



CR&V Insiders' Newsletter: November 2017

## Recent Cuban news and commentary from around the world

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[The Guardian: Mass Hysteria May Explain “Sonic Attacks” in Cuba say Top Neurologists](#)

[New York Times: Mysterious Sounds and Scary Illnesses as Political Tools](#)

[Canada Not Assuming Cuba Set Up Attacks on Canadian, US Diplomats](#)

[Interview: Ambassador Carlos Alzugaray](#)

[Reuters: Cuban Travel Operators Work to Mitigate Travel Advisory](#)

[Kudos to CR&V alumnus Maximiano Valdés for bringing free concerts to those who need it most.](#)

“The people of Puerto Rico need food for the soul...and music for me, is the best art because it goes right to your heart.”

-Maximiano Valdés, October 2017



L-R: Daiana García; Neil Birnbaum; Aldo López-Gavilán; Woody Wilson; Jody Valdés; Max Valdés; Enrique Pérez Mesa; Miguel Cañellas Sueiras

## After Irma, a resilient Cuba rebuilds and tries to reboot American tourism in the wake of Trump’s hard-line political agenda

In the past six months Cuba hasn’t been able to catch a break. First, there was the accusation that Cubans were using a “sonic weapon” against US and Canadian embassy staff, which has resulted in an international investigation on who or what could have made these people sick and permanently damaged their hearing. Nothing conclusive has been found despite the Cuban government allowing the FBI to sleuth on their own.

However, this didn’t stop the US Government from issuing a punitive travelers’ warning for Americans to stay away from Cuba because they might be zapped by errant sonic waves. This is, of course, is nonsense and the rest of the world, including the Canadians, agree

Then came hurricane Irma, which glanced off the north coast, damaging crops, infrastructure and flooding coastal areas in nearly every part of Cuba, including Havana. Most affected were the tourist destinations in the north from Varadero to Cayo Santa Maria. These resort locations are just now beginning to come back on-line and the cost of lost wages and tourism dollars has been devastating to an already struggling Cuban economy.

Cuba Rhythm and Views remains committed to our People-to-People “Diplomacy through the Arts” project and we will continue bringing our American delegates to Cuba in comfort and safety. In our opinion, based on years of working closely with the Cubans, their best days are ahead. Politicians come and go, but Cuba and its appeal will be there forever.

**Our next trip is May 23-30** with the great jazz master, Byron Stripling. This will be our third time taking Byron to Cuba and if the past two trips are any measure, next year’s trip will be  *muy sensacional*. Two days in Cienfuegos on the south coast and five days in Havana in the north.

Byron’s previous two concerts with Cuban pianist Aldo López-Gavilán’s jazz ensemble have made Byron the toast of Cuba. This year’s finale concert, *By George – A Tribute to George Gershwin*, will be in the theater at Havana’s **Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes** (Museum of Fine Arts) and all of Havana is invited.

**Our first-ever summer trip next year, July 11-18, 2018** is designed for teachers and those who have a hard time getting away during the school year. However, anyone can join this delegation. Again, it will be Cienfuegos and Havana and hosted by Deborah Richter of La Única Spanish Language Instruction Center.

For delegate applications and more information go to [www.cubarhythmandviews.org](http://www.cubarhythmandviews.org), or call:

**Woody – 602.679.0590**  
**Neil – 253.279.5555**