

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 17, 2010**

**PAINTED BRIDE PRESENTS THE CREOLE CHOIR OF CUBA  
IN DEBUT US PERFORMANCE TOUR PREVIEW\*  
UNDISCOVERED CUBAN MUSIC & CULTURAL ROOTS  
REVEALED FOR THE FIRST TIME**

PHILADELPHIA FIRST TO BEAR WITNESS

PHILADELPHIA, PA – **Painted Bride Art Center**, in partnership with the **Haitian Professionals of Philadelphia**, warmly welcome **The Creole Choir of Cuba** for its first stateside concert performance on **Saturday, January 8, 2011 at 8pm**. **Tickets are \$25. To purchase tickets, for more concert or venue info, visit [paintedbride.org](http://paintedbride.org), call the Box Office at 215-925-9914 or visit the Painted Bride Art Center, located at 230 Vine Street in Philadelphia. The box office is open Tuesday through Saturday, 12pm until 6pm. Crush Card holders receive a 20% discount. Students and seniors always receive a 25% discount on tickets.**

Riding a wave of critical acclaim garnered by their **debut CD release in the UK** entitled ***Tande-la*** (Real World Records, Oct. 2010) **The Creole Choir of Cuba tours the US for the first time to share musical and cultural treasures from Haiti, Dominica and Cuba.** The choir sings in Creole – a distinct language which fuses African, French and indigenous languages. **Passionate melodies, harmonies and richly textured arrangements accompanied by jubilant movement and impassioned spirit separate The Creole Choir of Cuba from any other ensemble witnessed from in the US.** Philadelphia audiences can expect to hear, see and feel something completely different from Cuba as this 10-piece vocal and percussion ensemble takes the stage of the Bride to reveal an undiscovered musical gem telling stories of their Haitian ancestors, enslaved to the Caribbean from West Africa. **Last month**, the Creole Choir of Cuba performed as part of the **London Jazz Festival** in association with BBC Radio 3 **wowing audiences of all stripes.**

*"The sweet harmonic sounds and melodies from the Creole Choir of Cuba brought audience members to their feet with tears of joy ... Spiritually uplifting ... A must see for the whole family!"* **The Voice**

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## **PAINTED BRIDE /WORLD MUSIC / CREOLE CHOIR OF CUBA /ADD-2**

**Longtime Bride jazz and world music curator, Lenny Seidman**, was blown away upon first hearing the rare ensemble. He explains, "I felt the music innately and immediately understood **The Creole Choir of Cuba** would be deeply appreciated by audiences throughout the Philadelphia region, Bride goes especially." A dedicated and accomplished musician himself, **co-founder and member of Spoken Hand Percussion Orchestra**, Seidman's sensibility for artistic and cultural authenticity and world-class quality standards have enabled the Bride to present world music acts such as **Taiko Dance & Drum Ensemble, Sidi Goma and Noreum Machi**, among others, **for the first time here in Philadelphia**. Matched with lucky timing, the Bride has the honor of welcoming and presenting The Creole Choir of Cuba's first stateside performance helping to springboard its tour momentum this spring.

Painted Bride Executive Director Laurel Razcka recalls with comment:

"Artist access has always been paramount in the Bride's role as a presenter. We have given new, rare, even risky artists opportunities to share work with audiences since our early days on South Street. While it may be financially 'risky' to present artists without a built-in audience, our principals pay off in other ways. The reason Zakir Hussain returns every spring, the reason The Dave Holland Big Band played here just last week, rather than somewhere else? We believe in building relationships with our artists starting from the ground-up. I think some artists really value that and they remember us. We are lucky to have Lenny Seidman on our curatorial team, as the Bride continues its unique organizational role in the Philadelphia market."

Serendipitously, **at this very moment, Seidman is in Cuba**. Valued for his curatorial contributions, he was invited by **Philadelphia Music Project** to go to Cuba and serve as a cultural arts ambassador among other curatorial leaders from the Philadelphia region. He will surely return with **new and exciting artistic discoveries**.

**Following The Creole Choir of Cuba's "one night only" full-length concert performance** at the Bride the ensemble is slated to showcase, as part of **New York's *Global Fest***, during **The Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) Conference**.

Anticipating high praise, as well as market demand following its NYC tour appearance January 9<sup>th</sup> and national CD release this spring, The Cuban Creole Choir of Cuba will surely exceed the Bride's booking sway. **While the Bride is the first to open the door, will the unique ensemble ever circle back to the Bride's stage?** Time will tell.

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## **PAINTED BRIDE /WORLD MUSIC / CREOLE CHOIR OF CUBA /ADD-3**

In partnership with **the Haitian Professionals of Philadelphia (HPP)**, the Painted Bride will reach out to the immediate Haitian, Cuban as well as other Caribbean communities. The partnership aims to **spread the word about the choir's upcoming concert**, delivering the warmest possible welcome, and to raise awareness and funds for **HPP's continued disaster relief efforts for Haiti since the devastating earthquake on January 12 of 2010**. Florcy Morisset, proprietor of Vivant Art Collection/Gallery in Old City and HPP Executive Board Chair explains:

"As a community partner of the Painted Bride Art Center we are pleased to welcome and support the unique ensemble, the Creole Choir of Cuba as they kick-off their debut US performance tour from Philadelphia."

### **About The Creole Choir of Cuba**

Five men and five women make up The Cuban Choir of Cuba including **Rogelio Torriente, Fidel Miranda, Teresita Miranda, Marcelo Luis, Dalio Vital, Emilia Diaz Chavez, Yordanka Fajardo, Irian Montejo, Marina Fernandes, Yara Diaz**. The ensemble's repertoire consists of a wide range of choral arrangements with percussion accompaniment including **Choucouné, a Haitian merengue, Gran Toumobile, a Creole Mazurka, and Doudou Moin, a Martinique merengue**.

**In 2009, the ensemble floored Edinburgh Festival-goers** with their riveting performance. It was there the producer of BBC 2's 'Later ... with Jools Holland' saw the vibrant ten-piece choir and invited the group to perform. They accepted and performed an uplifting and emotional *Chen Nan Ren*, a freedom song denouncing neo-colonialism and colonialism. The performance conveyed the celebratory and glorious feeling of resistance, which harks back to the freedom songs and spirituals, which helped to fuel the struggle for racial equality in the US.

**Founded in 1994**, the choir's ten remarkable singers come from Camagüey, Cuba's third city. **Known as "Desandann" in Cuba**, the group members are descendants of several waves of Haitian migrants who escaped slavery at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century or more recently came as laborers to work Cuba's sugar and coffee plantations. Creole, Cuba's second language is the language of a people twice exiled: first to Haiti from Africa through the iniquitous slave trade; then from Haiti to Cuba tricked into second slavery by the French after the Haitian Revolution of 1790.

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## **PAINTED BRIDE /WORLD MUSIC / CREOLE CHOIR OF CUBA /ADD-4**

\* Members of The Creole Choir of Cuba have appeared and performed previously in the US (1997, 1999) under the name Grupo Vocal Desandann, Desandann for short. While The Creole Choir of Cuba and Desandann share the same unique music and cultural signature, the ensemble has reincarnated itself marked by an all new name, material, members, record label and CD release which will be released in the US this spring coinciding with the continuation of the ensemble's US debut tour plan. Tour dates and cities are TBA.

### **About The Haitian Professionals of Philadelphia (HPP)**

The Haitian Professionals of Philadelphia's mission is to support professional development and promote/celebrate the Haitian history and culture. In addition, HPP's goal is to elevate the Haitian community locally and abroad as such we developed a Haiti Relief Fund in partnership with the Urban Affairs Coalition.

### **About the Painted Bride Art Center**

Entering its 41<sup>st</sup> season, the Painted Bride continues to present a diverse roster of risk-taking talents spanning a wide spectrum of disciplines including music, dance, theater and visual arts. Looking forward after 40, the Bride maintains its stance at the "intersection of culture and creativity" to deliver the best the living arts has to offer – work that engages, excites, transforms, inspires and exhilarates.

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**Press note:**

**SCROLL TO NEXT PAGE**

**For press quotes and other artist related online references**

**For a copy of the CD *Tande-la*, additional information,  
to schedule an artist interview, or press tickets  
call Phil Sumpter, Director of Marketing and Communications  
(215) 925-9914 ext. 15**

## **PAINTED BRIDE /WORLD MUSIC / CREOLE CHOIR OF CUBA /ADD CLIP QUOTES / ONLINE REFERENCES**

### **What the Press is saying overseas:**

#### About **Tande-la (Real World)**

*"The music this wonderful choir purveys is bewitching – it has a feline delicacy entirely unlike anything else to have come out of Cuba. The nearest thing I can think of is township singing in South Africa, but in contrast to the earthy harmonies of Black Mambazo and co, this group's are infinitely lighter and more airborne."* – Reviewed by **MICHAEL CHURCH for Reaping Islands**

*"The sweet harmonic sounds and melodies from the Creole Choir of Cuba brought audience members to their feet with tears of joy ... Spiritually uplifting ... A must see for the whole family!"* **The Voice**

*"A mesmerizing experience ... astonishing stuff... I'm lost for words  
.....absolutelyextraordinary."* **Mark Lamarr, BBC Radio 2**

*"Entrancing, exquisite, unlike any other music show."\*\*\*\*\** **The Scotsman**

*"Anyone who has fallen for Cuban music of any style, be it the Buena Vista Social Club or Omar Sosa, or who just likes great singing, will be moved by this ultra-colourful, cross-generational troupe's performance."\*\*\*\** **The Herald**

### **Website:**

<http://www.creolechoir.com/>

<http://www.realworldrecords.com/thecreolechoirofcuba>

### **Social Media:**

<http://www.myspace.com/thecreolechoirofcuba>

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Creole-Choir-of-Cuba/128332534826>

<https://twitter.com/#!/creolechoircuba>

contains sample of singing mixed with interviews:

<http://www.realworldrecords.com/videos/tanda-la>

### **Music Video of Singing Tande:**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAyZVAPrfVE>