

## FocusON Movies

### Latino Film Talent and the Sundance Film Festival

*Hispanicize and Latino Filmmakers focus on the Latino influence at the annual festival, The partnership aims to increase Latino participation and visibility in the film industry*

By Luis Comi

Despite the contributions and history of the Latino community in the United States, there still exists a lack of Latino representation and stories in Hollywood. This year, Hispanicize, the creator of the yearly gathering for Latino trendsetters and media entrepreneurs, is taking the lead to help drive change by bringing back its historic partnership with Latino Filmmakers during the Sundance Film Festival to help open doors for Latino talent.

part of this effort, Hispanicize will coproduce the second Latino Filmmakers mixer, "A Royal Social Affair II," which will spotlight Latino producers to support their presence in Hollywood. The event, which counts on the participation of industry executives, agents and the entertainment community, will take place on Monday, January 25, 2016 in Park City, Utah during the festival at the Power &



Photo courtesy of hispanicizewire.com

Industry-Indie Lounge on Main St.

"Our growing presence in this signature initiative created by Maylen Calienes is all about bringing attention to under-represented Latinos in the film industry," said Manny Ruiz, founder of the Hispanicize platforms that include the annual Hispanicize event, DiMe Media, the Hispanic PR Blog and Hispanicize Wire. "Latinos are practically invisible in the entertainment industry.

Hispanicize is committed to leading this initiative with the end goal of creating opportunities and cultivating Latino talent and growth."

The Latino Filmmakers will partake in a conversation, encouraging the inclusion of Latinos whose films have been selected by the festival and creating a nucleus of continuing support, community, education and knowledge.

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### Multiculturalism Is a Sham, Says Angela Merkel

Merkel urges integration over differentiation.

# [hispanic] market works

FocusON Miami Unique

## Miami, State Rank High for Minority-Owned Businesses

*U.S. Census Bureau Survey shows minority-owned firms rising as non-minority-owned firms decline*

By Nancy Dahlberg, The Miami Herald

Miami had the second-highest proportion of Hispanic-owned businesses in the United States and Florida had the third highest number of minority-owned businesses, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012 Survey of Business Owners, released by the U.S. Department of Commerce Tuesday.

The results found that business ownership in the United States mirrors the country's increasingly diverse population, with minority-owned firms nationwide rising from 5.8 million in 2007 to 8.0 million in 2012, and employing 7.2 million people in 2012. While the number of minority-owned businesses increased by 2.2 million, the number of non-minority-owned businesses declined by 1.2 million, from 20.1 million in 2007 to 18.9 million in 2012.

From 2007 to 2012, the percentage of minority-owned firms increased from 22 percent to 29 percent of the total number of U.S. firms. Hispanic-owned firms increased

by 46.3 percent from 2.4 million to 3.3 million. Black or African American-owned firms rose from 1.9 to 2.6 million, and the number of Asian-owned firms climbed from 1.5 million to 1.9 million.

"This new Census Bureau data underscores the rapid growth in minority-owned firms. Nonetheless, considerable disparities remain between their revenue and non-minority companies in our economy," said National Director for Minority Business Alejandra Y. Castillo. "Next year, [the Department of Minority Business Development Agency] will invest nearly \$13.4 million in grants to continue to support the growth and expansion of Minority Business Enterprises."

Regional highlights included:

- California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Georgia remain the states with the highest numbers of minority-owned businesses.
- Georgia had more Black or African American-owned firms in 2012 than any other state (256,848), followed by Florida (251,216).
- Among the 50 most populous U.S. cities, New York had the most Hispanic-owned firms with 199,085. El Paso, Texas, and Miami had the highest proportion of Hispanic-owned firms with 73.9 percent and 69.2 percent, respectively, more than twice the U.S. average rate.



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## FocusON CubaNear

### U.S.-Cuba Relations: A Year of Change

By Mimi Whitefield, *The Miami Herald*

In the year since the U.S.-Cuba rapprochement began, some things have seemed to move at warp speed, but others have smacked into the reality that the two former Cold War enemies still have two very different systems and have barely talked to each other in five decades.

There have been important symbolic changes. An American flag now waves over a U.S. Embassy in Havana, and a Cuban flag flies at the Cuban Embassy in Washington, D.C., after an absence of more than 54 years. President Barack Obama and Cuban leader Raúl Castro have met face-to-face twice and talked by telephone three times, even joking about the famously long speeches of Fidel Castro.

Cuba has been removed from the U.S. black list of state sponsors of terrorism, and there have been talks on prickly issues such as migration, human rights, and claims for confiscated property of U.S. citizens and corporations.

Interactive timeline: [A history of modern U.S.-Cuba relations](#)

But because expectations were so high and many U.S. businesses were so eager to engage after a half-century drought, some say Cuba has been slow in taking up the United States on the new business opportunities

the Obama administration began outlining in January. Obama also has said he wants to work with Congress to lift the embargo.

Expectations were high among the Cuban people, too, said Domingo Amuchástegui, a former Cuban intelligence officer who left the island in 1994, because “in Cuba’s political culture, when the president says something is going to be done, take his word, it will be done. Cubans who heard Obama thought this is the president’s word.”

But such high hopes have been tamped down. It was apparent after the first round of normalization talks in Havana in January that rapprochement would be a slow process, he said.

Some Americans imagined that U.S. companies with all their technical know-how would rapidly expand Internet access on the island or that Americans would be able to pick up a charger for their cellphone at a U.S. mobile storefront in Havana, soon be visiting Cuba via a ferry from Miami, and pulling out credit cards issued by U.S. banks to pay for their hotel stays and to withdraw cash from ATM machines in Cuba.

All are theoretically possible under new U.S. rules, but it takes two to tango, and Cuba is yet to green-light any of those opportunities.

Eventhough U.S. companies are free to form partnerships with Cuban government entities to improve the island’s Internet and telecom infrastructure, the only deals announced so far have been a few roaming and direct-connect arrangements. This summer, Cuba began rolling out new public Wi-Fi hotspots that now number 50, but most Cubans don’t have regular access to the

Internet and desire for connectivity is huge.

“It’s all about what your benchmark was at the beginning of rapprochement. If you had realistic expectations, then you see gradual progress,” said Richard Feinberg, a professor of international political economy at the University of California-San Diego and a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution. “Both Obama and Raúl Castro say this will be gradual.”

#### Tangible change

At the Summit of the Americas in April, Castro said that while the two countries still have their differences, “we are willing to discuss everything, but we need to be patient, very patient.”

Castro’s more conciliatory words to Obama in Panama were a watershed event, Feinberg said. “Up until that time, the United States was the implacable enemy and a threat to the security of Cuba. His remarks changed the whole paradigm and atmosphere in Cuba.”

The most tangible change in Cuba since last December has been the parade of U.S. visitors, including Obama Cabinet members and State Department delegations. On Wednesday, many baseball stars who defected, including Los Angeles Dodgers outfielder Yasiel Puig, St. Louis Cardinals catcher Brayan Pena and Chicago White Sox first baseman Jose Abreu, also visited.

For Alana Tummino, who accompanied a U.S. business delegation at a recent international trade fair in Cuba, the realization that things had changed significantly came as she sipped her morning coffee at the Hotel Saratoga in Havana.

“A whole host of business leaders from the United

States, including former hard-line Cuban Americans, passed by, and that really signaled to me that we're in a different era," said Tummino, who heads the Cuba Working Group at the Americas Society/Council of the Americas.

American travelers have signed up for people-to-people tours in record numbers, helping Cuba set a new record for international visitors this year. There have been sports and cultural exchanges, U.S. governors have toured Havana in vintage automobiles, and countless U.S. business delegations have arrived in Cuba to test the waters.

The Obama administration has outlined an array of commercial activities that U.S. businesses may engage in legally, even though most trade is still prohibited by the embargo and U.S. investors can't invest in Cuba.

To empower the Cuban people, the opening allows U.S. companies to trade with Cuba's private entrepreneurial sector. But there has been little progress in that area — other than increased remittances trickling into the hands of Cuban entrepreneurs to start and expand their businesses and the entry into the Cuban market of San Francisco-based Airbnb, which hooks travelers up for stays at private homes.

"There is the feeling that Obama freed up a lot restrictions [on doing business with Cuba] with the new regulations and now it's on the Cubans to show their willingness to work in various sectors," Tummino said.

She said one reason for the seemingly slow uptake on the part of the Cuban government is a difference in priorities.



Los Angeles Dodgers player Yasiel Puig, from Cuba, greets young baseball players before giving a baseball clinic to children in Havana, Cuba, Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2015. "We're going to give our best on this visit and we appreciate the opportunity we've been given," said Puig, who left Cuba on a smuggler's fast-boat in 2012. "Everything else we leave to God and destiny." Ramon Espinosa AP

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U.S. policy puts a lot of emphasis on empowering and engaging the non-state sector, she said. "But from the Cuban government's viewpoint, that's a small percentage of the overall economy. They are very focused on large projects in energy, biotechnology and tourism and those projects are largely off the table in terms of American investment.

"We're seeing the Cubans taking their time to see what the opportunities really are. For them, that requires a longer time of trust-building," Tummino said. "Hopefully we'll see all the business meetings and collaborations start coming to fruition over the next few months."

The opportunities are there under the new regulations, said Saul Cimbler, a Cuban-American who is president of U.S.-Cuba Business Advisory. "Not withstanding the political rhetoric, there is forward motion."

"Most people going to Cuba these days are looking to hit a home run but that is putting the cart before the horse. You need to assess what is really practical," said Cimbler, who said lately he has been spending 10 to 12 days a month in Cuba on business trips.

To get business deals done in Cuba, he said, requires a lot of work and creativity. Another important thing to remember, Cimbler said, is business isn't and won't be conducted the way it was before the 1959 Cuban Revolution.

It's not just business people interested in engagement with the island. A supporter of such efforts is Alan Gross, the USAID subcontractor the Cubans accused of smuggling military-grade equipment into the country. He said recently that "while I served as an involuntary catalyst for this change, I hope now to help foster

continued good relations between our countries and our citizens."

But not everyone is in favor of engagement, and over the past year, members of the Cuban-American delegation in Congress have introduced legislation that seeks to limit the Obama opening. Congressional supporters of engagement, meanwhile, have been busy trying to line up co-sponsors for bills lifting the travel ban and the embargo.

South Florida Republican Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen said the opening hasn't worked and that the progress the Obama administration sees "is not reflected in the mass arrests and the increase in Cubans fleeing that has marked this year."

Human rights is among the more contentious issues between the two countries. While the United States has criticized the jailing of dissidents and insisted on the importance of respecting basic civil rights, such as freedom of speech, press and assembly, Cuba views human rights through a somewhat different prism of social well-being, emphasizing its free healthcare as an example of respect for human rights.

Although the number of political prisoners has fallen sharply in the past year, the number of political arrests is way up. Through November, the Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation has documented 7,686 political arrests, most resulting in short-term detentions of a few hours or days.

In its November report, the commission said the Castro regime was reacting with "ever greater repressive fury" against those who only want freedom for political prisoners and respect for civil and other basic rights.

Not only has there been "disappointment by the naive view of the White House regarding its misguided policies toward communist Cuba," Ros-Lehtinen said, but "little has changed for the average Cuban while the Castro brothers continue to rejoice that they have an ally on Pennsylvania Avenue."

Ros-Lehtinen said in the coming year she expects Obama to offer more concessions to the Cuban government, including possibly the release and pardon of Ana Belen Montes, a former senior analyst at the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency who pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 25 years in October 2002 for spying for the Cuban government.

Francisco "Pepe" Hernández, president of the Cuban American National Foundation and a Bay of Pigs veteran, said he has mixed feelings.

Although he regards the resumption of diplomatic ties as positive and says it has created tremendous interest in all things Cuban, he worries that along with it has come "an acceptance by the international community of the political and economic system in Cuba such as it is."

Cuba, he said, needs an economic transformation and improvement in human rights but "now there seems to be this acceptance that Cuba is owned by the extended Castro family — and they are preparing to maintain their political and economic power."

Even Cuban-Americans, he said, are starting to lose touch with what is happening inside Cuba. "The American people think everything is going to be OK and there will be no bad consequences but the Cuban people don't believe it. Let's see what happens when

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Raúl surrenders his official powers,” Hernández said. Castro has said he plans to retire on Feb. 24, 2018. He has named First Vice President Miguel Díaz-Canel as his successor.

In Cuba, there’s a lot of talk about economic and even political reforms floating around, said Amuchástegui, “but I don’t know if they will show up at the Communist Party Congress.” It’s tentatively set for April. During the last Congress, a series of limited market-economy reforms emerged.

Amuchástegui said that until 2018, he thinks the Cuban leadership will be cautious, slow and seek to avoid tensions and conflicts. “Nothing much will be happening until after 2018,” he said.

“Raúl Castro is increasingly a lame duck. Whether his administration has the energy to accelerate change, we’ll have to see,” said Feinberg. “He may think that he’s done enough.”

The coming year is pivotal, said Ted Piccone, a senior fellow at the Brookings Institution, because there’s quite a bit of uncertainty when it comes to U.S. politics. Some Republican presidential hopefuls have said they will reverse the Obama opening.

Obama may feel he needs to do as much as possible, using his executive authority, to further the relationship with Cuba and enhance his legacy in his remaining time in office, say some analysts.

The president has said he wants to visit Cuba, but there is a sense in Washington that he wants to see more compromise and deliverables on the part of Cuba before scheduling a trip.

“I think the idea now is that it would be good for Obama to go just before his presidency is over to cement his legacy,” said Tummino. “After the 2016 elections might make the most sense.”

Several analysts said they expect to see progress soon on agreements on civil aviation and counter-narcotics. Feinberg said it’s also possible Cuba will give approval for the first U.S.-based ferry and cruise service to Cuba in 2016.

Just in time for the Christmas season, the United States and Cuba reached agreement Dec. 10 on a pilot program for direct-mail service that will take mail directly from the United States to Cuba several times a week, rather than through third countries. And Wednesday, both sides said they had reached an understanding to restore regularly scheduled commercial flights between the two countries.

There have already been two environmental agreements — one that establishes sister relationships between marine sanctuaries in Cuban waters and the Florida Keys and a more far-reaching accord that will make it easier for U.S. and Cuban scientists to work together to protect the environmental resources of both nations.

“Even if the next president does not share President Obama’s desire to go forward with normalized relations with Cuba, the agreement puts bilateral environmental cooperation on a secure and lasting footing,” said Elizabeth Newhouse, director of the Center for International Policy’s Cuba Project. The Center has been a long-time advocate of easing restrictions on scientific exchanges with Cuba.

On the financial front, there has been both progress and frustration. Pompano Beach-based Stonegate Bank became the first U.S. bank to establish a correspondent relationship with a Cuban financial institution and recently announced that its debit cards would work to pay bills at government hotels, restaurants and other card-accepting merchants on the island. But other banks have remained wary and have exercised extreme caution when dealing with any Cuban-related business, sometimes holding up payments that are completely legal.

Many challenges remain. One immediate one is the more than 3,000 Cubans stranded in Costa Rica because Nicaragua, an ally of Cuba’s, won’t let them pass through its territory on their route north to the United States.

Preferential U.S. migration policies, such as the Cuban Adjustment Act and wet foot/dry foot, which allows Cubans who arrive on U.S. soil — even without a visa — to stay while those interdicted at sea are generally sent back, have acted as a magnet for Cubans migrants.

“The Central American crisis is part of a much bigger migration problem. The route through South and Central America [often taken by Cuban migrants] is like a highway to the United States where everyone is dry-foot,” said William LeoGrande, a government professor at American University.

Unless the United States ends the wet foot/dry foot policy, he said, Cubans will continue to find alternative routes to the U.S. through the Caribbean and Latin America.

Cuba also wants to engage on sensitive issues. Castro

has said he wants the lifting of the embargo, the return of the U.S. Navy base at Guantánamo Bay, and the end to Radio and TV Martí and other acts of hostility against Cuba by the United States. Cuba also wants reparations for human damage caused by U.S. incursions against the island, as well as economic damages due because of the embargo.

The United States, meanwhile, would like to see meaningful progress on compensation for \$1.9 billion (\$8 billion, including interest) in claims by U.S. citizens and corporations who had their Cuban property seized.

Feinberg, who released a Brookings white paper on claims earlier this month, said it's possible there could be an agreement — even within the next year — if both countries decide settlement of property issues would serve their national security interests.

For the United States, a satisfactory agreement would encourage Congress to lift the embargo, he said. "In Cuba, it could be a good deal, too, because it would result in increased investment flows and more access to international capital markets."

A settlement could turn a conflictive problem into a win-win situation, he said.

"I think the Cubans would be wise to do some big deals [with U.S. companies] that make people think this is really going to pay off," said LeoGrande. "But you've got the embargo still in place, and I think it's part of the reason the Cuban response has been slow. They know it is not going away until at least 2017 and maybe after."

## FocusON La Política

### Do The Political Views of Millennials Make Sense?

By Adeline Cruz-Phillips, Dieste Account Director



The Atlantic wrote a [timely piece](#) about how the political views held by Millennials don't make any sense. The article goes on to explain that according to a recent poll conducted by the Reason Foundation, the political views held by young adults, 18 to 29 years of age, are contradictory and do not make sense.

For those of us immersed in politics and in the hope of a better future, this finding is scary - especially when you consider that Millennials (given the population size) could very likely determine who our next president will be.

In March, the Pew Institute conducted a [similar survey](#) showing that Millennial views and attitudes are an array of paradoxes. Here are some examples:

- While Millennials are the most technologically connected, they don't trust people.

- Millennials hate the political parties but have the highest opinion of Congress.
- Millennials are the most likely to be single parents and the least likely to approve of single parenthood.
- Millennials voted overwhelmingly for Obama, want universal health care, and are fine with a bigger government ... but they oppose Obamacare.
- 58% of Millennials want to cut taxes overall and 66% want to raise taxes on the wealthy.
- 66% of Millennials say: "when something is funded by the government, it is usually inefficient and wasteful, however, 2/3 of young adults think the government should guarantee food, shelter, and a living wage."
- Millennials don't know what socialism is, but they think it sounds nice. 49% of young adults think socialism is preferable to capitalism, but only 16% of Millennials could accurately define socialism in the survey.

With the 2016 presidential election less than a year away, it's important for candidates to understand what's really important to Millennial voters, and on the flip side, it's imperative that the voters become educated before casting their vote. We can't vote based on gender or race – we need to evaluate the whole package. Our future depends on it!

Stay up to date with latest in millennial marketing and follow [Dieste Inc.](#), a multicultural advertising agency located in Dallas, Texas. Subscribe to [Provoke Weekly](#) to learn about the trends in the multicultural market.



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## Multiculturalism Is a Sham, Says Angela Merkel

By Rick Noack

German Chancellor Angela Merkel's refugee policy has attracted praise from all over the world. Time magazine and the Financial Times newspaper recently named her Person of the Year, and delegates applauded her for so long at her party's convention on Monday that she had to stop them.

The speech that followed, however, may have surprised supporters of her policies: "Multiculturalism leads to parallel societies and therefore remains a 'life lie,' or a sham, she said, before adding that Germany may be reaching its limits in terms of accepting more refugees. "The challenge is immense," she said. "We want and we will reduce the number of refugees noticeably."

Although those remarks may seem uncharacteristic of Merkel, she probably would insist that she was not contradicting herself. In fact, she was only repeating a sentiment she first voiced several years ago when she said multiculturalism in Germany had "utterly failed."

"Of course the tendency had been to say, 'Let's adopt the multicultural concept and live happily side by side, and be happy to be living with each other.' But this concept has failed, and failed utterly," she said in 2010.

Repeating those ideas on Monday was meant to calm her supporters who have grown increasingly weary of the influx of refugees. Newcomers, Merkel stressed,

should assimilate to German values and culture, and respect the country's laws.

Merkel emphasized that despite her commitment to limit the influx of refugees, she was standing by her decision to open the borders earlier this fall. "It is a historical test for Europe," she said, adding that other countries in Europe should accept more refugees to take some of the burden off Germany.



Photo courtesy of Getty Images

Refugees in need should be helped, she said, but she also suggested that not everyone who has come to Germany fulfilled those criteria. German authorities are expected to ramp up deportations in the coming months.

Merkel's party, the Christian Democratic Union, overwhelmingly approved of her refugee policy, with only two out of about 1,000 delegates voting against a

resolution in support of it.

Merkel's comments may also reflect a particular understanding of assimilation. Many Germans expect immigrants to quickly learn the German language and to contribute to their communities and work life.

Multiculturalism usually has a positive connotation, but to Merkel it symbolizes the emergence of isolated societies within Germany — and ultimately a failure of assimilating immigrants. Her policy toward the issue is supposed to avoid the creation of suburbs such as the areas around Paris, for instance, where young immigrants are isolated from the rest of society.

However, her speech comes at a sensitive time. Germany has opened its borders to approximately 1 million refugees this year, many of whom are still being accommodated in makeshift housing. Fights have broken out in multiple reception centers, raising fears about the country's ability to deal with the influx.

Local disputes have caused tensions in national politics as well. Last year, Germany's influential Christian Social Union party proposed that everyone in Germany should be required to speak German "in public and in private with their families." The public backlash forced the party to retract the draft resolution.

Compared to 2010, when Merkel first voiced her criticism of multiculturalism, there was little reaction Monday. The applause following her speech lasted nine minutes and again had to be interrupted by Merkel. "Thanks, but we have work to do," she said.

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## FocusON Entertainment

### Lin-Manuel Miranda Composes Song for New Star Wars Movie

By Barbara Gonzalez



From his hit Broadway musical "In the Heights," to his most recent success with "Hamilton," Lin-Manuel Miranda never ceases to amaze us.

This past Monday on the "Tonight Show," Director, J.J. Abrams announced that he and Lin-Manuel have joined forces to collaborate on a brand new song for the "Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens" revival movie.

The original cantina song (which can be heard here) was a wordless jazz-style tune, but maybe we can hope for a bit more hip-hop influence with Lin-Manuel on the track.

In the meantime, I haven't felt this excited for a collaboration since J Biebs and J Balvin's "Sorry" Latino Remix.

## FocusON Television

### Azteca, the Nimble

*Miss Universe® 2015 simulcast in Spanish on Azteca America last night.*

As the Spanish-language television rights for this year's Miss Universe pageant went up for bid last

week in the U.S., Azteca America acquired the Spanish-language rights in a surprise move that Azteca CEO Manuel Abud called one of his nimblest. The reigning Miss Universe 2014, Paulina Vega, crowned her successor at the end of the evening in a memorable pageant hosted by Vanessa Claudio and Poncho de Anda.

According to Abud, the move gave Azteca a solid advantage for future negotiations with the pageant's creator and for other similar venues. The network has made reaching younger Hispanics in the U.S. audience a priority that fits right in with its programming and social media strategy.

Abud did not reveal how much Azteca paid for the rights, but made it clear that the price had been lower than the \$2.5 million Univision had paid before its breakup with the Trump organization. In September, Trump sold its rights and the Azteca negotiations were made with the current owners.



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