



Lourdes Carvajal

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About the Collection

Introducing "Cuban Cadence," a fashion collection that intricately weaves together the vibrant tapestry of Cuban architecture, celebrating both its resplendent beauty and poignant decay. Inspired by the juxtaposition of the island's stunning edifices and those bearing the scars of neglect, this collection serves as a powerful homage to the rich architectural heritage of Cuba. Yet, beyond mere aesthetic admiration, "Cuban Cadence" carries a profound political resonance, symbolizing the systemic failures of governance and the oppressive forces that have afflicted the Cuban people and their homeland. Through meticulously crafted garments and thoughtful design elements, this collection seeks to illuminate the complexities of Cuba's socio-political landscape, inviting reflection and dialogue on the enduring spirit of resilience amidst adversity.

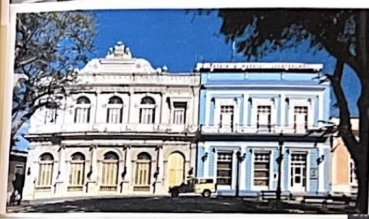
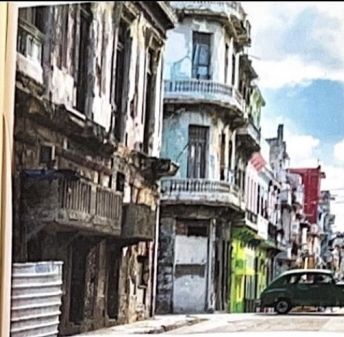


A lot of Havana architecture is in fact in the baroque style, or at least a version of it. Baroque had its origins in Italy in the 1600s, but did not make it to Havana until almost a century later. More delicate in nature than the earlier Moorish-inspired Spanish colonial architecture, the baroque Havana architecture was more muscular in nature than many baroque buildings back in Europe. This is an interesting example of how Cuba and the New World were seen as a European outpost, needing the style of Europe as opposed to creating its own distinctive style.

This is still demonstrably different when it comes to Cuban baroque. The infrastructure for mining and processing the necessary materials to replicate the style simply did not exist, meaning that Cuban baroque has a roughness not seen in its European counterparts.



Havana Architecture: Chasing Europe



It wasn't only the Spanish who were colonising the New World. The neighbouring island of Haiti was largely a French colony, and a number of the French settlers fled in terror after a slave uprising there in 1791. Incidentally, it wouldn't be until 1886 that slavery was abolished in Cuba, although there were a fair few uprisings.

Many French settled in the Cuban capital, bringing French influences to Havana architecture. In the years that followed, neoclassical styles also made their mark on the capital, resulting in rather a lot of columns. Seriously... Havana is sometimes called the city of columns.





Goodbye to Spain

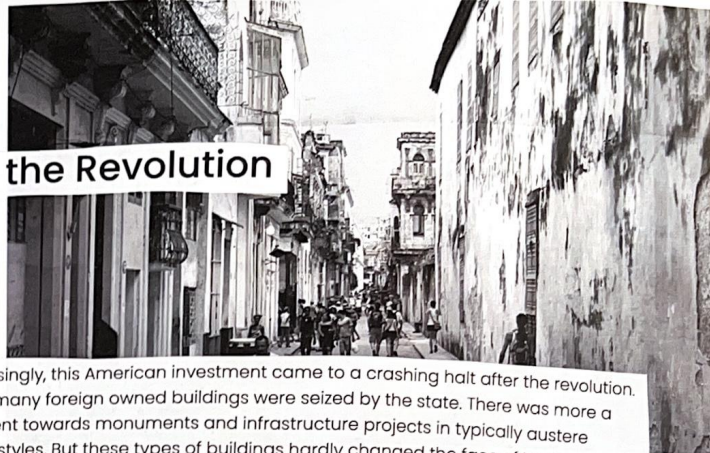


After gaining independence from Spain in the early 1900s, the influences of Spain were cast aside, and indeed the influences of Europe too. Havana architecture from this time actually has a number of American influences, and this is true of a number of government buildings that were constructed prior to the Cuban Revolution, most notably the Cuban Capitolio Nacional (the Cuban Capitol Building which looks incredibly similar to its counterpart in Washington DC).

This was also the time of a lot of American investment in the buildings of the capital city, and Havana architecture in the decades prior to the revolution is notable for the proliferation of hotels and casinos, such as the Hotel Nacional de Cuba.



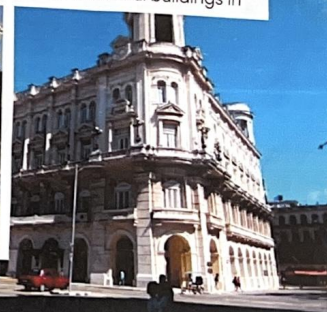
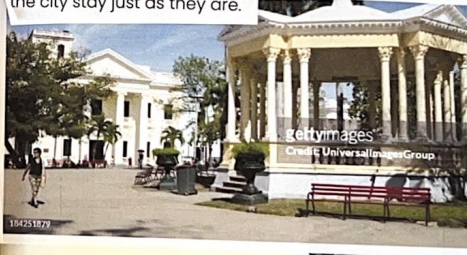
After the Revolution



Unsurprisingly, this American investment came to a crashing halt after the revolution. Indeed, many foreign owned buildings were seized by the state. There was more a movement towards monuments and infrastructure projects in typically austere socialist styles. But these types of buildings hardly changed the face of Havana, just as no singular style of building had done before it.

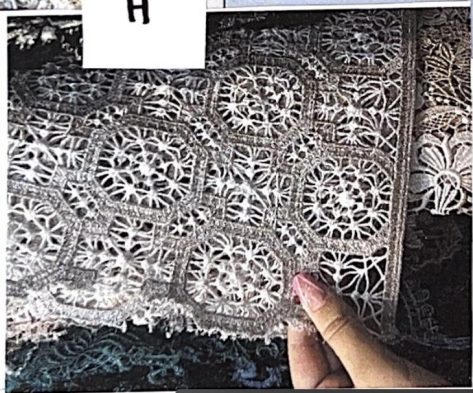
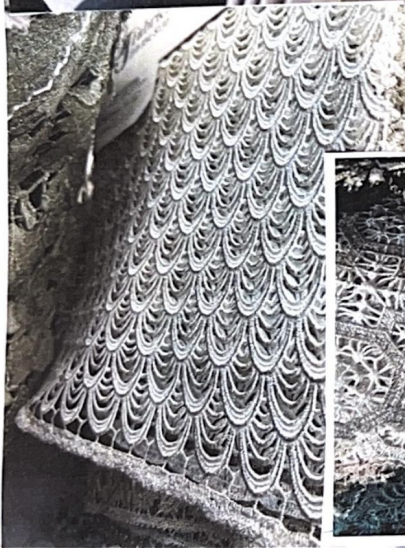
These numerous designs merely contributed to the mishmash of styles and colours that make up the Havana we all know and love. One of the most interesting recent developments in the architecture of the capital of Cuba took place in 1982. This was when Havana's Old Town (La Habana Vieja) was designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site (the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). This means that the United Nations recognised the cultural and historical significance of this part of Havana and provided the funds needed for restoration work.

This means that the beauty of many of Havana's grand and even minor buildings can be enjoyed by future generations. It would be a tragedy to lose such architectural beauty, so let's hope that Havana's Old Town and the rest of the beautiful buildings in the city stay just as they are.





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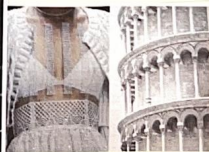
PANTONE® COLOR REPORT SPRING

14-4313 Aquamarine	16-4725 Scuba Blue	14-5714 Lucille Green	19-4052 Classic Blue	14-1213 Toasted Almond
16-1720 Strawberry Ice	15-1247 Tangerine	13-0720 Custard	18-1438 Marsala	14-4102 Glacier Gray

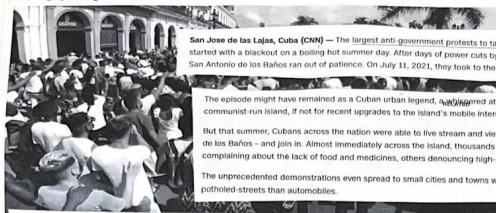




Collection Direction



Cuba faced the biggest protests since the revolution. One year on, the government's grip is tighter than ever



San Jose de las Lajas, Cuba (CNN) — The largest anti-government protests to take place in Cuba since the 1959 revolution started with a blackout on a boiling hot summer day. After days of power cuts by the government, residents in the small city of San Antonio de los Baños ran out of patience. On July 11, 2021, they took to the streets to complain.

The episode might have remained as a Cuban urban legend, ~~but~~ ^{hadn't} occurred about moment of rare public dissent on the communist island, if not for recent upgrades to the island's mobile Internet.

But that summer, Cubans across the nation were able to live stream and view in real time the unfolding protests in San Antonio de los Baños — and join in. Almost immediately across the island, thousands of other Cubans took to the streets, some complaining about the lack of food and medicines, others denouncing high-ranking officials and calling for greater civil liberties.

The unprecedented demonstrations even spread to small cities and towns where there are more horse and carriages on the potholed streets than automobiles.

As more and more Cubans took to the streets, it became clear that the Cuban government was facing the largest internal challenge to its hold on power in decades.

In a speech on state-run TV, Cuban President Miguel Diaz-Canel blamed the island's economic problems on US government sanctions, said the protests were the result of a subversion campaign directed from abroad, and called the loyal to take back the streets from protesters.

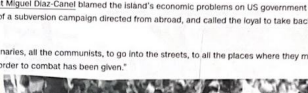
"We are convoking all the country's revolutionaries, all the communists, to go into the streets, to all the places where they might replicate these provocations," he said. "The order to combat has been given."

As the pandemic, US sanctions and the slow pace of reforms continue to batter the Cuban economy, officials on the island seem to realize that despite their heavy-handed crackdown last year, more protests could happen at any time.

In June this year, hundreds of Cuban students at a university in the city of Camaguey began a nighttime demonstration after power was cut in their dormitory.

"F*** these blackouts! Put the electricity on!" they chanted as they banged on pots as seen on videos that the students uploaded to social media.

Cuban officials quickly turned back on the lights.



Preventing future protests

But international human rights organizations say the Cuban government is using the prosecutions to intimidate Cubans from daring to protest again.

"We found that prosecutors were constantly charging Cubans for exercising their basic rights such as the right to protest peacefully, the right to insult their president or the right to insult police officers, exercising the right of freedom of expression," said Juan Pappler, a senior Americas researcher at Human Rights Watch (HRW).

On Monday, HRW released a report on the protests that it says documents 155 cases of alleged abuse against people involved in last year's demonstrations, "including harassment, arbitrary detention, abuse-ridden prosecutions, beatings, and other cases of ill-treatment that in some cases constitute torture."

The organization also accused the Cuban government of further cracking down on civil liberties to prevent more protests from taking place.

Marta Perdomo said she encountered the tightening restrictions first-hand after she was invited to Europe in June to speak about her sons to human rights groups and lawmakers. When she reached the airport in Havana, officials there told her and another mother of an imprisoned protester they would not be permitted to travel.

"They said I was 'regulated' and couldn't go," Perdomo said.

Cuban officials did not respond to a CNN request asking why Marta Perdomo was not allowed to leave the island.

Even though Perdomo says she is worried about when her three young grandchildren will see their fathers again, she does not have regrets.

"They didn't have to go out but they felt the pain of Cuba," Perdomo said. "That's why they went out. That day my sons were free."

It remains to be seen whether the July protests will be remembered as rare outburst of public rage or a new stage in the struggle for greater openness.

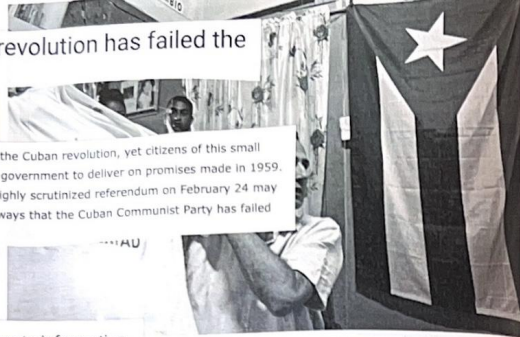
Government supporters carrying bats alongside police began to break up the protests. Hundreds of Cubans were arrested, some or clashing with officials, others for merely filming the turmoil with their phones.



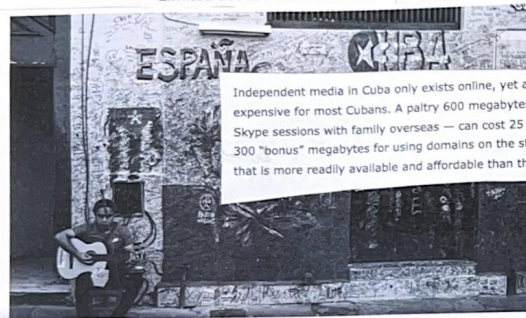


ways the Cuban revolution has failed the people of Cuba

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the Cuban revolution, yet citizens of this small socialist nation continue to wait for their government to deliver on promises made in 1959. A new constitution that will go up for a highly scrutinized referendum on February 24 may rein in their rights further. Here are five ways that the Cuban Communist Party has failed its people.

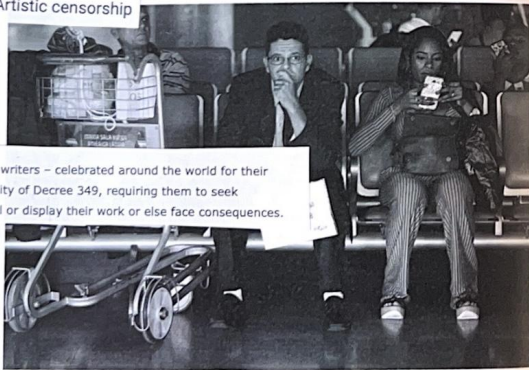


Limited access to information



Independent media in Cuba only exists online, yet accessing the internet is prohibitively expensive for most Cubans. A paltry 600 megabytes of data a month — enough for a few Skype sessions with family overseas — can cost 25 percent of a worker's wages. Users get 300 "bonus" megabytes for using domains on the state-sanctioned, censored "intranet" that is more readily available and affordable than the global internet.

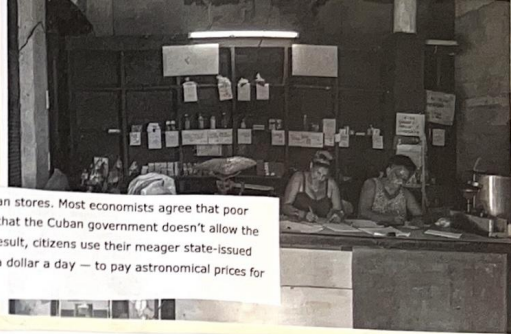
Artistic censorship



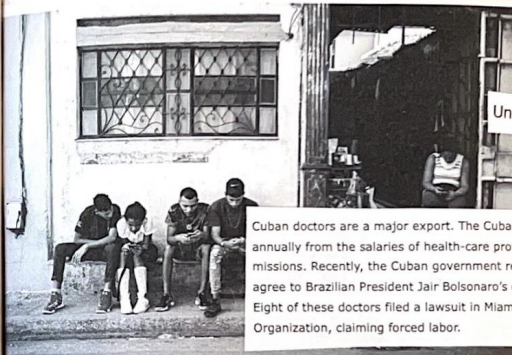
Cuba's musicians, dancers, artists and writers — celebrated around the world for their creative output — now suffer the indignity of Decree 349, requiring them to seek government permission to perform, sell or display their work or else face consequences.

Economic stagnation

Empty shelves are a common sight in Cuban stores. Most economists agree that poor centralized management is the cause and that the Cuban government doesn't allow the private sector to reach its potential. As a result, citizens use their meager state-issued salaries — which can amount to less than a dollar a day — to pay astronomical prices for groceries on the black market.

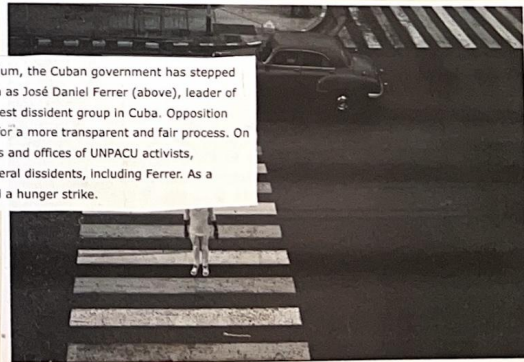


Unfair working conditions

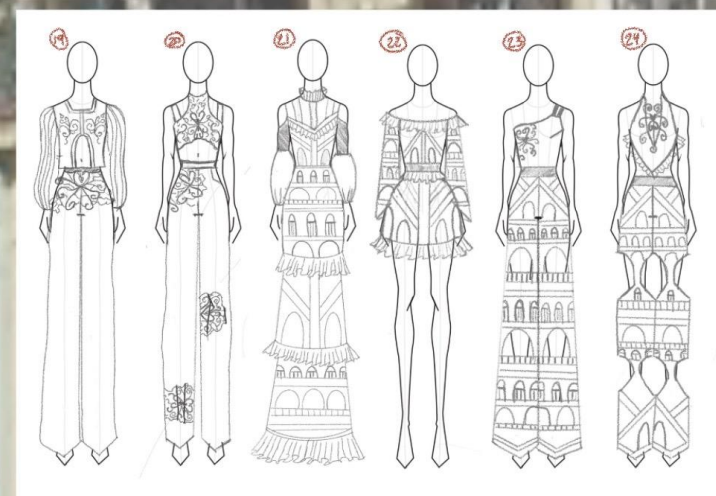
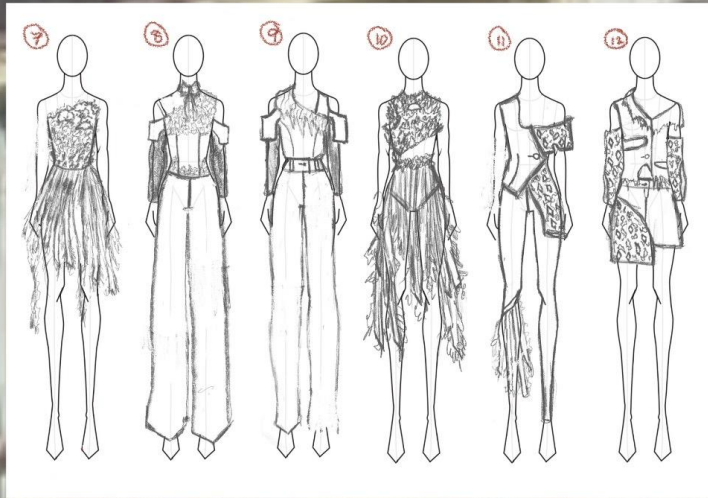
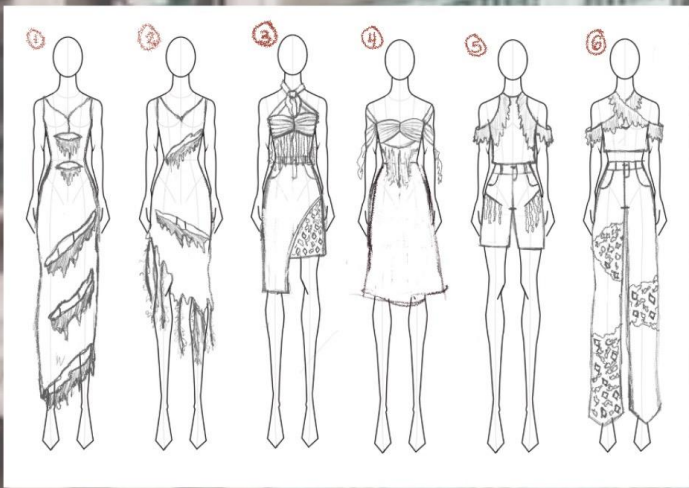


Cuban doctors are a major export. The Cuban government takes in roughly \$11 billion annually from the salaries of health-care professionals participating in its overseas medical missions. Recently, the Cuban government recalled its doctors working in Brazil rather than agree to Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro's demand that Cuba pay the doctors a fair wage. Eight of these doctors filed a lawsuit in Miami against the Pan American Health Organization, claiming forced labor.

And of the February 24 constitutional referendum, the Cuban government has stepped repression of political opposition figures, such as José Daniel Ferrer (above), leader of Unión Patriótica de Cuba (UNPACU), the largest dissident group in Cuba. Opposition res such as Ferrer have pressed the regime for a more transparent and fair process. On uary 11, Cuban police raided multiple homes and offices of UNPACU activists, iscated property, and beat and detained several dissidents, including Ferrer. As a t, dozens of UNPACU activists have initiated a hunger strike.



Preliminary Sketches



Final Sketches with Color Edits

