

ALAIN PANTALEON

La Habana. Cuba - Miami. FL



He embarked on his artistic journey in 2001, in the vibrant streets of Havana, Cuba, under the mentorship of Raúl Cañibano. Immersed in the rhythms of rural Viñales, he began documenting the soul of the Cuban countryside, where his passion for photography took root, giving life to his "GUAJIROS" series.

Alain's lens became a storyteller of his homeland, capturing the essence of life's quiet moments in the city, along the seafront, and in the rural landscapes, all interwoven with the unwavering faith of his people. His journey into the spiritual began with the series "Following Their Faith", a profound exploration of the San Lázaro pilgrimage in Rincón. Years of dedication to this project earned him recognition, including honorable mentions at the Alfredo Sarabia Biennial In Memoriam in 2003 and 2005, and ultimately the Grand Prize in 2007.

In 2008, his work took center stage at the Fototeca de Cuba with his first solo exhibition. Collaborating with renowned photographers, he co-created "17 Milagroso Babalú Ayé", a visual testament to faith, which culminated in exhibitions in Casa Madrid, Barcelona, and Germany, resonating with audiences far beyond Cuba.

Now based in Miami, his artistic spirit roams the streets, capturing the essence of a new world while maintaining a deep connection to his Cuban roots. His recent explorations in Mexico have opened new doors, unveiling the rich tapestry of culture, tradition, and humanity, as he continues to evolve as an artist and storyteller, always seeking new moments to immortalize through his lens.

Curatorship and museography by Santiel Rodríguez Velázquez

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Fé

A visual testament where faith and hope endure

by Santiel Rodríguez Velázquez | oct 3, 2024

The belief in the miracles of San Lázaro is central to the devotion of the Cuban people, representing not only a religious bond but also a source of hope and comfort in times of illness and despair. Through his syncretism associated with the Yoruba Orisha Babalú Ayé, San Lázaro has gained deep significance as a healer and protector, especially among the most humble sectors of Cuban society, who see him as a figure that understands both physical and spiritual suffering.

In this photographic series, Aláin Pantaleón captures the essence of that devotion, exploring how faith in San Lázaro becomes a beacon of hope amidst life's most difficult trials. The images reveal the intimate relationship between devotees and the saint, illustrating fulfilled promises, silent offerings, and personal sacrifice as acts of faith. The veneration of San Lázaro is not merely a religious expression but a collective act of resilience and solidarity.

One of the deepest aspects these photographs reveal is how San Lázaro, becomes an intercessor for miraculous healings. Devotees turn to him, trusting in his power to reverse illnesses and ease pain, knowing that his divine intervention is a tangible possibility. The images capture this act of faith in motion: the pilgrimages to the Sanctuary of El Rincón, bodies enduring physical sacrifices in search of miracles, and faces reflecting both gratitude and suffering in equal measure.

Pantaleón's work not only documents an act of devotion but also invites the viewer to immerse themselves in a mystique where the invisible becomes visible through faith. The untold stories of miracles, kept secret by many devotees, create an aura of mystery around San Lázaro. In these images, that mystery is partially unveiled, allowing us to glimpse how Cuban faith in San Lázaro transforms pain into hope and adversity into an opportunity for miracles.

These photographs not only illustrate Cuba's spiritual life but also remind us that faith in San Lázaro is a reflection of the Cuban people's resilience. Beyond religion, this devotion symbolizes resistance and unity in the face of daily hardships, a visual testimony that faith and hope endure, even in the darkest moments.