

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
December 7, 2004

CONTACT:  
Kimberly Burns/510.643.6714  
kburns@calperfs.berkeley.edu  
Christina Kellogg/510.642.9121  
ckellogg@calperfs.berkeley.edu

## **EVENT CANCELLATION**

### **CAL PERFORMANCES ANNOUNCES CANCELLATION OF CUBAN LUTE MASTER BARBARITO TORRES**

**THURSDAY, MARCH 24 AT 8:00 P.M. IN ZELLERBACH HALL**

**BERKELEY, December 7, 2004** – Cal Performances regrets to announce the cancellation of the concert by acclaimed Cuban lute master **Barbarito Torres** and his nine-member ensemble, scheduled for **Thursday, March 24, 2005 at 8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall. Due to policy changes in State Department security clearances, Cuban artists touring to the United States are being denied visas at this time, effectively canceling Mr. Torres and his group's entire three-week United States tour. In a statement to his fans and audiences anticipating the ensemble's spring tour, Barbarito Torres expresses his dismay and regrets that "it is impossible for us to enter the U.S. because of the irrational politics of the current American government. We had hoped to exchange our music and experiences with the American public, especially because the latest CD was nominated for a Grammy Award. This demonstrates the preference for our music in North America. We have always been well received by our fans." He concludes by saying "We hope that sometime soon rationality will return to the disheveled political climate, and that we can share music and experiences that ennoble the human race, promote spirituality, and quality of life."

#### **Barbarito Torres**

Well-known for his work with the Buena Vista Social Club and Afro-Cuban All Stars, Barbarito Torres was featured on the 1998 Grammy Award-winning Buena Vista Social Club album and subsequent hit film, as well as on the Afro-Cuban All Stars recordings that have sparked a worldwide infatuation with Cuban music. Barbarito Torres is widely regarded as the world's most celebrated virtuoso lute player. He has remained true to the musical folklore of his native Cuba, the genre known as *musica guajira*, or the blues of the Cuban countryside. He expresses a modern sophisticated but authentically traditional style, more likely to be found in a

-MORE-

rural hamlet deep in his beloved countryside, than in urban Havana, where he now resides. His musical expression continues to reflect the gutsy, heartfelt outcry of his true origin and upbringing, since he remains after all a true *guajiro*, or country man.

Born Bárbaro Alberto Torres Delgado in Matanzas, Cuba, Barbarito was already playing the lute proficiently at age 10. In 1970, he started his professional career with Serenata Yumurina, a group led by Higinio Mullens. Barbarito entered the military service in 1973, where he joined the marching band and the army's jazz orchestra. After his discharge in late 1976, he traveled all over Cuba performing with Siembra Cultural, later renamed Grupo Yarabi, until he decided to settle in Havana. By then Barbarito had become well known as one of the island's best lute players, and he worked as a session musician for radio, film and television. He became a permanent member of the Orquesta Cubana de Cuerdas and performed with some of Cuba's bigger names, such as pioneering *son* group Sierra Maestra and rootsy *chanteuse* Albita. Barbarito's biggest recognition before forming his own band came when he was asked to join Celina González and her Grupo Campo Alegre as their musical director. At the same time, he was a featured player with Grupo Manguare, and toured extensively with both groups in Europe and Latin America. In 1992, he founded Piquete Cubano, but continued to accompany Celina until 1995.

In 1996, guitarist Ry Cooder traveled to Havana and assembled a dream team of local musicians for the recording of an album that would single-handedly change the history of Cuban music: *Buena Vista Social Club*. Barbarito quickly became one of the Club's most respected instrumentalists. Shortly thereafter, he released his debut recording, *Havana Cafe*, which has sold upward of 78,000 albums, and has spent the following three years touring the world. Torres was to tour the United States with a nine-piece band in support of his new self-titled album, *Barbarito Torres*, just released on Havana Caliente Records.

### **TICKET INFORMATION**

The event for **Barbarito Torres** on **Thursday, March 24** at **8:00 p.m.** in Zellerbach Hall has been cancelled. Tickets can be exchanged or refunded by calling the Cal Performances ticket office at (510) 642-9988.

# # #

The *San Francisco Chronicle* is a season sponsor of Cal Performances; *San Francisco* magazine and Classical 102.1 KDFC are season media sponsors of the 2004/05 performing arts season.

Cal Performances' 2004/2005 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

# # #

**CALENDAR EDITORS, PLEASE NOTE:**

### **CONCERT CANCELLED**

**Thursday, March 24 at 8:00 p.m.**

**Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley Campus**  
Bancroft Way at Telegraph Ave., Berkeley

*World Music*  
**Barbarito Torres**

**Tickets: This event has been cancelled.** Refunds and exchanges are available by calling the Cal Performances Ticket Office at (510) 642-9988.

---

-30-