

Swiss Red Cross Ball 2004

On May 1, 2004 the Swiss Red Cross will be holding its third annual charity ball in Morges, outside of Lausanne. This magnificent gala evening will be attended by members of prominent families, as well as high profile individuals from the worlds of politics, entertainment, and business. Together, they form a crucial network of support for the Swiss Red Cross and its important relief programmes, in aid of the Victims of Forgotten Disasters.



Just one week before the 176th birthday of Red Cross founder Henry Dunant, this prestigious event will welcome as many as 800 guests to Les Halles CFF, located in Morges near Lausanne. An atmosphere of tropical splendour will highlight the evening's theme, "Havana Nights" and the stage will be set for the world-famous musicians of the **Buena Vista Social Club™, starring Grammy Award winner Omara Portuondo and Ibrahim Ferrer.** The Swiss Red Cross is particularly honoured to welcome these illustrious Cuban musicians, as they share a rare and highly anticipated performance with the gala's guests.

The first Red Cross Ball was held under the Honorary Patronage of HRH Maria Gabriella Princess of Savoy. In 2003, Crown Prince Albert of Monaco served as Honorary Patron. This year, the Patron for the 2004 Swiss Red Cross Ball is Mr. Joseph Deiss, President of the Swiss Confederation. The gala will be opened by the President of the Swiss Red Cross, Prof. René Rhinow.

The SRC focuses its assistance on emergency disaster relief, reconstruction and the establishment of sustainable, efficient health care and social services in particularly disadvantaged regions of the world. The proceeds from this year's Swiss Red Cross Ball will benefit relief programmes to help the Victims of Forgotten Disasters. These SRC programmes are directed at those whose suffering no longer attracts media attention but continues nonetheless, and depends upon significant relief. Victims of natural disasters and economic decline in various continents have already received assistance. **This year's Swiss Red Cross Ball will mainly benefit poverty-stricken, small farmers in Honduras, AIDS orphans in Swaziland,**

the public health care system in Tibet, and a home-care system in Bulgaria.

Fortunately, the SRC is supported by numerous volunteers, patrons and sponsors who contribute to its work. Due to their dedication, the first Swiss Red Cross Ball was held in 2002 and the organization is proud and grateful that it is able to build on the enormous success of the previous years' events.

The important, loyal supporters of Swiss Red Cross Ball are the prestigious Geneva jeweller **Chopard, Global Investment & Marketing SA, Synthesis Bank, the Hôtel Beau Rivage in Geneva and Moët & Chandon.** Once again, they will make generous contributions to the success of this year's event.

Numerous sponsors and bidders will provide support for the SRC in the traditional charity auction with **François Curiel, the Director of Christie's Europe, at the gavel. There are many outstanding and unique opportunities for auction participants including a stunning diamond pendant necklace set in white gold from the "Happy Diamonds" collection by Chopard, valued at more than SFr. 50'000.- Also up for bids is a roundtrip voyage in a Cessna Citation Bravo private plane, scheduled to whisk you off to Monaco and back, including accommodations for six at the Hôtel de Paris, offered by Marquis Jet.** In addition, numerous tempting tombola prizes will be won.

The 2004 Swiss Red Cross Ball promises to be a unique gala and an important fund raising platform in support of Victims of Forgotten Disasters.



Dominique Brustlein and Gabrielle Haddad, Co-Chairmen



René Rhinow,
President of SRC



Comtesse Maily Zegna, Member of
Honorary Committee, and Mary
Hofstetter, Executive Director SRC Ball



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The Swiss Red Cross is committed to help the most vulnerable men, women, children, families and communities in Switzerland and in other countries, in a spirit of humanity. It is alleviating suffering and the misfortune of victims that have been "forgotten" because they are no longer in the media spotlight. Thanks to the generosity of our friends, guests, donors and sponsors, the Swiss Red Cross will once again have the resources to help poverty-stricken populations, and give them back some hope for the future, in particular among the younger generations.

*The President
of the Swiss Red Cross
René Rhinow*

Chopard

Red Cross:

the very words evoke charity, courage, abnegation and support for others...

Caroline Gruosi-Scheufele, Vice-President of Chopard, was fortunate enough to be born to a united and loving family, in a country that is not at war, and to receive an excellent education. These joys have led her to the conviction that "when life has given us so much, we must give back something of this happiness on behalf of those for whom life is a daily struggle."

In the words of Caroline Gruosi-Scheufele, "This is the main reason for my involvement and my support for the work of this exceptional charitable cause."

Caroline Gruosi-Scheufele



Que Beau-Rivage soutienne activement la Croix-Rouge est une évidence quand on sait que depuis bientôt 140 ans cette maison reçoit ceux et celles qui oeuvrent à rendre notre monde meilleur pour le plus grand nombre.

Certains lieux ont une âme.

D'autres ont également un cœur qui, ce soir bat très fort à l'unisson du vôtre en pensant à ceux qui n'ont pas eu notre chance et, qu'en plus, l'oubli est en passe d'achever.

Très sincèrement merci de votre généreux engagement à nos côtés.

Jacques Mayer



While champagne is usually associated with happy, joyful events, Moët & Chandon has always made a point of being involved in those charity events, where the proceedings go directly to the less fortunate. This is why Moët & Chandon is supporting the Red Cross Ball for Victims of forgotten Disasters.

André Peier





Ibrahim Ferrer &
Omara Portuondo

THE SWISS RED CROSS WELCOMES the BUENA VISTA SOCIAL CLUB™ Starring Omara Portuondo and Special Guest Ibrahim Ferrer

By Hilary Dayton Busch

The Swiss Red Cross is honoured by the presence of the well-known vocalists Omara Portuondo and Special Guest Ibrahim Ferrer of the Buena Vista Social Club™, at its most important fundraiser.

Despite being virtually unknown by international audiences until the 1990's, these two Cuban artists have done much to bring the captivating rhythms and soulful sounds of traditional Cuban music to the world, during their long and unusual careers.

Following the initial success of Wim Wenders' film, "The Buena Vista Social Club™" and its tremendously successful soundtrack, Ms. Portuondo and Mr. Ferrer, both in their 70's, are now finally recognized as the global talents they always were and continue to be.

Through their artistry, we are able to recognize something of the human experience, set to music. Their voices convey an unusual sense of intimacy with their subject matter and we are won over. Whether they sing of love lost and found, or hope, or joy... it is our story that they are telling. And to listen is to forge a miraculous connection between ourselves and art.

Perhaps it takes almost a lifetime to be able to sing so movingly, that we believe. Suddenly, the authenticity and richness of this music transport us, and "Havana nights" become our own.





Omara Portuondo was born in Havana, Cuba in 1930. In 1952, she formed a female vocal quartet with her sister led by pianist Aida Diestro. They became one of the most important groups in Cuban musical history, known as the Cuarteto Las D'Aida.

Her first debut solo album, 'Magia Negra' appeared in 1959, fusing Cuban music with American jazz. Throughout the Sixties and Seventies she continued to record and tour, performing mainly in communist countries. Among her best works was an album she recorded in 1984 with Adalberto Alvarez and later, two albums for the Spanish label, Nubenegra in the Nineties, 'Palabras' and 'Desafíos'.

Omara has been called the Edith Piaf of Cuba. For more than half a century she has been actively performing in the cabarets of Havana and now, internationally, bringing her rich, unique voice to a global audience. Hidden treasures, once discovered, are always the most extraordinary.

However, it wasn't until 1995 that the opportunity of a lifetime presented itself when producer Ry Cooder arrived in Cuba to record the Buena Vista sessions. Omara was in same studio at the time and was asked to sing the bolero 'Veinte años' with Compay Segundo. It became one of the highlights of the Grammy Award

winning album. After this breakthrough experience, Omara was able to enjoy wider international exposure and success.

She toured internationally and continued to record with the Buena Vista Social Club™, appearing on the follow-up album, 'Buena Vista Social Club presents... Ibrahim Ferrer', singing with him the well-known duet 'Silencio'. This bolero in particular, evokes the bitter-sweet quality of Cuban music, while fusing to perfection the well-matched vocals of Ferrer and Portuondo.

In 2000, Omara took center stage with the release of the third album in the Buena Vista series, 'Buena Vista Social Club™ presents... Omara Portuondo'. For this third collaborative effort, she was accompanied by Rubén González, Orlando 'Cachaito' López, Manuel 'Guajiro' Mirabal and Jesus 'Aguaje' Ramos, featuring guest appearances by Ibrahim Ferrer. Its release was welcomed with critical acclaim and was followed by an extremely successful tour in 2000-2001.

In September 2003, Omara returned to the studio to record her second solo album "Flor de Amor", due for release in 2004. The "Flor de Amor Tour" is planned this year during which she will be accompanied by a core band of some of Cuba's finest musicians.



Ibrahim Ferrer was born in 1927 near Santiago and is now considered one of the world's greatest singers of traditional Cuban music.

In a career spanning more than sixty years, Ibrahim Ferrer first enjoyed local success in Cuba with his 1955 hit record, 'El platanar de Bartolo' with Orquesta Chepín-Chóven, Santiago's number one group. Later, he worked in Havana with the Orquesta Ritmo Oriental and Beny Moré, one of the most important Cuban musicians of the twentieth century. He then reunited with Pacho Alonso's group, Los Bocucos, with whom he remained until his retirement from the music world in 1991.

During those years, he sang mainly guarachas or up-tempo songs, but longed to sing the slower, more evocative ballads called boleros. At the time of his retirement, he realized that over the course of his career, the opportunity to expand his repertoire and foster an international reach hadn't materialized. His quiet success remained largely unknown outside Cuba.

Then, seven years ago, the soft quality of his voice was brought to the attention of producer Ry Cooder for the Buena Vista sessions and in particular for the bolero, 'Dos gardenias'. Ferrer remembers, "Ry Cooder



Omara Portuondo &
Ibrahim Ferrer

and Nick Gold were in the control room. I didn't know who they were, but it seemed they liked my voice. And when I sang the bolero 'Dos gardenias', they really noticed me. I still can't believe that I went there to record one number, and I ended up singing almost all of them. And I had been chosen as a bolero singer!"

The Grammy Award winning soundtrack produced by Cooder for Wim Wenders' film went on to sell 5 million copies and subsequently catapulted Ferrer's talent onto the international stage. There he remains, as a symbol of Cuban culture, personal triumph, and a music form that is as unique and emotive as his talent.

Since the overwhelming success of The Buena Vista Social Club™, Ibrahim has gone on to record two solo albums, including the 2004 Grammy Award winning, 'Buenos Hermanos' as Best Traditional Latin Tropical Album. His tours play to sold out, enthusiastic audiences worldwide, who recognize him as one of the world's greatest vocalists. At 72, his response to such acclaim is characteristically modest: "I don't want you to think I say this with pride, but I'm happy, I'm here and I'm fighting!" It seems that great art knows no boundaries.

Information and registration:

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Donations:

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account 30-4200-3; or UBS, 3001 Bern, Clearing number
235, SRC account 694.200.01Q