



Celebrating the Life of Rafael Enrique Catalá



September 26, 1942 - December 19, 2024

Service: January 25, 2025 @ 11:00 AM

Officiating: Rev. Dr. Daniel Medina

Musicians: Mr. Mario Cesar Del Risco

Ms. Teresa Lesiuk

Miami Lakes Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

6701 Miami Lakeway South

Miami Lakes, FL 33014

(305) 822-4313

Rafael Catalá

Memorial Service

Musical Prelude—Faure Prelude Mario C. Del Risco/
Teresa Lesiuk

Opening Sentences Rev. Dr. Daniel Medina

Processional Hymn:..... Amazing Grace #547

Opening Prayer Rev. Dr. Daniel Medina

First Lesson:..... Psalm 23, Psalm 91 (KJV)

Congregational Hymn: I Danced In The Morning

Second Lesson..... Matthew 17:20-21 , John 14:12

Eulogy..... James D. Anderson

Remembrance..... Eric Calaforra

Reflections Rev. Dr. Daniel Medina

Prayers of Intercession..... Rev. Dr. Daniel Medina

Closing Hymn:..... My Shepard Is The Living God
247

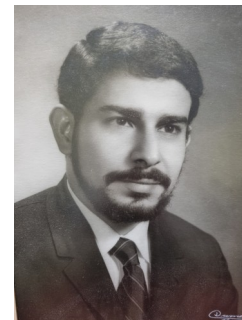
Recessional Music..... Savior When in Tears and Dust
#185

Postlude:..... Mario C. Del Risco/
Teresa Lesiuk

segundo piso del que solo un grupo social tiene la llave.] Nunca se me olvidara la gente que me reconoció y se echó a llorar cuando estuve allí ~ yo me di cuenta que no lloraban por mí, sino por lo que yo representaba: la Tunas clásica que llenaba sus aspiraciones y que la revolución dio al traste con ellas. Ahora no hay un segundo piso al que aspirar, pero su presencia sigue allí, silenciosamente. Hasta la Unión Fraternal representaba para los negros un piso más alto al que no todos podían llegar. A este mundo pertenecía el Dr. Pozo, el veterinario, los Mantillas, a la familia del profesor de inglés, Sr. Regis ~ que todos llamaban Sr. Reyes ~, al profesor Chicoy ~ aunque el no quería pertenecer a este mundo y era, además, alcohólico. Él fue mi maestro privado. Era excelente aun borracho. Actualmente, sus mejores clases las daba bajo los efectos del alcohol.

Por supuesto, nuestras casas son testimonio palpante de una energía viva, una cultura viva que despierta con nuestra presencia: una Tunas en la que todos hubieran querido haber vivido. Igualmente, el edificio de la Colonia Española y el Liceo, o el Club de Leones, son testigos mudos que se comunican con todo el que pasa por allí. Hoy día la Colonia Española es parte de la Biblioteca Provincial, que está abierta todos los días. Igualmente, la casa de Don Claudio Aguilar es la casa de la cultura. Todas estas son alturas invisibles que mantienen su antiguo prestigio preñados de silencio-y lo comunican a todo el que pasa por allí.

A todo este mundo se le puede hacer un estudio semiótico que demuestre la vivencia latente de la Cuba de ayer que sigue palpitando en el firmamento cultural de hoy con una vida insospechable y al que muchos siguen aspirando hoy día. Este es el efecto latente de la historia.



Reflexión Sobre Cuba por Rafael Catalá

Cuando estuve en Cuba, hace ya casi 16 años, hablé con Telvia de la Fe~no se si te acuerdas de ella, hermana de Sergio de la Fe, su mama trabajaba en la oficina de correos ~ que es poeta y promotora de la poesía en Las Tunas. Ella se interesa mucho por la historia de Las Tunas y me hablo mucho de los Nápoles Fajardo. Con la revolución ha habido un renacimiento de la historia y literatura tunera.

De una de las cosas de las que me di cuenta cuando estuve allí, fue del sentido de "clase alta" en que nos tienen a nosotros, tu yo, por ejemplo. Se siente como una envidia. No sé si porque esa clase se pudo ir de Cuba al principio de la revolución, o porque tuvo acceso a una educación~clasista si se quiere~en la Cuba de ayer. Tal como si hubiera sido un ruso blanco que regresaba de visita a la Rusia comunista. Las vibraciones eran como si yo los estuviera observando desde arriba, sin el deseo de querer regresar a la cultura tunera y/o cubana en que ellos viven. Yo, por supuesto, me di cuenta de esto y aproveché la distancia. No sabes lo triste que se pusieron cuando me preguntaron si me gustaría regresar a Cuba y les conteste que no. Luego les dore la píldora diciéndole que ya me había acostumbrado a mi nueva cultura. La Cuba de hoy no se asemeja a la Cuba nuestra ~ que poseemos en nuestra conciencia. Son dos mundos aparte, pues, aunque nuestra Cuba ya desapareció, aun la poseemos en nuestras entendederas, y cuando hablamos con ellos brota calladamente. Poseemos el tesoro de la Cuba clásica, de la que solo unos pocos pudieron poseer. Yo siento que mucho del supuesto "odio" que nos tienen, es en realidad, envidia ~ ya que somos poseedores de un tesoro que solo existe dentro de nosotros, se manifiesta por nuestros labios, pero regresa a su lugar de origen. En nuestra Tunas no solo poseíamos el Liceo y la Colonia Española que anunciaban nuestra presencia, sino que poseíamos un piso más alto, invisible, que todavía esta allí en el recuerdo colectivo ~ pero que solo aquellos que lo poseemos pueden caminar en él. [Algunos le pueden llamar 'clase', pero es más que eso: es poseer un



In Loving Memory



Obituary

Rafael Enrique Catalá

September 26, 1942 - December 19, 2024

Miami Lakes, Florida - Rafael Catalá (Rafael Enrique Justino Catalá Gallardo) was born 26 Sept. 1942 in Victoria de las Tunas, Oriente, Cuba. He left Cuba in 1961 on the last commercial flight after the revolution. He was educated at NYU (B.A., M.A., Ph.D.). He began his academic career at Lafayette College and Seton Hall University. He was visiting professor at Universidad de Costa Rica, 1993-94.

Catalá applied for U.S. citizenship in the 1960s but was denied because he was gay. The ban on homosexuals entering the U.S. or becoming citizens was not removed until 1990. Rafael would have been deported back to Cuba were it not for strained relations with Fidel Castro. Catalá finally was granted citizenship in 1993, just before departing for Costa Rica.

Catalá learned of Joel Goldsmith's Infinite Way while a faculty member at Lafayette College, when he became a student of Laura Perkinpine of Easton, PA, one of Goldsmith's first students. By 1987, Catalá was called to lead the Corrales (NM) Infinite Way Study Group with Laurie Parker and Fotini Pedron, which led to a ground breaking new expression for many who studied the Infinite Way. This led to a 25-year career of teaching the Infinite Way around the world, in USA, Europe, especially England, Germany & Switzerland, Latin America, and Australia.

Also in Corrales, NM, Catalá founded the Ometeca Institute and it's refereed journal Ometeca, which focused on the relationship between the sciences and humanities. The Institute and its Journal continued until the end of 2023.

Throughout his career, Catalá published many books and articles on mysticism, Latin American literature, and poetry, including *Mysticism of Now* (1998) and *Cienciapoesia* (1986), as well as many scholarly articles. His own poetry has been published in many journals, including *The New York Times*.

Catalá is survived by his loving husband of 53 years, James Doig Anderson, and his nephew, Eric Calaforra, both of Miami Lakes, FL, as well as their extended families.

To plant trees in memory, please visit the [Sympathy Store](#).

Please join us in the Fellowship Hall after the memorial service for a luncheon.



never forget the people who recognized me and burst into tears when I was there ~ I realized that they were not crying for me, but for what I represented: the classic Tunas that fulfilled their aspirations and that the revolution destroyed. Now there is no second floor to aspire to but their presence is still there, silently. Even the Fraternal Union [society for only blacks] represented for the blacks a higher floor that not everyone could reach. Dr. Pozo, the veterinarian, the Mantillas, the family of the English teacher, Mr. Regis ~ whom everyone called Mr. Reyes ~, Professor Chicoy ~ belonged to this world ~ although he did not want to belong to this world and was, in addition, an alcoholic. He was my private teacher. He was excellent even when drunk. In fact, his best classes were given under the influence of alcohol.

Of course, our houses are a palpable testimony to a living energy, a living culture that awakens with our presence: a Tunas in which everyone would have liked to have lived. Likewise, the Colonia Española building and the Liceo, or the Lions Club, are silent witnesses that communicate with everyone who passes by. Today, the Colonia Española is part of the Provincial Library, which is open every day. Likewise, the house of Don Claudio Aguilar is the house of culture. All of these are invisible heights that maintain their ancient prestige, filled with silence~and communicate it to everyone who passes by.

A semiotic study can be made of this whole world, which shows the latent experience of the Cuba of yesterday that continues to pulsate in the cultural firmament of today with an unsuspected life and to which many continue to aspire today. This is the latent effect of history.



Reflection About Cuba by Rafael Catalá

When I was in Cuba, almost 16 years ago, I spoke with Telvia de la Fe ~ I don't know if you remember her, Sergio de la Fe's sister, her mother worked in the post office ~ who is a poet and promoter of poetry in Las Tunas. She is very interested in the history of Las Tunas and she told me a lot about the Napoles Fajardo. With the revolution there has been a renaissance of the history and literature of Las Tunas.

One of the things I noticed when I was there was the sense of "upper class" that they have of us, you and I, for example. It feels like an envy. I don't know if it's because that class was able to leave Cuba at the beginning of the revolution, or because they had access to an education~classist if you will~in the Cuba of yesterday. Just as if it had been a white Russian returning to visit communist Russia. The vibes were as if I were watching them from above, without the desire to want to return to the culture of Las Tunas and/or Cuba in which they live. I, of course, noticed this and took advantage of the distance. You don't know how sad they were when they asked me if I would like to return to Cuba and I told them no. Then I sweetened the pill by saying that I had already gotten used to my new culture. Today's Cuba does not resemble our Cuba ~ the one we have in our conscience. They are two worlds apart, because even though our Cuba has disappeared, we still possess it in our minds, and when we talk to them it quietly flows out. We possess the treasure of classical Cuba, which only a few could possess. I feel that much of the supposed "hatred" they have for us is in reality envy ~ since we are the possessors of a treasure that only exists within us, it is expressed through our lips but returns to its place of origin. In our Tunas we not only possessed the Liceo and the Colonia Española [societies for whites] that announced our presence, but we possessed a higher, invisible floor that is still there in the collective memory ~ but that only those who possess it can walk on. [Some may call it 'class', but it is more than that: it is possessing a second floor to which only one social group has the key.] I will

“Landscape” by Rafael Catalá

Cows graze with a quiet regret among industrial nights
My home beholds the farm, the railroad tracks,
the swiftness of deer or a pheasant a nightly cotton tail rabbit
and enjoy the birth of daffodils, the profound colors of autumn.
A languid V of geese inscribed in blue moves south.
The pregnant trains of tanks and war effort for poor countries
season after season tread their daily path among choirs of white
steeple and townhall blessings the cows pass and pass.
In the quiet evenings of town a people eat and by the glued eyelids
the juicy steaks of far away death pass by.

“Estampa” translation of “Landscape” by Pedro Mir

Pastan las reses la tristeza tranquila de sus noches industriales.
Mi morada contempla la campiña, los rieles del ferrocarril,
la sutil velocidad del venado y del faisán,
el nocturno copo de algodón de la cola del conejo
y goza del nacimiento del narciso en los profundos colores del
otono.
Una lánguida V de patos se inscribe en el azul y emigra hacia
tierras cálidas.
Los trenes preñados de tanques y pertrechos de otoño tras otoño
trenzas su rumbo diario hacia países empobrecidos.
Y mientras suben los coros de las cúpulas blancas
y las bendiciones azules de los ayuntamientos, las reses
pastan y pastan.
En las tranquilas noches del pueblo la gente come.
A través de sus párpados engomados los júcidos
filetes de una muerte lejana pasan y pasan...

I Danced in the Morning

SIMPLE GIFTS Irregular with refrain

Sydney Carter, 1963

American Shaker melody
Harm. Sydney Carter, 1963

1. I danced in the morn - ing when the
2. I danced for the scribe and the
3. I danced on the Sab - bath and I
4. I danced on a Fri - day when the
5. They cut Me down and I

world was be - gun, And I danced in the moon and the
Phar - i - see, But they would not dance and they
cured the lame; The ho - ly peo - ple
sky turned black; It's hard to dance with the
leap up high; I am the life that will

stars and the sun, And I came down from heav - en and I
would not fol - low Me; I danced for the fish - er - men, for
said it was a shame. They whipped and they stripped and they
dev - il on your back. They bur - ied My bod - y and they
nev - er, nev - er die; I'll live in you if you'll

danced on the earth; At Beth - le - hem I had My birth.
James and John; They came with Me and the dance went on.
hung Me high; And left Me there on a cross to die.
thought I'd gone: But I am the dance and I still go on.
live in Me: I am the Lord of the Dance, said He.

Refrain

Dance, then, wher - ev - er you may be; I am the Lord of the

Dance, said He, And I'll lead you all, wher - ev - er you may be,

And I'll lead you all in the dance, said He.