

For Immediate Release:

April 27, 2016

Media Contact:

Lillian Dompe

University of Florida College of the Arts

Office: 352.846.1218 | Cell: 804.502.4063

ldompe@arts.ufl.edu

**The University of Florida School of Music
presents:**
Cantantes y Canciones de Cuba!
(Singers and Songs from Cuba!)

Gainesville, Fla., April 27, 2016 — The University of Florida School of Music in collaboration with the UF Center for Latin American Studies and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church will present *Cantantes y Canciones de Cuba* on **May 20 at 7:30 p.m.** in the School of Music, Room 101, and on **May 22 at 3:00 p.m.** at the Reilly Arts Center in Ocala. The program features Cuban opera singers, Yilam Sartorio and Ramón Centeno, who are visiting the United States on a concert tour. Joining them will be UF faculty members, Dr. Anthony Offerle, bass-baritone, and Dr. Kevin Sharpe, pianist. The program features songs by Cuban composers, as well as famous arias, duets, and songs by Puccini, Verdi and Mozart. The May 20 performance is free and open to the public, while the May 22 performance is ticketed with ticket prices ranging from \$10-\$5.

The island nation of Cuba has for many years been off limits to travel. With the recent opening of the US Embassy and official visit of President Obama, the two cultures are beginning to get to know one another once again. After more than 50 years, the arts are being shared between the two countries.

"Building bridges takes time but the universal art of making music makes the process so effortless," said Offerle. "I met Yilam and her husband, Ramón, when visiting Havana last month. Being able to hear them sing and work with them at the voice conservatory was marvelous and eye opening. With our research and cultural ties to Latin America, UF is the university most well positioned to build partnerships in Cuba."



Both Ms. Sartorio and Mr. Centeno have extensive performance credits and are alumnae of the Cuban Ministry of Culture, which sponsors and educates artists, dancers, and musicians from their mid-teens through what, in US schools, would be considered a graduate program. Their training is grounded in the European tradition of *bel canto*, meaning "beautiful singing," with elements of the Russian school training approach.

Performance and Ticket Information

The first *Cantantes y Canciones de Cuba* performance will be held on Friday, May 20 at 7:30 p.m. in the University of Florida School of Music Building, Room 101. The School of Music is in Gainesville and on the corner of Stadium Road and Newell Drive, UF Campus. The concert is free and open to the public.



An additional concert will be held on Sunday, May 22 at 3:00 p.m. at the Reilly Arts Center in Ocala. The Reilly Arts Center is located at 500 NE 9th Street, Ocala, Florida 34470. This performance is a ticketed event. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for students, and free for children 12 and under. Tickets can be purchased at <http://www.reillyartscenter.com> or by calling 352-351-1606.

About the School of Music

The School of Music is one of the University of Florida College of the Arts' three institutionally-accredited schools. The School of Music plays an important role in the academic life of the University and the community. The school's programs provide broad-based instruction in performance, composition, history and literature and music disciplines, through a strong curriculum as well as through professional experiences such as ensembles and internships. UF students also have the opportunity to join more than a dozen music ensembles, including jazz bands, the University Choir, the University Symphony Orchestra and the "Pride of the Sunshine" Fightin' Gator Marching Band. To learn more, visit www.arts.ufl.edu/music.

About the College of the Arts

The College of the Arts is one of the 16 colleges and more than 150 research centers and institutes at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida. The College of the Arts offers baccalaureate, master's and Ph.D. degree programs in its three institutionally-accredited schools — the School of Art + Art History, School of Music and School of Theatre + Dance. The college is home to the Center for Arts in Medicine, Center for Arts and Public Policy, Center for World Arts, Digital Worlds Institute, University Galleries and the New World School of the Arts in Miami. More than 100 faculty members and approximately 1,200 students work together daily to engage, inspire and create. The college hosts more than 300 performances, exhibitions and events each year. Faculty and students also exhibit and perform at other local, national and international venues. To learn more, visit www.arts.ufl.edu.

###

Captions: *top photo* - Yilam Sartorio; *bottom photo* - Ramón Centeno