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Ashes of Artist
Wilfredo Lam
placed in Cuban
Cemetery
culture

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2015:Lam:

1982

by Lionel martin

havana, dec 6, reuter -- the ashes of the world renowned cuban artist, wilfredo lam, who spent most of his adult life in spain and france, were placed in a mausoleum here in columbus cemetery at a ceremony attended by cuban president fidel castro.

the urn carrying the mortal remains of lam draped with a cuban flag was escorted by a guard of honour of the cuban revolutionary armed forces. fidel castro saluted as the urn passed by.

the cuban expatriate died last september at a paris hospital at the age of 79. he had been confined to a wheel chair for several years.

lam was an intimate friend of pablo picasso for more than three decades. in his paintings he tried to capture the essence of afro-cuban cults. his primitively powerful +la jungla+ (the jungle), painted in 1943, brought the cuban painter of chinese-black parentage international fame when it was exhibited in the museum of modern art in new york.

--more Lem/syl

2020:Lam 2 havana:

following the victory of the cuban revolution, lam identified himself publicly with fidel castro's government: he continued to live in paris, but made periodic trips back to his native island where he received many honours, including cuba's highest award for cultural achievements in 1981.

lam was born into a peasant family in central cuba in 1902 and moved to havana when he was 14 years old to study in the school of fine arts. in 1923 he went to spain and remained there for more than 15 years. +spain taught me the force and structure of painting,+ lam said.

later, in paris, lam with his army cape and beret, became part of the artistic world. besides picasso, he was a close friend of paul eluard, joan miro, fernand leger, matisse, georges braque, christian and ivonne zervos, man ray, roland penrose, hans bellmer, marcel duchamp, max ernst and others.

lam took part in the spanish civil war in the loyalists' famed fifth regiment. it was the victory of franco's forces that forced him to flee to paris with a letter of introduction to pablo picasso. picasso became his mentor and close friend and during hard times, a source of financial support. lam later recalled that his proudest moment was when picasso looked at one of his works and told him: +you are a true artist.+

--reuter lam/ayl