentary fine art photographer, just released a photo exhibit that demonstrates what it means to be a Cuban “Millennial” or “Gen-Zer.” Kahn highlights a generation which was born either slightly before or during Cuba’s economic crisis of the 1990s known as “the Special Period.” His photographs show these generations “redefining what it means to be Cuban.” The exhibit premiered by appointment only at the Cody Gallery at Marymount University in Arlington, VA, and is expected to travel through 2021.

Short interview [HERE](#)

Full interview [HERE](#)

“Waiting For Normal” Tells Stories of Cubans Affected By The Embargo



Image Detail BIRD IN A CAGE (1999) © Joe Guerriero

Joe Guerriero, a documentarian and photojournalist, unveiled “Waiting for Normal,” a photo exhibit sharing stories of Cubans affected by the embargo. Guerriero has been visiting Cuba since 1999 and shows 32 photos taken during his travels to the island through 2019. He hopes his photos “...help people understand how the embargo has impacted Cuban society over time.” The exhibit is available for viewing in person at ArtRage Gallery in Syracuse, New York, and virtually [HERE](#).

Our Thanks To Supporters Like YOU & The Gia Maione Prima Foundation



Tony Sylvester and Troy Andrews giving instrument donations to students at Conservatorio Amadeo Roldán with principal Enrique Rodriguez Toledo on stage

We are proud to partner with Horns to Havana. Traveling to Havana and witnessing firsthand the tremendous work that Susan has done was remarkable. We are grateful for her commitment and dedication and for putting instruments in the hands of Cuban music students. Her actions have helped fulfill the dreams of so many young musicians. We are honored to share in the same commonalities of fostering music and arts at a youth and community level.

Anthony J. Sylvester

Trustee of [The Gia Maione Prima Foundation](#)



THE HORNS PROJECT / HORNS TO HAVANA

The Horns Project / Horns to Havana is a nonprofit organization dedicated to instrument donation, repair, and training; music education and cultural exchange. In the improvisational and exploratory spirit of jazz, we strive to fulfill dreams of aspiring young musicians and work to strengthen the ties between countries using shared musical traditions.

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