

**CULTURAL COUNTERPOINTS:  
Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America**



**Pereira, Alyssa (Tish School of the Arts, New York University and Society of Ethnomusicology):  
“Somos Iguales: Cuban Hip-Hop in the Age of Social Networks”**

**Abstract:**

Through occupation and trade during the last ten years, the United States and Cuba have absorbed facets of each other’s cultural profile. Two products of recent exchange in Cuba as a result of its relationship with the United States are the emergence of online social networks and the growth of Cuban hip-hop.

In the US, social networking (through vehicles such as Facebook, Myspace and Twitter) is used as a method of communication and a marketing tool. Many small record labels primarily rely on this type of grassroots marketing to appeal to their web-savvy target audience. While rap musicians in Cuba do not always have the capability to commercially sell professionally mixed albums due to a dependence on government allocated musician’s funds and materials, and submissiveness to government’s jurisdiction over what music is publicly released, the accessibility of the internet and social networks make possible a release of music at an underground level. As a result, complete censorship becomes an impossible feat and these musicians are able to release their music nationally and internationally through this medium. In this paper, I explore the expansion in the use of new social media networks in Cuba and their role in burgeoning the commercialization of Cuban rappers and their music. I note the differences in social media’s influence for Cuban underground rappers versus commercial rappers and the resulting success, both culturally and financially. Finally, I discuss the transnational impact of music dispersed through social media in Cuba and compare it to an earlier model of government-mandated distribution.

**How to Cite this Paper:**

Pereira, Alyssa. “Somos Iguales: Cuban Hip-Hop in the Age of Social Networks.” Paper presented at the Latin American Music Center’s Fiftieth Anniversary Conference “Cultural Counterpoints: Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America,” Indiana University, Bloomington, 2011. Available from *IUScholarWorks* (<https://scholarworks.iu.edu/dspace/handle/2022/15545>); accessed [Date Accessed].

**Editorial Disclaimer:**

This paper was presented at the Latin American Music Center’s Fiftieth-Anniversary Conference titled “Cultural Counterpoints: Examining the Musical Interactions between the U.S. and Latin America,” Indiana University, Bloomington, October 19-23, 2011, and was accepted on the basis of its abstract, which was peer-reviewed. This paper is presented as submitted by the author, who has authorized its dissemination through *IUScholarWorks*.

## **Alyssa Pereira**

### *Somos Iguales: Cuban Hip-Hop in the Age of Social Networks*

*Abstract: Through occupation and trade during the last ten years, the United States and Cuba have absorbed facets of each other's cultural profile. Two products of recent exchange in Cuba as a result of its relationship with the United States are the emergence of online social networks and the growth of Cuban hip-hop.*

*In the US, social networking (through vehicles such as Facebook, Myspace and Twitter) is used as a method of communication and a marketing tool. Many small record labels primarily rely on this type of grassroots marketing to appeal to their web-savvy target audience. While rap musicians in Cuba rarely have the capability to commercially sell professionally mixed albums due to a dependence on government allocated musician's funds and materials, and submissiveness to government's jurisdiction over what music is publicly released, the accessibility of the internet and social networks make possible a release of music at an underground level. As a result, complete censorship becomes an impossible feat and these musicians may be able to release their music nationally and internationally through this medium.*

*In this paper, I explore the expansion in the use of new social media networks in Cuba and their role in burgeoning the commercialization of Cuban rappers and their music. I note the differences in social media's influence for Cuban underground rappers versus commercial rappers and the resulting success, both culturally and financially. Finally, I discuss the potential implications of a use growth of these networks in Cuba.*

Cuban hip-hop is on the rise. Despite Cuba's lack of internet connectivity, Cuban artists are somehow able to present their music on a global stage. While this claim in itself provokes a well deserved, "How?" the answer is quite complicated. It would be too easy to simply say that Cubans have inconsistent internet. The reality is that issues such as censorship and resistance to globalization also greatly influence a Cuban's access to common American social networks like Facebook, YouTube, Myspace and Twitter. The Cuban hip-hop artist's internet accessibility is no different; these issues prevent the artists from not only promoting shows but also from engaging in any kind of album marketing tactics that are exceptionally common in the American record label market strategy: "With only about 16 percent of Cubans with Internet access, it is the rest of the world rather than those inside Cuba who are more likely to see the videos and Internet updates" (Whitefield 2011). Research on the topic must traverse the fields of global politics, technological advancement and hip-hop. Some artists are able to overcome Cuba's censorship restrictions and connectivity issues;<sup>1</sup> others are left to rely on contacts in America (and otherwise) to do online marketing for them. All research on this paper was done exclusively via the internet and by email; I employed this strategy to show the massive importance of the internet and internet marketing that must be considered henceforth in the study of hip-hop politics and business. In this paper, I will explore these issues by focusing on two Cuban groups in particular. The first is Doble Filo, a duo signed to the Cuban Rap Agency with significant ties in Miami, and a group considered commercial by some standards; the second is Los Aldeanos, an underground group that is not signed to the Cuban Rap Agency, that relies on the strength of their talent to generate an income, and one that is often barricaded from show venues in Cuba, left to create their own performance spaces. Lastly, I will discuss the common thread between these groups, Emetrece Productions, a non-profit American record and distribution label based in Puerto Rico that specifically markets and manages international sales of Cuban hip-hop albums. These profiles outline the state of hip-hop in Cuba today and consider its place in the global economy. In particular, and most importantly, I ask: what is the role of new social networks in promoting Cuban hip-hop?

Homegrown hip-hop emerged in Cuba in the early 1990s when young Cubans “built antennas from wire coat hangers and dangled their radios out of their windows to catch 2 Live Crew and Naughty by Nature on Miami’s 99 Jamz” (Fernandes 2011). Edgar González of the hip-hop duo Doble Filo recalls in the documentary *La Fabri-K: The Cuban Hip-Hop Factory* directed by Lisandro Perez-Rey, “Since the ocean is so close and the apartments are elevated [in Alamar, a district of Havana], radio stations from Key West can be heard. That’s the reason why Hip-Hop took root so strongly in Alamar.” While at first slow to advocate for hip-hop, (Baker 2005) the Cuban government came to support the new movement, calling it “the voice of the revolution.”<sup>ii</sup> (Umlauf 2005).

However, hip-hop’s role in Cuba today is quite complicated. In recent years, it has intricately coalesced political and musical culture in Cuba. Artists are subject to inconsistent degrees of censorship and treatment. Some groups, like La Fabri-K<sup>iii</sup> stated in an interview with a Miami radio show<sup>iv</sup> that they had never been asked to provide their lyrics for approval to the Cuban government for shows or otherwise; others, like El Cartel,<sup>v</sup> stated that “At the [nationally sponsored] Hip-Hop Festival, they ask us for written copies of our songs, so they can read them before we sing them. I don’t see another name for that but censorship.”<sup>vi</sup> Censorship in Cuba is clearly complicated and for this reason there can be no generalizations applied to its state of free speech; its regulation is inconsistent and seemingly unsystematic.

The Cuban government has in the past sponsored a widely-attended annual hip-hop festival and an international symposium on hip-hop; they also run an official record label and hip-hop magazine. This is problematic for two reasons. First, the state-run record label is the only record label in Cuba that can offer artists a high production value on their album and enough of a salary to live on; this ensures that the artist will largely be dependent on the government for money and success. Second, because the government is the primary provider for these artists, they have the power of influence over these artists’ lyrical content, image and marketing tactics, if any. The latter reason, however, is quite complicated. Yrak Saenz of Doble Filo, stated in the documentary *La Fabri-K: The Cuban Hip-Hop Factory*, “What record companies do is decide everything for you and manipulate your art. We’ve suffered a lot in the past because of this.” However, being

outside of the official Agency is still not an ideal alternative. Artists not part of the Cuban Rap Agency are blocked from performance opportunities and a steady income. As Appadurai states in his *Fear of Small Numbers*, “Most poor countries and regions have destroyed their cities, weakened their academic institutions, made serious research and teaching impossible, and made many professional spaces colonies of the state, either through repression or through corruption” (Appadurai 2006, 124). Hip-hop emerged as an art form critical of institutions like the government, but if the Cuban government monopolizes the industry and secures artist dependency, artists may be afraid to be politically critical for fear of losing their paycheck.

Working as an underground artist appears as an attractive alternative to some; artists are granted more creative flexibility, and some are able to maintain a sustainable income by performing, as do the popular hip-hop group Los Aldeanos. Los Aldeanos, or their fans, have established an extensive online presence on Facebook and YouTube, as well as smaller time profiles on Myspace and Twitter. Geoffrey Baker argues that although the internet has not made a significant impact on the success of Cuban artists at home, it has, as he states, “boosted the popularity of Cuban underground music on a global level, drawing in foreign visitors to the Havana scene, promoting and selling underground music, and laying the foundations for overseas engagements” (Baker 2011). This type of presence online exists despite the lack of the artist’s direct internet access. In my research I sought to investigate how these pages exist, their purpose in further advancing the international reach of the Cuban hip-hop artist’s music, and the potential power of these networking sites for Cuban artists.

The American social networks I specifically focus on include Facebook and YouTube. It appears that these networks are the most utilized by Cuban artists, their fans and record labels, and consequently, these networks have the most potential in extending the reach of Cuban hip-hop music to a global stage.

### *Social Media in Cuba*

The process of researching social media networks is often complicated and fruitless. Despite my familiarity with the anatomies of these networks, finding hard facts as to how musical artists in Cuba navigate these networks, if at all, proved extremely

difficult. Cuba's censorship barriers and the privacy policies of networks like Facebook and YouTube impeded my ability to produce evidentiary support for some of my arguments. Each issue in itself corroborates the difficulty in researching the current state of music industry marketing in Cuba.

There are some important obstacles in researching the state of the internet in Cuba and thus, the obstacles associated with the usability of these social networks for its hip-hop artists. I want to point out that Cubans residing in Cuba, to put it simply, have very limited access to the internet. Most internet connections in Cuba are done via dial-up modems and as a result, international connectivity runs very slow (Press, Interview, 2011). Cuba is currently awaiting the construction of an underwater cable that is supposed to increase internet connectivity speeds in Cuba, but currently, the country has fewer web servers per capita than any other nation in the Caribbean or Latin America (Press, "State of the Internet in Cuba" 2011). When users in Cuba *are* able to connect, their usage is complicated by censorship restrictions. Those few that have established some kind of presence online are only able to do so under government regulation. (Riviere 2011)<sup>vii</sup>

In addition, the Cuban government itself has had a complicated relationship with American social media. "Cubadebate," the Cuban government's official YouTube profile was shut down in January 2011 after videos featuring former CIA Agent Luis Posada Carriles (who at the time was on trial for immigration fraud in the United States) surfaced in their video queue.<sup>viii</sup> In response, YouTube terminated the page, citing "copyright infringement." The Cuban government responded publicly via their Facebook, condemning YouTube's actions; Facebook responded by shutting down Cuba's official account ("Cuba denounces Facebook, YouTube"). Cuba's page on Facebook<sup>ix</sup> has since been reinstated.<sup>x</sup>

It has been suggested that Cubans with the most significant web presence are those that contribute to the blogging community in Cuba; (Press, "State of the Internet in Cuba" 2011) some notable bloggers include Yoani Sanchez of Generación Y and Orlando Luis Pardo. Bloggers like these are considerably outspoken in taking a critical stance in regards to the Cuban government; as the Cuban government regulates the Cuban Rap

Agency, I suspect there is potentially an overlap between these bloggers and the hip-hop artists who are managed by this organization.

In consideration of Cuba's internet accessibility issues, this paper would not be possible were it not for some artists' contradictory presence on the web; there are many hip-hop artists based in Havana that *appear* to have managed to conspicuously engage in social media marketing practices commonly used by record labels and artists in the United States. While fan-created pages<sup>xi</sup> are quite prevalent in burgeoning the popularity of these groups outside of Cuba, many rappers appear to have their own artist pages, as well as personal profiles. As someone who has worked in New Media for an Independent record label, it is still surprising to me to see such a staggering response to these fan-created pages. For example, a search for Anónimo Consejo's name on Facebook turned up six separate profiles and fan pages; the page that appears to be managed by the band (or a close business affiliate) has close to 4,000 friends (Facebook, Anónimo Consejo 2011).<sup>xii</sup> Orishas, one of the most famous Cuban hip-hop groups now based in Paris,<sup>xiii</sup> have about seven fan-created pages, equaling thousands of fans besides their own official Facebook profile. Los Aldeanos, a group whose Facebook presence I will be discussing further, have close to 10,000 likes on their Facebook "community" fan-created page; their artist page has an even more impressive 20,000 friends as of October 7, 2011. However, the likelihood that these "friends" are in fact based in Cuba is quite small.

In addition, determining an artist's page's authenticity very difficult. As a researcher, I cannot positively tell whether an artist page is managed by a Cuban hip-hop artist overcoming censorship barricades, or rather, if it is managed by an American fan who has no difficulty in accessing these networks constantly, and is managing this page to create an "affiliation" with the artist (Greenhow, Robelia, Hughes 249, 2009; Riviere 2011).<sup>xiv</sup> I fear that these community-created fan-pages, while potentially being beneficial for the artists that they represent in a publicity-generating framework, may mislead fans and other users into thinking that Cuba's social media accessibility is far more advanced than it actually is. While it is true that networks like Facebook, YouTube and Myspace (as well as blogging platforms) *can* be accessed from Cuba, many options to do so are difficult and often very expensive (Perez 2011).<sup>xv</sup>

*A commercial hip-hop endeavor: Doble Filo*

Cuban hip-hop artists are, in general, unable to market their music using these networks. In contrast, American artists and their record labels in the United States have standardized the utilization of these networks for marketing to the masses. One popular Cuban musical group that exists as an exception is the hip-hop duo Doble Filo: a group that effectively uses social media marketing in defiance of Cuba's censorship laws.

Doble Filo formed in 1996 in Havana, and consists of the duo Yrak Saenz and Edgardo Gonzales.<sup>xvi</sup> They work with the Cuban Rap Agency, the government-run program that manages the country's official record label and the country's official hip-hop magazine, *Movimiento*. Because of their relationship with the Cuban Rap Agency, Doble Filo has national endorsement in Cuba. However, they, unlike many other Cuban hip-hop groups, utilize social media networks like Facebook and YouTube to promote international shows and upcoming album releases (released through both the Cuban Rap Agency and the American label Emetrece Productions)(Boone 2011). Due to their international visibility, they have been able to play shows with exceptionally popular American artists such as Kanye West and the Roots. They have been hailed for the quality of their lyrics: "Doble Filo aims to improve social conditions by encouraging listeners to find themselves. The members veer away from lyrics that advocate violence or belittle women. Their main philosophy is avoiding negativity"(Varela 2011). Their Facebook page states that, "in the musical production they mainly use rhythmic hooks produced by Edgardo, with influences of Cuban popular and traditional music, rock, rhythm & blues, drum and bass, and other contemporary musical genres" (Facebook, Doble Filo 2011).

They, unlike many Cuban groups, are capable of working in the United States, playing shows in Miami facilitated by various music programs. This is due, in part to Yrak Saenz' travel capabilities because of his marriage to Beth Boone, the Artistic and Executive Director of the Miami Light Project, an organization that showcases Cuban art and music groups in Florida. Doble Filo has played a several shows in the United States commissioned by this organization (Boone 2011).

Doble Filo has their own Myspace page and a Facebook page (as well as a separate Facebook page for each member), and use these platforms to publicize shows



and upcoming releases, as American hip-hop artists would. The official “DOBLE FILO” page has 1,181 likes; while a small number by American artist standards, this number is not so small considering the miniscule number of Facebook users in Cuba. Doble Filo uses their Facebook to promote upcoming shows, music videos, and television appearances:

“DOBLE FILO together with other artists this Sunday at Teatro Lazaro Peña. Show starts at 9pm!”<sup>xvii</sup>

“A night with Doble Filo  
Presented by Crazy Hood Film Academy  
Documented, Edited and Filmed by Garcia  
Produced by DJ EFN”<sup>xviii</sup>

“Remember we are in the Super Concert Celebrating 10 years of CUERDA VIVA aight!!” (Facebook, Doble Filo 2011)<sup>xix</sup>

Doble Filo is extremely prolific with Facebook postings with roughly 40 individual postings in July 2011 alone promoting television appearances, music videos, new releases as well as re-sharing their own official Facebook page.<sup>xx</sup> They have also been publicizing the release of their new 2011 album *Despierta*.

#### *An Underground Presence: Los Aldeanos*

In the course of my research, I found it imperative to realize the dualistic nature of Cuban hip-hop: a group is either considered underground or commercial; there is little grey area in this respect. Doble Filo is considered a more commercial group in Cuba because of their relationship with the Cuban Rap Agency; they might be considered as a group with more income because they are signed to the national label, but Geoffrey Baker’s 2011 ethnographic work on the topic revealed that some underground groups, like Los Aldeanos, generate an income working as independent artists (Baker 2005).

Los Aldeanos formed in 2003 and consists of members Aldo Rodríguez Baquero, and Bian “El B” Rodríguez Gala. The group has been lauded for their lyrical creativity and their albums’ high production value, despite being unsigned (Facebook, Los Aldeanos 2011). Their style is also described as “aggressively blast[ing] Cuba’s shortcomings with often crude street language” (Tamayo 2011) and as generating a “radical discourse”<sup>xxi</sup> that is critical of Cuban institutions (Mariol 2010). However, Los

Aldeanos, in a biography on Facebook, draw attention to the fact that the group is not rich, despite having skills comparable to their rich and famous rap counterparts in America (Facebook, Los Aldeanos Fan Page 2011). However, their internet presence is still more impressive. In addition to having a strong Facebook following throughout fan-created pages and possibly a label or personally created Facebook artist page, their YouTube profile is also impressive. It has a total of about 1,200 profile views and 19,400 video plays as of October 2011, despite being created only a few months ago in May 2011 (YouTube, “Los Aldeanos – Official Channel” 2011). However, this internet presence may not have been established by a member of Los Aldeanos. In Mayckell Pedrero Mariol’s 2010 documentary *Revolution*, Los Aldeanos member El B and Emetrece Productions’<sup>xxii</sup> Melisa Riviere discuss Los Aldeanos internet *non*-presence. In the documentary, El B recalled:

“Once this guy came up to us and said, ‘Brothers, so you guys have any idea how much money you are losing because of the internet?’ And there is this guy somewhere that is administrating a webpage of us, and we have no idea who he is.” (Mariol 2010)

Melisa Riviere, the group’s international representative and head of Emetrece Productions, also noted that the lack of international representation is why there are so many fans posing as Los Aldeanos across the web and within social media networks (Mariol 2010). The problem with this is best described by El B when he stated, “And they’re over there, making money with our tracks, while we are here, working on our music, and not in control” (Mariol 2010). It appears, however, that the group has been reprimanded for their computer usage: in 2009, Los Aldeanos member Aldo Baquero was arrested for “illegal possession of a computer,” as reported by Generación Y blogger Yoani Sanchez (Cuba Encuentro 2011).<sup>xxiii</sup> While this computer was not being used for social media, the seizing of Aldo’s computer in itself speaks to the state’s discomfort with independent artists’ computer usage.

Emetrece Productions, an American independent label releasing Doble Filo’s new album *Despierta* as well as many other Cuban artist’s albums outside of Cuba is noteworthy; although the business name is registered in Minnesota, the physical location of the label is in Puerto Rico. This is probably because the location ensures a better proximity to the base of their artist’s location and repertoire and a closer connection to

their fan base. Their marketing tactics are quite creative; in an online interview with me, Emetrece's producer described one method of music and video circulation the label employs:

"I uploaded the video clip to a hidden Internet location from the United States before departing for Havana. I requested allied artists, bloggers and on-line magazines to help us diffuse the link upon receipt of a "release" email. On the day of the release I sent the allies the secret cyber location of the link (which incidentally was shut down by US officials three days later). 5,000 copies were burned onto DVD and with the help of local organizers we put a large bed sheet with a projector up for its viewing in a reclusive artists gallery in downtown Havana. The space designated for the showing and neighboring rooftops were covered with audiences to watch. We received nearly 10,000 downloads on-line during the three days the link was available. Today the video has received over 300,000 views on line via YouTube and has exponentially been reproduced in the streets of Havana" (Riviere 2011).

This shows the mixture of street and online marketing that is crucial to music marketing in Cuba. Emetrece Productions is responsible for selling digital copies of the recent albums by Doble Filo, Los Aldeanos and others on iTunes; I found this quite interesting considering the artist's likely inability to access iTunes, and it brings me to wonder how much of a profit the artists themselves receive from these sales. Emetrece's mission statement on their website<sup>xxiv</sup> reads:

The mission of Emetrece Productions is to bridge education with entertainment, using hip-hop as a tool for reflection on social, political, racial, gendered and class divisions, in order to further unity amongst diverse communities (Emetrece Productions).

In addition, a second statement on their website in translated Spanish reads:

The work of Emetrece Productions in Cuba is a non-profit, in solidarity with the island hip-hop movement. We don't accept any financial assistance from the government, nor do we associate with any organizations with political agenda. Our promise is the education and creation of music dialogues between artists and the community using hip-hop as a tool to do so (Emetrece Productions 2011).

The statement outlining Emetrece's denial of governmental ties is almost certainly a reference to the Cuban government's record label, which is completely financed by the Cuban government.

Many artists fault the state-run label for its silencing quality; they believe that the capacity to revolutionize is lost when the artists are told what they can and cannot say. Papá Humbertico, an underground Cuban artist who denied joining the Cuban Rap

Agency's label in favor of avoiding censorship restrictions, best explained his decision when he stated, "When you join the Agency you can get paid for your performances. But for me it's only another way of controlling us" (Rodriguez 2010). El B, in conjunction with Humbertico, claims that not only does the Cuban Rap Agency not do anything for the rappers or the hip-hop movement as a whole, but that "those who did make a record had to pay for the recording themselves" (Mariol 2010). If this is the case, it seems most likely that the label does very little for the artists in terms of new media marketing; those that utilize networks like Facebook and YouTube are left to their own means to do so.

### *Conclusion*

The state of the internet in Cuba is rapidly changing. With the activation of the underground internet cable from Venezuela (Whitefield 2011), the internet will have a new role in the identity of Cuba, and might potentially establish Cuban artists' presence globally. Currently, the clash between censorship barriers and the Cuban government's manipulation of recording and sound materials maintain a wall artists are unable to permeate. Artists have a ghostly presence in cyberspace in that they often have little control in the web pages representing them. The global success of these artists is left on the shoulders of their fans and business partners abroad who are able to access the internet frequently and build their global fan base. The result is a disconnect between the externally-managed image of a group as portrayed by these pages and the actual group as it exists. Misplaced royalties go to third parties taking advantage of these groups' lack of connectivity rather than the artists themselves (La Fabri-K 2004).

I hit many walls during the course of this project; I was often forced to abandon my research tactics because of censorship and privacy law walls. In a similar manner, Cuban artists exist on the other side of that wall. There is a division between the world of online social media marketing and the world of Cuban hip-hop; one that only allows a small trickle of information to pass through to the connected world.

My research also provokes the important questions: how important is it for an artist's sustainability to use these networks? What are the implications if they don't? I believe we have begun a new chapter of hip-hop and music marketing; a successful artist depends on these networks for relevancy and viability. Until Cuban artists are able to

manage their own projected international image and promote their own albums in competition with hip-hop groups worldwide, they cannot reach their full potential as successful international artists.

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## Notes

<sup>i</sup> The best way for Cubans to access American social networks like Facebook, YouTube and Myspace is from a hotel or internet café (Boone). Some are also able to update their Twitter feed by sending SMS text messages to their registered account.

<sup>ii</sup> This statement was made by Cuba's Minister of Culture, Abel Prieto in 1998 (Wunderlich).

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<sup>iii</sup> Hip-hop supergroup consisting of Obsesión (Majda and Alexey Rodriguez) and Doble Filo (Edgar González and Yrak Saenz)

<sup>iv</sup> Filmed for the documentary *La Fabri-K: The Cuban Hip-Hop Factory*.

<sup>v</sup> El Cartel consists of artists Soandry, Magyori and Mikki Flow.

<sup>vi</sup> Quote from the documentary *East of Havana*.

<sup>vii</sup> Melisa Riviere states that online distribution of music and video in Cuba is difficult because: “the act of disseminating the productions itself challenge[s] the Cuban firewall of isolation that restricts access to the Internet as there is no broadband in Cuba.”

<sup>viii</sup> Posada was later acquitted of all charges.

<sup>ix</sup> Located at <http://www.facebook.com/cubadebate>.

<sup>x</sup> Cubadebate’s account on YouTube is still suspended. A search for their page results in an error page stating: “This account has been suspended due to multiple or severe violations of YouTube's Copyright Policy.”

<sup>xi</sup> Fans based outside of Cuba could have potentially created these pages.

<sup>xii</sup> This conclusion was reached because of the quality of some postings on their wall; there are pictures on Anónimo Consejo’s Facebook that include postings to an album titled “Mobile Uploads.” In general, photos posted to an album of this title are uploaded directly from a user’s phone.

<sup>xiii</sup> Being based outside of Cuba greatens the capability for Cuban groups to regularly access and manage their Social networks.

<sup>xiv</sup> Greenhow, Robelia and Hughes state the importance of research within social networks like MySpace, Facebook and blogs to promote what he calls *media literacy*: “Such opportunities might promote potentially richer opportunities to make learning more personally meaningful, collaborative, and socially relevant” (249).

<sup>xv</sup> One such way to access these networks is by using computers with internet in Havana hotels. They often charge a nominal fee to use, which is usually too expensive for an average Cuban’s income.

<sup>xvi</sup> With recent addition of DJ Alain Medina.



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<sup>xvii</sup> Translated from Spanish. Teatro Lazaro Peña is located in Havana, Cuba. This posting was on September 18, 2011.

<sup>xviii</sup> Accompanies a video. This link was posted on September 18, 2011.

<sup>xix</sup> This status was posted on September 15, 2011. VIVA CUERDA is a Cuban television show showcasing young musicians.

<sup>xx</sup> Doble Filo also uses their social network pages to directly communicate with their fans when they are able (Riviere).

<sup>xxi</sup> Exact quote from Roberto Zurbano, essayist and cultural critic from the documentary *Revolution* (2010).

<sup>xxii</sup> Emetrece Productions, headed by Melisa Riviere, internationally release some Cuban hip-hop artists' work. They are based in Puerto Rico.

<sup>xxiii</sup> The news was reported through her Twitter page, @yoanisanchez.

<sup>xxiv</sup> <http://www.emetreceproductions.com/>