



CINTAS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES THE 2009 LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD TO MARGARITA CANO, ARTS ADMINISTRATOR, LIBRARIAN, PAINTER

Miami - (May 4, 2009) The Cintas Foundation (www.cintasfoundation.org) will present the *2009 Lifetime Service Award* to Margarita Cano in recognition of her lifetime dedication to the Cuban arts.

Born in the Vedado neighborhood of Havana, Cuba, in the winter of 1932, Margarita Fernandez Villa Urrutia was educated at the Ruston Academy and the University of Havana. She took degrees in biochemistry and physics, later earning a master's degree in library science and working at the Havana National Museum and at the Julio Lobo Napoleon Museum.

In 1956 she married Pablo Cano. Their first child, Isabel, was born in 1959 and their son, the artist and Cintas Fellow, Pablo Daniel, was born in 1961. At the time, Pablo Sr. had a successful music career in Havana and Margarita became an assistant to the director of Cuba's National Library. Both, however, became disillusioned with the recently established revolutionary government in Cuba, as censorship encroached on their intellectual freedom. With the help of family already living outside Cuba, the Canos arrived in Miami on October 17, 1962 – three days before the Cuban Missile Crisis.

In 1963, Margarita began a 30 year career with the Miami-Dade Public Library System during which she initiated, promoted and executed innovative programs, and played an instrumental role in shaping a major art collection for the library.

She served on the Board of the Cuban Museum of Arts and Culture and with its support presented, at the Main Library, the first exhibition of Cintas Fellows in 1977 and a major exhibition of works related to Colonial Cuba, "The Romance of an Era." In 1983, she organized "Nine Cuban-American Artists, The Miami Generation," an exhibition for the Cuban Museum that traveled to Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia.

After her retirement from the library in 1993, Margarita dedicated herself to her own creative work, painting portraits of family and friends and nostalgic Cuban landscapes. She also began work on a series of hand-written aphorisms that, combined with miniature versions of her paintings, became books in the style of the medieval Books of Hours. Margarita has also written and illustrated several books for children.

"As a director of the Cintas Foundation for almost three decades, Margarita has been instrumental in the work of the foundation in promoting the fellowships and the works of the fellows in numerous exhibitions," said Hortensia E. Sampedro, president of the Cintas Foundation. "Margarita Cano has dedicated her life to the arts and has worked selflessly for the benefit of Cuban artists as well as many other artists in South Florida. We are honored to recognize her with the Cintas Foundation Lifetime Service Award".

The award will be presented at a ceremony at the Frost Art Museum of Florida International University on May 20, 2009, at 7:00 pm. The public is invited.

About The Cintas Foundation

The Cintas Foundation was established with funds from the estate of the late Oscar B. Cintas (b. Sagua La Grande, Cuba 1887 – d. New York City, 1957), a prominent industrialist and patron of the arts. Since 1963, the Cintas Foundation has awarded more than 300 fellowships to artists of Cuban lineage who reside outside of Cuba.

About the Frost Art Museum - Florida International University

The Frost is an AAM accredited museum and Smithsonian affiliate. The museum is located at 10975 SW 17th St. across from the Blue garage and adjacent to the Wertheim Performing Arts Center on the University Park campus. Its hours of operation are Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday noon-5 p.m. The Frost is closed on Mondays and most legal holidays. For more information, please visit www.frostartmuseum.org or call 305-348-2890.

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