Ayabbas: Memory, Sacred Performance and the Restoration of Afro Cuban Women’s Subjectivity to the Cuban Trans/nation

Published Feb 22, 2016

Yesenia Fernandez Selier
New York University

Yesenia Fernandez Selier (oriselier@gmail.com), a Cuban born performer and researcher, is currently a Media, Culture and Communication PhD student at New York University. Fernandez Selier is the recipient of fellowships from CLACSO, CUNY Caribbean Exchange Program, Cuban Heritage Collection, and the organization Save Latin America. Her work on Afro-Cuban culture, encompassing dance, music, and race identity, has been published in Cuba, the United States, and Brazil. She has worked alongside artists like Coco Fusco, Ivan Acosta, Septeto Nacional de Cuba, Jane Bunnett, Melvis Santa, Venissa Santi, Wynton Marsalis, Chucho Valdés, Pedrito Martinez, and Roman Diaz. She produced the theater play Women Orishas for Miami Cuban Museum (2013), the show Cuba en Clave for the New York Cuban Cultural Center (2014), and the performance-procession Dia de Reyes during the display of Teresita Fernandez sculptures Fata Morgana at Madison Square Park (2015).
Ayabbas: Memory, Sacred Performance and the Restoration of Afro Cuban Women’s Subjectivity to the Cuban Trans/nation. Writing this paper, I am committing sacrilege, one that is an attempt against a life of my own creation. I had lived my life as a liminal creature with two brains: one for dance and another for research, to analyze and dissect. Cruz’s performances of the salutes to the orishas (Afro-Cuban deities) Changó and Babalú Ayé were first released as a single. “They are the first recordings by Celia Cruz, and also, as far as we know, this was the first time ever that Afro-Cuban liturgical music was recorded,” Marquetti adds. “These drums were for religious ceremonies -- remember that this is just about the second generation after slavery.” The same is true of the groundbreaking recordings, which feature the sacred chants in their entirety, and for which the Panart studio had to be sanctified before the musicians could perform. 10 Eternal Celia Cruz Songs. Ayabbas: Memory, Sacred Performance and the Restoration of Afro Cuban Women’s Subjectivity to the Cuban Trans/nation. Writing this paper, I am committing sacrilege, one that is an attempt against a life of my own creation. I had lived my life as a liminal creature with two brains: one for dance and another for research, to analyze and dissect. Uniting Blacks In A Raceless Nation: Blackness, Afro-Cuban Meshell Ndegeocello Dap Kings Reggie Watts Mavis Staples Sharon Jones Afro Cuban Mark Ronson John Legend Pearl Jam. Afro Cuban percussion provides some of the most emotive and dynamic sounds known. The way intricate grooves and upbeat dance rhythms meld and blend through its signature polyrhythmic drumming [...] Oyu Oro Afro-Cuban Dance Ensemble is committed to the preservation of Afro-Cuban culture through dance, song and music, exploring traditional dance forms that derive from the Yoruba, Congo, Carabali, Arara, and Dahomeyan cultures of West Africa; the rich Haitian influences that remain in Cuba; along with popular dances of Cuban heritage.