

From Cuba with Love

The Story of a Peter Pan Kid

Written and Performed by
Manuel Prestamo, Ph.D.



With currently unfolding world events, this is the timely riveting story of a Peter Pan Kid - a 9 year old “kid” sent to the US by his parents to avoid being sent to Russia by Fidel. In the minds of those parents, the kids never grew old. Operation “Peter Pan” was a mass exodus of over 14,000 unaccompanied Cuban minors to the US (1960-1962). The kids got letters from their parents in Cuba but lived for years without their parents and many went on to accomplish great things. Father Bryan O. Walsh of the Catholic Welfare Bureau created the program to provide air transportation to the United States for Cuban children and then care for them. This is the story of one such “kid” and what it was like to come to America and navigate the world of the performing arts to become an American Cultural Ambassador for the US State Department and earn a Ph.D. at NYU. There are poignant, tearful, terrifying, and comical peaks and valleys. Hear Dr. Manuel Prestamo tell you his story of a Peter Pan Kid.

Operation Peter Pan was born of fear and the human instinct to protect children.

Luisa Yanez, (May 14, 20019), Miami Herald

*The timing is perfect for what is happening here in America and Ukraine.
It brings tears to your eyes and pride to your heart to see someone from a challenging
situation able to turn their lives into a success story.*

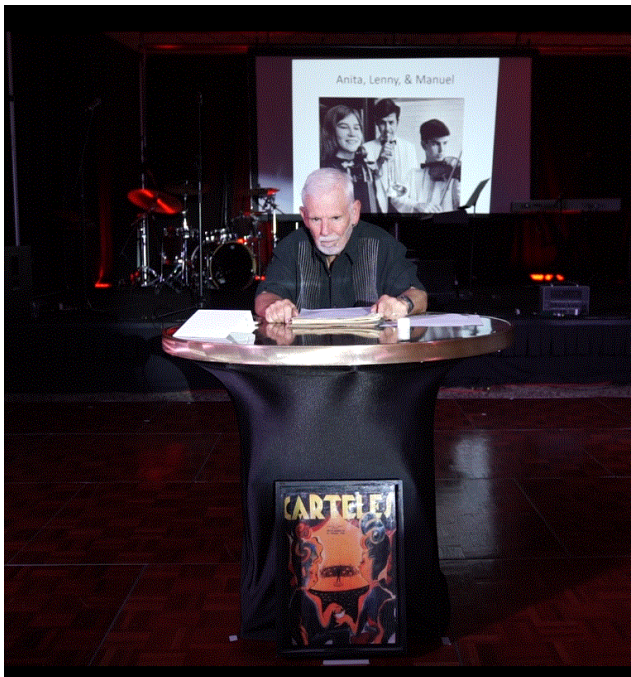
Jimmy Chapel, Singer and Entertainer

National Association of Latino Arts and Culture Award 2023

Presented by Producers Inc, 813-988-8333, <https://www.producersinc.com/>, Booth 207

Manuel Prestamo

Sent to the United States on January 6, 1961 by his parents at the age of 9, Manuel had the good fortune to at least get brought out to the United States by his aunt. Nevertheless, in the intervening years before his mother, sister, and grandmother were able to get out and come to the United States his father had passed away. His early years here were difficult ones as his aunt's brother was very opposed to encouraging Manuel's interest in the arts and Manuel was forced to go out to a barn to practice and study violin. He progressed quickly and went to the university at the age of 16 on a full scholarship. By the time he was 21 he had earned a Ph.D. from NYU and become a college professor. He earned his living as a symphony orchestra conductor and became recognized for his work with youth orchestras. But, his love of acting as a child never left him and he sought out acting opportunities and played roles such as that of the King in *Once Upon a Mattress*, while serving as Dean of Arts and Humanities at Oklahoma Community College. When immigrant children were being separated from their parents during the Trump years, Manuel felt compelled to tell "his" story in support of those children. With the current exodus and the separation of families in Ukraine, this recurring immigrant theme is as poignant and relevant today as it was in 1961. In addition, Manuel's estrangement from his parents was also a direct result of Russia's influence on Cuba during the 1960's. The show, *The Story of a Peter Pan Kid*, had its premiere in October of 2019 in a sold out showcase in Orlando which got a standing ovation and the show was immediately booked the next morning. With an expansive record of accomplishments, including winning the Mary Beth Treen Award from South Arts, and 2 Fulbright Scholar Appointments, Manuel's services and expertise as a performing artist, administrator and educator have been utilized by organizations for some 40 years in the United States, Austria, Germany, Spain, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Israel, Chile, Columbia, Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Uruguay, Argentina, Israel, and the Far East



*In his one-man show, **From Cuba with Love - The Story of a Peter Pan Kid**, Manuel Prestamo does a wonderful job helping us feel what it must have been like for him as a young boy taken from his homeland and re-settled in Florida, with his aunt. At first, they thought it was just a temporary move, sort of like a long, strange vacation. When would they return to Havana? When would Manuel see his family again? But it ended up being a change for life. Prestamo was part of the Operation Peter Pan program, created by the Catholic Church and the U.S. State Department to rescue families from Cuba. Ironic that the program and Prestamo's one-man show is called "The Story of a Peter Pan Kid." Peter Pan was a lifelong, playful boy. Prestamo's boyhood was cut short as he dealt with the very adult feelings of loss and longing.*

Vicki Quade, Nuns4Fun

FROM CUBA WITH LOVE – THE STORY OF A PETER PAN KID

Tech Sheet

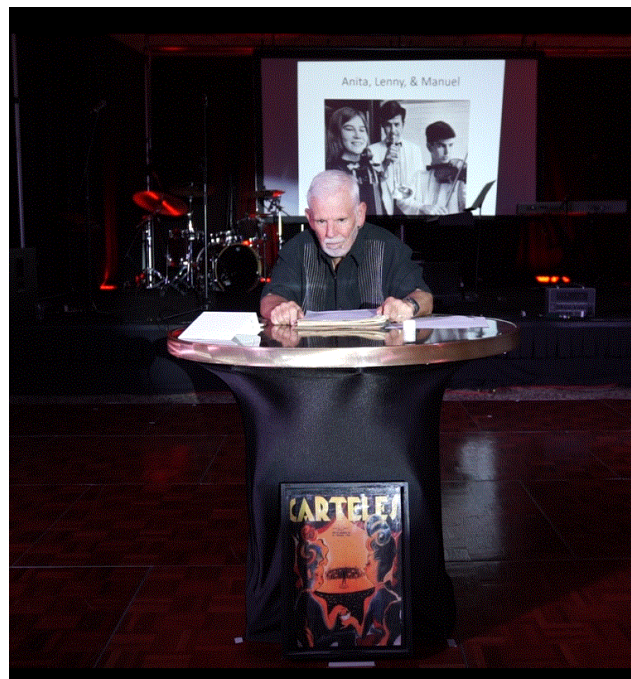
FROM CUBA WITH LOVE – THE STORY OF A PETER PAN KID requires minimal technical requirements:

Set: Ideal minimum performing space required is 12' deep x 24' wide, but tell us what you have and we will make it work. Presenter is asked to provide a large projection screen or video wall and good quality projector. Slides and music for the show will be provided on a USB as a PowerPoint presentation along with a printed script marked with each slide change. A projector operator is provided by the artist. However, a projector operator could be provided by presenter to keep travel and hotel costs to a minimum. However, that will require a longer sound check. Presenter is also asked to provide a lavalier microphone and amplification system, at least one small (preferably old looking) desk and comfortable easy chair. If available an area rug and a lamp.

Lighting: A stage wash is all that is required with the desk and chair somewhat brighter than the rest of the stage. Desk top must be sufficiently bright to read documents on it. Other than bringing the house to half and stage lights up to start the show, there are no cues or effects thereafter, except for the slides. Screen projections should be very bright and large...ideally not on a portable screen.

Sound: Speaker system for music on the slide show and a single lavalier mic and corresponding amplification is all that is needed.

Set-up: 30 minutes is adequate for set-up and for strike. Additional 30 minutes for tech rehearsal to set sound levels and run through the slides and slide cues.



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Additional Resources:

Webpages:

NALAC: <https://www.nalac.org/members/manuel-prestamo/?fbclid=IwAR0x3SFvnkMeUe-TXOSJL9EBafoEC7to0hESFwYSVUOITrs07Kjo3-Zv9Bo>

Producers Inc: <https://www.producersinc.com/attractions-1/from-cuba-with-love>

PMI: http://www.pmiarts.com/index_files/FromCubawithLove.htm

Downloadable High Res Photos:

http://www.pmiarts.com/index_files/From_Cuba_with_Love_PHOTOS.htm

Manuel Prestamo – Artist Bio:

http://www.pmiarts.com/FromCuba/Manuel_Prestamo%20-%20ActorBio.pdf

Tech Rider (or Sheet):

http://www.pmiarts.com/FromCuba/FromCuba_TechRider2021.pdf

Poster / Flyer:

http://www.pmiarts.com/FromCuba/FromCuba_Poster-Flyer.pdf

VIDEO SHOWCASE: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOiRyJVTHK4>

From Cuba with Love is a moving story of our times. It's a must see for today's generation to explore the little-known history of Peter Pan kids. Manuel's stirring narration of his life story, which moves from Cuba to Miami, is a testament to resilience, culture and the enduring bond of family love. The performance I attended touched the heart of every audience member and earned a standing ovation. I highly recommend this show to all audiences.

Vitaly Beckman, An Evening of Wonders, Vancouver, Canada