

Cuba Connections: Key West—Tampa—Miami, 1870 to 1945

By Paula Harper

Dr. Paula Harper is associate professor of modern art history at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida. She is the author of a book on Honoré Daumier, co-author of a critical biography of Camille Pissarro, and has also published numerous articles and catalogue essays on twentieth-century art.

A

pattern of connections between Cuba and South Florida began to form more than one hundred years ago, based on projects and needs that remain central to the relationship: industry and commerce, political and economic migrations, travel and tourism. Elements of the pattern can be seen in architecture and advertising of the era, made visible in the public buildings designed by Cuban architects for South Florida and in cigar and travel advertising by both Cuban and Anglo-American illustrators. In contrast to the private arts of personal revelation, these public arts communicated and strengthened the popular perceptions of each community and its identity.

Cubans had begun their exodus to Key West at the outbreak of the Ten Years' War (1868–1878), the first round of the struggle for independence from Spain that ended in victory in 1898. At the beginning of the war, thousands of Cubans fled northward, establishing exile communities in the United States that became active in supporting the independence movement. Many émigrés from the Havana elite moved to New York. In contrast, Key West attracted Cubans with middle- and working-class backgrounds.¹

These Cubans were put to work in the cigar industry organized in Key West by Don Vicente Martínez Ybor (1818–1896). Martínez Ybor, although Spanish by birth, supported the cause of separation from Spain and fled Cuba in 1869 to escape a warrant for his arrest. He quickly reestablished himself in Key West, employing hundreds of workers in his factory, producing the same brand of cigars he had made famous in Havana, El Príncipe de Gales (Prince of Wales). Martínez Ybor understood his male market and appealed to them with handsome cigar box labels and bands featuring a portrait of the future Edward VII of Great Britain, a famous smoker, bon vivant, and man of distinction. By the mid-1870s Key West had forty-five cigar factories, of varying sizes, employing about fourteen hundred workers, who were turning out twenty-five million cigars a year. The industry was buoyed by low United States tariffs on the importation of tobacco leaf and by the cheap émigré labor pool.² By 1873 Cubans in Key West were the majority of the population.³ In 1875 Key West, then the

1. Gerald E. Poyo, "Key West and the Cuban 'Ten Years' War," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 57 (January 1979): 289.
2. Miguel A. Bretos, *Cuba and Florida: Exploration of a Historic Connection, 1539–1991*, exhibition catalogue (Miami: Historical Association of Southern Florida, 1991), 62.
3. U. S. Bureau of the Census figures, quoted by Poyo, "Key West," 290.



Fig. 1. Francisco Centurión, San Carlos Institute, Key West, Florida, 1924. Photograph of restored building by Margarita A. Khuly, AIA, ca. 1990.

second largest city in Florida, elected a Cuban mayor, Carlos Manuel de Céspedes (1840–1915), son and namesake of the 1868 leader of the rebellion against Spain.⁴

The San Carlos Institute in Key West, one of the examples of Cuban architecture in South Florida, is a monument to the community identity of the Cuban cigar workers who settled there in reaction to changing political and economic realities at home. Through all incarnations it remained devoted to its initial political and social goals: promotion of Cuban cultural values, preservation of the Spanish language, and support of democratic ideals.

The first San Carlos Institute, a small wooden structure on Anne Street, was founded in 1871. It was named La Sociedad de Recreo e Instrucción San Carlos after Havana's Seminario de San Carlos, noted for academic excellence and support of independence from Spain among its graduates, and in honor of Carlos Manuel de Céspedes Sr. (1819–1874). A second and larger structure was built on Fleming Street in 1874, funded by contributions from the cigar workers whose children were educated there. When it burned to the ground in the great fire of 1886 that destroyed much of Key West, the Cuban community purchased a lot fronting Duval Street and rebuilt its beloved San Carlos again in the heart of Key West. The new building was a three-story Victorian timber structure; its only tropical feature was an arcade spanning the sidewalk at ground level. When José Martí came to Key West at the invitation of the cigar workers in 1891, during his eloquent efforts to unify Cuban exiles in the fight for independence from Spain, it was this building that he visited.

Another disaster struck the San Carlos in 1919 when a hurricane leveled the already dilapidated structure. Once more, a successful campaign was mounted to rebuild it, resulting in the fifth incarnation of the San Carlos Institute, which reopened in 1924. This is the building that now stands on Duval Street, recently and lovingly restored (fig. 1).⁵

The 1924 San Carlos Institute was built with the help of the government of Cuba. In June 1919 (before the September hurricane that sealed the fate of the old building) the president of Cuba, Mario García-Menocal, signed the San Carlos Act. Along with a grant of up to one hundred thousand *pesos*, it specified that a “stone building suitable to house the club, the school and the offices of the Cuban consulate be erected, provided that the San Carlos corporation relinquish title to the Cuban government.”⁶ In 1923 President Alfredo Zayas's administration in Havana commissioned a Cuban architect, Francisco Centurión y Maceo, a graduate of the University of Havana, to design the building. Centurión was well connected in government circles and had been commissioned to build the Cuban pavilion at the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco (fig. 2). For Key West he designed a more restrained version of the Cuban Baroque, inspired by public buildings in Havana like the Palace of the Captains General. The San Carlos Institute echoed this building in the treatment of the pilasters and window surrounds, and in the three bays of the

4 Bretos, *Cuba*, 69–72; Francisco Xavier de Santa Cruz, *Historia de familias cubanas* (Havana: Editorial Hércules, 1942), 3:120.

5. The architectural firm of Rodríguez-Khuly-Quiroga was chosen by the State of Florida (which had allocated one million dollars in the form of a general revenue grant in 1986) to carry out the restoration. A statewide effort to raise additional funds was led by Rafael A. Peñalver Jr., a Miami attorney. The six-year project was completed by architects Jorge and Margarita Khuly.

6. Bretos, *Cuba*, 107.

Fig. 2. Francisco Centurión, Cuban pavilion at the Panama-Pacific International Exposition, San Francisco, California, 1915. From Frank Morton Todd, *The Story of the Exposition: Being the Official History of the International Celebration Held at San Francisco in 1915 to Commemorate the Discovery of the Pacific Ocean and the Construction of the Panama Canal* (New York: G. P. Putnam, 1921), 3:259. The Mitchell Wolfson Jr. Collection, The Wolfsonian, Miami Beach, Florida, and Genoa, Italy.



facade. But Centurión more probably drew his inspiration from a type of public architecture in Havana rather than from any single structure. His version of the European Baroque retained its undulations, complex pediments and cornices, and multiplications of engaged columns, with the addition of a Mediterranean touch of ornamental wrought iron. This style properly projected the symbolic function of the building, connecting it to the history and traditions of Cuba and ultimately to the intimate ties of Cuba with European civilization. At a time when civilization in South Florida was fairly rudimentary, the splendor of the San Carlos Institute can hardly have failed to make its point.⁷

But already the San Carlos had begun to change from a working institution to a symbolic one; by 1924 the tobacco industry had largely moved from Key West to Tampa and had begun to decline even there. When the handsome restoration of the San Carlos Institute opened on 3 January 1992, it was described in its official literature as a “showcase of Cuban history and architecture that enshrines the ideals and aspirations of the Cuban people.” It had become a museum and a memorial to the community of Cuban workers that José Martí visited when the building was still a meeting place and not yet a monument.

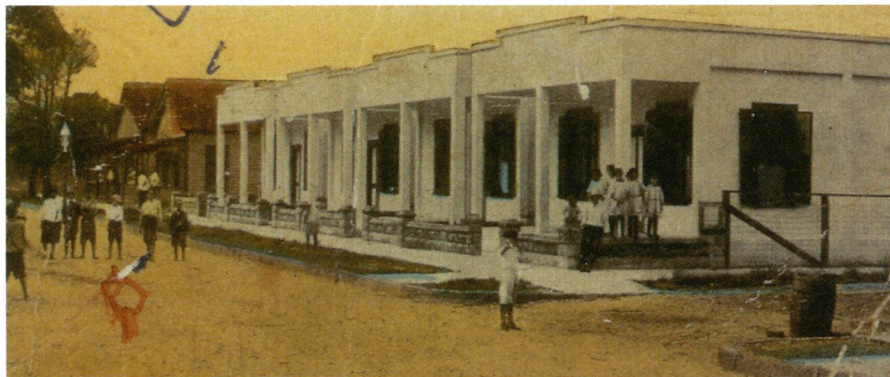
One other historic public building designed and built by Cubans to represent their country stands in South Florida. The Villa Paula, built between 1925 and 1926 to house the first Cuban consulate, in Miami, was “totally Cuban in purpose, design, materials, style and workmanship” (fig. 3).⁸ Miami’s first official connection with Cuba was initiated a decade earlier when consular agent Miguel Caballero set up an office at the request of a group of Dade County



Fig. 3. C. Freixa, Villa Paula, Miami, 1925–1926. Historical Association of South Florida, The Miami News Collection .

- 7 Cuban consul Domingo Milord Vázquez inaugurated the facility on 10 October 1924. The son of a cigar manufacturer, he moved with his family to Key West at age four and attended the San Carlos Institute as a child. The consulate remained in operation until January 1961, when the United States broke relations with Cuba.
- 8 Miguel A. Bretos, “A Cuban Suburban Mansion in Miami’s Little Haiti,” *Cuban Heritage* (Summer 1987): 38.

Fig. 4. Workers' houses in Ybor City, postcard, ca. 1911. University of South Florida, Campus Library, Special Collections Department, Tampa, Florida.



lumber merchants who traded with Cuba. In the 1910s Miami was still a small town surrounded by scrub and swamp, but after World War One it grew quickly. In 1925 the business-oriented administration of Gerardo Machado in Havana realized Miami's potential commercial importance and decided to upgrade Cuba's official presence to a full-fledged consulate. Machado ordered the Pensacola consulate closed and its consul, Jorge Ponce, to Miami to oversee construction, by Cuban workmen and artisans, of the new consulate's offices and residence, in what was then an undeveloped area along North Miami Avenue.⁹ Ponce remained until July 1926 when his successor arrived, Domingo Milord y Vázquez, who had previously served in Key West. The elegant new consulate was named for his wife, Paula.

The style of the Villa Paula, like that of the San Carlos Institute, sent a message about the cosmopolitan civilization enjoyed by Cuba in contrast to the relatively provincial tastes of Miami. The structure, designed by the Havana architect C. Freixa, was a Neoclassical villa showing French influence in its delicacy of scale and refinement of detail. This style, cradled in the *École des Beaux-Arts* of Paris, had influenced architects from the nineteenth century onwards and shaped buildings in many important cities, including New York and Havana. The Villa Paula was a miniaturization of the style, similar to many upper-middle-class homes in residential areas of Havana built during the prosperous first decades of the twentieth century. A one-story building with eighteen-foot ceilings, its rooms open on each side of a long central hallway that runs from front to back. The hallway, parlors, and dining room are still graced with the original carved and gilded chandeliers, the floors are of Cuban hydraulic tile,¹⁰ and the tall doors are Cuban mahogany topped with hinged transoms. A delicate pavilion stands in the walled back garden. The pavilion repeats the design of the villa's front portico, with a balustraded roof, dentillated cornice, and supporting corner piers flanked by Corinthian columns. The symbolic presence of Cuba in Miami, as projected by the elegant architecture of its consulate, was relatively brief. Although the building survived the devastating hurricane of 1926, the Depression hit Cuba severely and the Miami consulate was closed in 1930.

9. The Villa Paula is now in the crowded section of Miami called Little Haiti, at 5811 North Miami Avenue, and houses the offices of a Haitian physician, Dr. Lucien Albert.

10. Hydraulic tiles are thin square slabs of pressed tinted cement, twenty centimeters to a side, often carrying a pattern of different colors. The system was invented in the nineteenth century and was used extensively in Europe as well as in some important buildings in the United States, such as the Federal Capitol and the old State, War and Navy Building (presently the Executive Office Building). Hydraulic tile is the standard material for floors in Cuba.

A distant and surprising echo of this Cuban adaptation of the Neoclassical style is seen in a rare photograph of a group of houses built for Cuban workers in the cigar-manufacturing community of Ybor City in Tampa (fig. 4). The houses, seen in a pre-1911 postcard, are similar to many surviving today in working-class neighborhoods in Havana. They retain the basic image of the Neoclassical villas enjoyed by the more prosperous classes but simplify the porticoes, columns, and cornices. The Ybor City architect, if any, is unknown; the structures were most probably designed and erected by local building contractors.

The story of Ybor City as an instance of a planned “company town,” perhaps influenced by the example of George M. Pullman’s planned industrial community outside of Chicago and various southern mill towns, again features Don Vicente Martínez Ybor of Havana and Key West in a leading role.¹¹ In 1884 Martínez Ybor and another cigar tycoon, Ignacio Sánchez y Haya, took a trip to Tampa at the urging of a young Spanish entrepreneur and engineer, Gavino Gutiérrez. The two cigar makers were eager to expand their industry, which was impossible in Key West because of the lack of a fresh water supply, the absence of land transport (the railroad came only in 1912), and their militant and sometimes mercurial Cuban labor force. Strikes and work stoppages were commonplace. From the viewpoint of their employers, the ease with which workers could move back and forth between Key West and Cuba, only ninety miles away, made it more difficult to control them. Tampa offered Henry B. Plant’s system of steamships and railroads (extended that very year from Jacksonville to Tampa) and an important advantage: the “city fathers pledged to aid [underwrite] capital should labor agitation threaten investment, using the police if necessary.”¹²

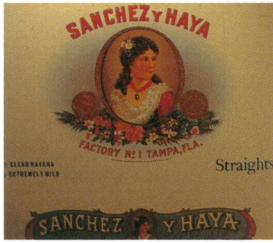


Fig. 5. Ybor City. Early workers' houses located on 17th Avenue between 15th and 16th Streets, photograph ca. 1960. University of South Florida, Campus Library, Special Collections Department, Tampa, Florida.

In 1885 Martínez Ybor and his Cuban business associate, Eduardo Manrara, began to purchase land northeast of downtown Tampa — at that time a sleepy, southern coastal town, cleared from the mud and scrub, plagued by alligators and insects. Beginning with 40 acres they continued to buy until 111 acres were consolidated. Gavino Gutiérrez, trained as a civil engineer, was hired to plat the area in a grid of numbered streets and avenues (Ybor City remains the only part of Tampa where the streets are designated numerically) and to oversee the design and construction of the factory and the houses of the workers (fig. 5).¹³ Martínez Ybor also hired a local building contractor and architect, C.E. Purcell, to erect a two-story factory building on Seventh Avenue between Twelfth and Fifteenth Streets, plus fifty small wooden houses as homes for workers.¹⁴

To persuade workers and other manufacturers to settle in this uninviting wilderness, Don Vicente offered workers inexpensive homes on an easy-payment plan and offered fellow cigar tycoons free ten-year leases on land and new factories built to their specifications. In return these firms guaranteed to manufacture a quota of cigars and furnish a fixed number of workers who would rent, or preferably buy, houses from their benefactors.¹⁵ The strategy worked.

11. Gary R. Mormino and George E. Pozzetta, *The Immigrant World of Ybor City* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1987), 65.
12. *Ibid.*, 64.
13. Jesse L. Keene, “Gavino Gutiérrez and His Contributions to Tampa,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 36 (July 1957): 39.
14. José Rivero Muñoz, “The Ybor City Story 1885–1954,” a translation by Eustasio Fernández and Henry Beltrán of “Los cubanos en Tampa,” *Revista Bimestre Cubana* 74 (1958): 5–40, at the Otto G. Richter Library, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.
15. Mormino and Pozzetta, *The Immigrant*, 67.



**Fig. 6. Cigar box label,
Sánchez y Haya Factory No. 1,
Tampa, Fla. New York Public
Library, Rare Books Division,
Arents Collection.**

About two hundred Cuban cigar workers had arrived by May 1886, via the tri-weekly steamship service to Key West and Havana, to live and work in what was then described as half mining camp and half frontier fort surrounded by palmetto scrubland, swamps, and pineflats. “Inhabitants had to wear goggles to keep the gnats out of their eyes.”¹⁶ The workers from Havana, used to urban life, suffered most. Don Vicente tried to keep them happy with bonuses and parties in addition to the lure of owning their own homes. Ironically, because of a strike by Cuban workers protesting the hiring of a Spanish bookkeeper, the first cigar produced in Ybor City was not rolled at the Martínez Ybor factory — a three-story building with room for eight hundred workers — but at the factory of his friend and competitor, Ignacio Sánchez y Haya. A cigar box label documents the fact that the Sánchez y Haya factory was “No. 1, Tampa, Fla.” (fig. 6).

Cigar box labels are now recognized as precious examples in the history of advertising art. The Sánchez y Haya label is an example of the chromolithography developed first in Cuba during the mid-nineteenth century in response to the demands of tobacco merchandising. Lithography shops quickly sprang up in Ybor City to service the new industry, drawing on established skills, formats, and subject matter. The Sánchez y Haya label incorporates the gold embossing developed in the early 1890s and is executed in delicate tints and shadings of color. It shows a young woman, “La Flor de Sánchez y Haya,” dark haired, feminine, and modest. She has flowers in her hair, a cameo at her throat, and ruffles around her shoulders — the perfect model of a lovely *señorita*, chaste and maidenly. The practice of selling cigars with pictures of idealized women was common and designed to appeal to the special interests of the tobacco smoker, in this case a presumably gentlemanly and conservative one, with an admiration for the Latin tradition. The style of the image — realistic and detailed in drawing, tone, and color — is also appropriately traditional.

Tampa flourished with the arrival of the cigar industry. By 1900 Tampa approached Key West in population (15,839 to 17,114) and exceeded it in numbers of factories (129 to 92). Five years later the population had swelled to 30,000, including over 10,000 foreign residents, mostly from Cuba, Spain, and Italy.¹⁷

Each group within the close-knit immigrant community eventually built its own social club and mutual-aid society, reminiscent of the purpose of the San Carlos Institute in Key West. Following the Spanish-American War and Cuban independence, the Cubans in Ybor City founded El Círculo Cubano (Cuban Circle) and raised money to erect their splendid clubhouse, a monumental four-story Beaux-Arts edifice completed in 1918 when membership numbered eight thousand (fig. 7).¹⁸ The Cuban Circle building perfectly fulfills its function as public architecture. In style and size it projects importance, solidity, and tradition; it materializes a desirable image of the political and social solidarity and stability of the Cuban community in Ybor City.

Like the architecture of public buildings, the style of advertising sends a specific message to a targeted audience. The chromolithographs produced in the golden age of the cigar box label, from about 1890 to 1920, are, for the most part, old-fashioned rather than modern, drawing on the tradition of nineteenth-

16. Ibid.

17. Statistics from Mormino and Pozzetta and Rivero Muñoz.

18. Only 165 members remain. The cantina and a small medical clinic continue to operate while funds are raised for restoration of the building.

Fig. 7. Clubhouse of El Círculo Cubano, Ybor City, completed 1918, photograph ca. 1960. University of South Florida, Campus Library, Tampa, Florida. Tony Pizzo Collection.

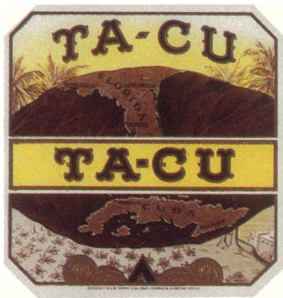


Fig. 8. Cigar box label, TA-CU, for Tampa-Cuba Cigar Company. University of South Florida, Campus Library, Special Collections Department, Tampa, Florida.

century Academic Realism with Victorian-Baroque embellishments.¹⁹ The imagery as well as the style establishes continuity with the past, evoking nostalgic visions of the old country—Europe, Spain, the tranquil Cuban countryside with tobacco plantations, palm trees, and busy workers. A sampling of the cigar box labels from the Tampa factories indicates the range of types.

TA-CU is an unusual logo-like image that shows the mapped peninsula of Florida almost touching Cuba on a tobacco leaf background, the close connection reinforced by the “Tampa-Cuba” brand name (fig. 8). Another combination name, Ricaroma, accompanies a romantic twosome (fig. 9). A handsome Latin, his manliness enriched by his cigar, embraces a buxom young woman who seems spellbound by its aroma. Freud admitted that sometimes a “cigar is only a cigar,” but in this case the sexual symbolism seems intended. The Florida Widow is an idealized portrait of a beautiful Latin lady, surrounded by decorative borders and scenes of Cuba and tobacco plantations (fig. 10). The reference is to those Cuban women who were “widowed” because their husbands were in Florida making money in the cigar industry.

Henry B. Plant’s Tampa Bay Hotel, a “Moorish palace” splendidly appointed and filled with European furnishings, appears in the label for Tampa Life (fig. 11). This image includes scenes of golf, tennis, and swimming and seems as much an advertisement for tourism as it is for cigars.

In the history of advertising art, “luxury goods such as wine and tobacco were the products on which the greatest ingenuity in advertising and presentation of goods was lavished.”²⁰ Tourism is not a commodity like tobacco but it is

19. Joe Davidson, *The Art of the Cigar Box Label* (Secaucus, N.J.: Wellfleet Press, 1989), 10.

20. Renata V. Shaw, “19th Century Tobacco Label Art,” *The Quarterly Journal of the Library of Congress* 28 (April 1971): 77.

**Fig. 9. Cigar box label,
Ricaroma, for Tampa-Cuba
Cigar Company. University of
South Florida, Campus Library,
Special Collections Department,
Tampa, Florida.**



**Fig. 10. Cigar box label, The
Florida Widow. New York
Public Library, Rare Books
Division, Arents Collection.**



Fig. 11. Cigar box label,
Tampa Life. New York Public
Library, Rare Books Division,
The Arents Collection.

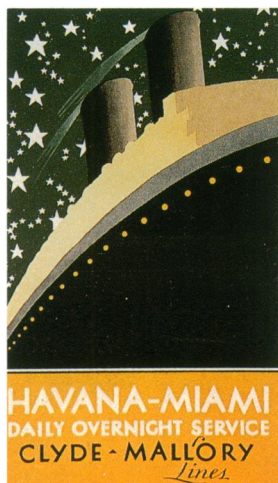


Fig. 12. Cover of pamphlet for
Clyde-Mallory Steamship Lines,
Miami, 1929–1930. The Mitchell
Wolfson Jr. Collection, The
Wolfsonian, Miami Beach,
Florida, and Genoa, Italy.

certainly a luxury, and the advertising associated with it is ingenious. In striking contrast to the cigar box labels, most of the travel ads of the period — both those produced in the United States and in Cuba — are in a distinctly modern mode, abstracted and stylized, influenced by high art, first Art Nouveau and then Art Deco. They target a moneyed, cosmopolitan, leisure class, both men and women, in a style that reflects their self-image as adventurous and innovative.

While working-class Cubans came to Key West and later Tampa for jobs in the cigar industry, upper-class Cubans traveled for pleasure or business to Europe and New York. Prosperous Anglo-Americans traveled to Havana, the “Paris of the Caribbean,” for night life, gambling, water sports, and old world charm. The travel advertisements both reflect and engender popular perceptions of Havana, picturing well-dressed travelers in tropical whites, sleek steamships, attentive waiters, elegant cocktails and food, picturesque peasants, and lively *latinas* in ruffled rumba costumes. Cuba is presented as exotic but at the same time comfortable and familiar, as piquantly foreign but also modern and convenient. A group of images that document travel between South Florida and Cuba demonstrates how the style, as well as the imagery, carries the message.

A pamphlet produced by a United States company to advertise overnight steamship service between Havana and Miami in 1929 projects the romance and glamour of travel with a strikingly simplified graphic design (fig. 12). An equally modish and modern Cuban travel image, signed by Enrique Riverón, graces the January 1932 cover of the Havana periodical *Bohemia* (fig. 13).

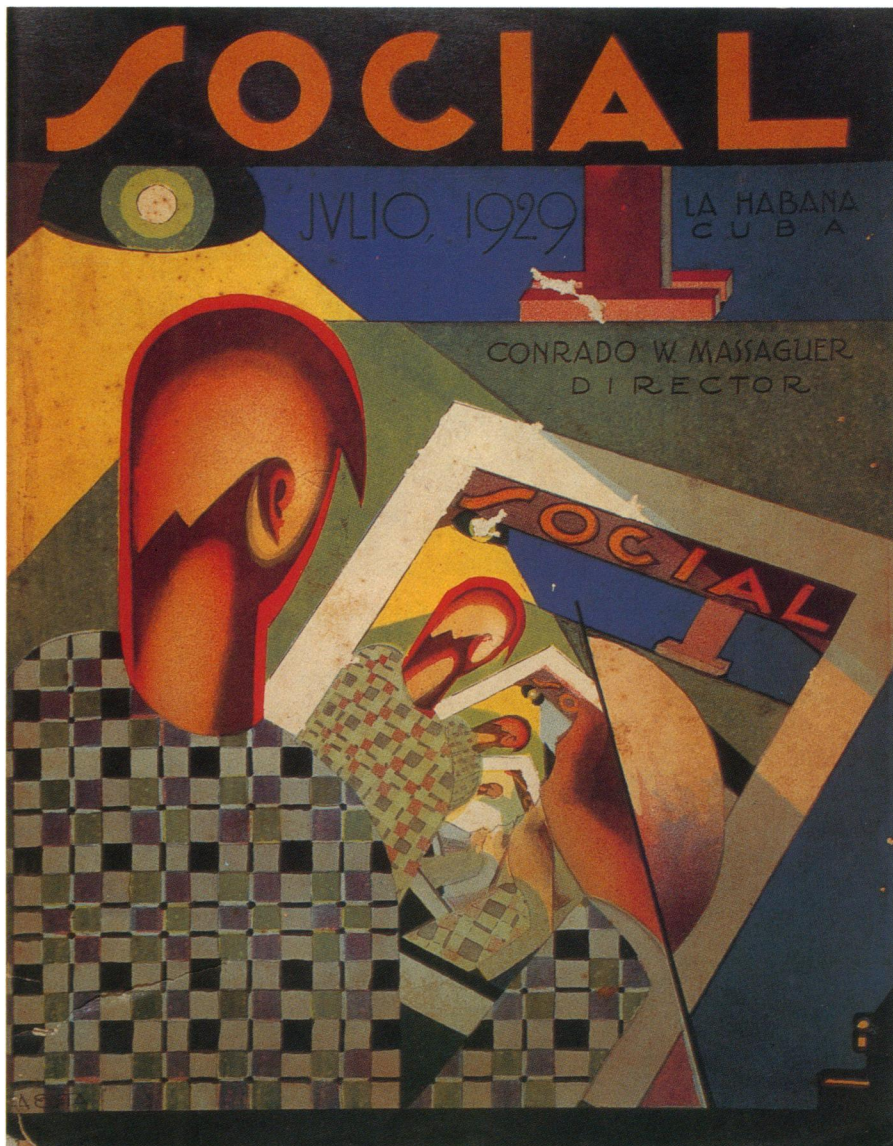
Bohemia, like another Cuban periodical, *Social*, appealed to a cosmopolitan and sophisticated readership (fig. 14). *Social*, whose director was the talented artist Conrado W. Massaguer (1889–1965), had a content similar to that of *The New Yorker* from the same period. It included articles on art, fashion, literature, and new ideas and regularly featured a roundup of cartoons from *Life*, *Punch*, *Le Journal Amusant*, and *The New Yorker*. Its close ties to New York and United States consumer society are documented by advertisements for the Hotel McAlpin and Great Northern Hotels in Manhattan and by ads for

Bohemia



◀
Fig. 13. Enrique Riverón, cover
of *Bohemia* 24, January 1932.

The Mitchell Wolfson Jr.
Collection, The Wolfsonian,
Miami Beach, Florida, and
Genoa, Italy.



▶
Fig. 14. Acosta, cover of
Social 14, July 1929.

The Mitchell Wolfson Jr.
Collection, The Wolfsonian,
Miami Beach, Florida, and
Genoa, Italy.

A. Sulka, Steinway, Victrola, Arrow, and Kotex. A 1938 travel ad in *Social* by Anuncios Kesevén, designed by Massaguer, encourages readers to “Take a little hop to Miami” in a lively, lighthearted image combined with Art Deco typography (fig. 15).

The cover of the pamphlet for the Cuban pavilion at the 1939 New York World’s Fair is in a stodgier style, not modern but simple and even naive (fig. 16). It was drawn by Massaguer, certainly capable of far more elegance and innovation, so presumably he intended to target a broader and less sophisticated segment of the public. The imagery is similar to that of much travel advertising—sunshine, water sports, and picturesque natives—but the style sets an old-fashioned and folkloric tone. The text of the brochure also presents the Old World ways of Cuba as an asset, romanticizing the nostalgia of country life, the *campesinos*, the *duennas*, the feminine modesty of Cuban women, while at the same time pointing out Cuba’s modern clubs, banks, and businesses.

Fig. 15. Conrado W. Massaguer, travel advertisement from *Social*, May–June 1938. The Mitchell Wolfson Jr. Collection, The Wolfsonian, Miami Beach, Florida, and Genoa, Italy.



Fig. 16. Conrado W. Massaguer, cover of pamphlet for the Cuban pavilion, New York World's Fair, 1939–1940. The Mitchell Wolfson Jr. Collection, The Wolfsonian, Miami Beach, Florida, and Genoa, Italy.



The beautiful *señorita* in rumba costume with *maracas*, one of the persistent stereotypes of travel advertising, appears in an image published by the Cuban Tourist Commission in the early 1940s (fig. 17). The artist is again Massaguer, but this time working in a stylish mode with a touch of self-reflective humor. Both the picture and the slogan, “Visit Cuba. So Near and Yet So Foreign,” summarize popular perceptions and even comment on them with a buoyant irony, an approach that is thoroughly modernist.

It seems clear, even from a small selection of examples of the public architecture and advertising of the era, that both Cubans and South Floridians depend heavily on style to project self-images and reinforce popular perceptions. The styles chosen are sometimes significantly traditional, as in the San Carlos Institute, the Villa Paula, the workers’ homes, and the Cuban Circle in Ybor City. These established forms of architecture emphasize continuity with the European past and connote stability and solidity. In advertising, the realistic, nineteenth-century style of the cigar box labels is intended to suggest the long history of quality cigars and the (perhaps unconscious) wish of gentlemen of substance

Fig. 17. Conrado W. Massaguer,
"Visit Cuba. So Near and Yet So
Foreign," postcard, early 1940s.
Cuban Tourist Commission.
Collection of Dina and Jeffrey
Knapp, Miami Beach, Florida.



to follow the time-honored "ways of the fathers." For most of the designers of travel advertisements, this nineteenth-century echo was definitely not appropriate for their message of adventure, of "breaking the mold," and seeking new and exciting experiences. They chose an anti-traditional art as a metaphor for innovative lifestyles. But, as so often has happened in the history of the new, it was comforting to mix familiar images with avant-garde styles; to continue the tradition of selling old wine in fashionable new bottles. □