

SAN ISIDRO MOVEMENT

CUBA

The San Isidro Movement is a group of Cuban artists, academics, and alternative thinkers formed in 2018 to protest against the government's censorship of artistic expression in Cuba. The activists are fighting for the abolition of Decree 349, which allows the state to censor performances and artistic concepts. According to this decree, every performance is to be examined, approved, and then evaluated by the Ministry of Culture. The artist and activist Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara founded the movement and has been arrested dozens of times. After an arrest, a hunger strike, and a forced hospital stay, he still fights for his artistic freedom. "I am an artist trying to influence the Cuban reality. Luckily it

is working. My social art questions the reality I live in, and the regime persecuting, arresting, and imprisoning me for that. My confrontation is to be able to do my work." At first, Alcántara was more interested in sculpture, feeling that it was a "more realistic copy of reality." *Regalo de Cuba a los EUA* (Gift from Cuba to the USA) is a sculpture made by the artist with the intention of donating it to the U.S. Embassy in Havana, but the diplomatic headquarters refused to accept it, so it was placed as a public intervention in Havana until the Cuban authorities demanded that the artist withdraw the work. The search for work that contributes to reality led him recently to performance art. He wants "the people to experience this type of freedom that only art can offer. I really believe in freedom and politics is an exercise in non-freedom." (AB)

1
Luis Manuel
Otero Alcántara
Regalo de Cuba a los EUA (Gift from Cuba to the USA)
2012, found wooden sticks, cardboard, and rags
100 × 500 × 60 cm

2
Luis Manuel
Otero Alcántara
El Policía y el Ladrón (The Police and the Thief)
2011, found wood, metal, cement, nails, and acrylic
29 × 86 × 33 cm

3
Luis Manuel
Otero Alcántara
Menina
2014, found wooden sticks and rags
160 × 210 × 80 cm

