For Immediate Release September 25, 2019

Schedule announced for Puerto Rican super-group Plena Libre’s 2019-20 UChicago residencies

Activities will include performances, dance workshops, round-table discussions, and more.

Chicago (Hyde Park) – The University of Chicago Department of Music is pleased to announce the schedule of events for Puerto Rican band Plena Libre’s 2019-20 residencies. The band, which is the University’s newest Don Michael Randel Ensemble-in-Residence, will participate in a rich variety of events and programs, including concerts, workshops, moderated public discussions, classroom visits, and more.

Nominated for multiple GRAMMY and Latin GRAMMY awards, Plena Libre has earned acclaim for taking the once-dormant style of plena music and reclaiming it for a new generation. Featuring three vocalists, bass, drums, horns, and requinto guitar, the group infuses their contemporary Caribbean compositions with a deep sense of the unique indigenous musical traditions developed in Puerto Rico over a century ago.

“The University is honored to welcome Plena Libre as the Don Michael Randel Ensemble-in-Residence,” said David Levin, Senior Advisor to the Provost for Arts. “We look forward to sharing the distinctive musical style of Puerto Rico through a wide variety of adventurous and creative programming.”

Over three separate weeks in November, March, and April-May, Plena Libre will give four public performances, accompany three Puerto Rican dance workshops, lead workshops with University instrumental ensembles, participate in luncheon discussions with the Center for Latin American Studies, visit music and Spanish language classes, and more. The group will also offer a matinee performance for Chicago Public Schools students and make visits to the University of Chicago Laboratory School, the Merit School of Music, and the Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center.

“We are very excited to be coming back to Chicago once again,” said Gary Nuñez, founder, music director, and bassist of Plena Libre. “We have made many friends in the area and have developed some great fans performing there multiple times over the years and are thrilled to bring our plena and bomba rhythms to the University of Chicago and around the city. Hasta pronto!”

A detailed schedule of events is available below. All events are open to the public and free of charge, except where indicated. More information can be found at music.uchicago.edu. Learn more about Plena Libre at www.plenalibre.com.
The Don Michael Randel Ensemble in Residence program is made possible by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation in recognition of noted musicologist and UChicago President Emeritus Randel, to provide a permanent home for world class musicians at the University. Ensembles holding the residency have been the Pacifica Quartet (2013-16), Imani Winds (2016-18), Sweet Honey in the Rock (2018-19), and Plena Libre (2019-20).

**Performances**

**Meet Plena Libre**
Thursday, November 7 | 7:00 pm | Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E 60th Street

*Public reception starting at 5:30 pm*

The public is invited to meet Plena Libre in a reception in the Gidwitz Lobby at the Logan Center of the Arts starting at 5:30 pm. Then, at 7:00 pm, the band offers an informal performance with Q&A.

**Plena Libre with the University Symphony Orchestra**
Saturday, March 7 | 8:00 pm | Mandel Hall, 1131 E 57th Street

Plena Libre performs with the University of Chicago Symphony Orchestra.

**Plena Libre World Premieres by UChicago Composers**
Friday, May 1 | 7:30 pm | Logan Center for the Arts, 915 E 60th Street

Plena Libre premieres brand new music written by graduate student composers at the University of Chicago.

**Plena Libre**
Sunday, May 3 | 3:00 pm | Mandel Hall, 1131 E 57th Street

*2:00 pm talk with University of Chicago Assistant Professor of Music Jessica Baker*

Plena Libre caps its UChicago residency with a mainstage performance in Mandel Hall.

*Tickets required for this performance. Visit chicagopresents.uchicago.edu or call 773.702.ARTS (2787).*

**Dance Workshops**

Ivelisse Diaz, co-founder of *La Escuelita Bombera De Corazon* and lead vocalist of *Bomba con Buya* in Chicago, leads instructional workshops for dancers of all backgrounds and skill-levels.

**Bomba dance workshop**
Wednesday, November 6 | 7:00 pm | International House, 1414 E 59th Street

**Plena dance workshop**
Thursday, March 5 | 6:30 pm | Bartlett Hall, 5640 S University Avenue

**Bomba dance workshop**
**Lunch Roundtables**

Plena Libre is joined by special guests from the University and community in luncheon discussions co-sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies.

Luncheon discussion: “Rhythm as Material” with composer Tania León, moderated by composer Augusta Read Thomas  
Friday, November 8 | 12:00 pm | University of Chicago, Classics Hall Rm 110, 1010 E 59th Street

Luncheon discussion with Dain Borges, Associate Professor of History, and Omar Torres-Kortright, Executive Director of the Segundo Ruiz Belvis Cultural Center  
Thursday, March 5 | 12:30 pm | International House, 1414 E 59th Street

Luncheon discussion: “Plena as an Afro-Cuban musical form” moderated by Agnes Lugo-Ortiz  
Thursday, April 30 | 12:30 pm | International House, 1414 E 59th Street

**Public Workshops**

**Workshop I with the UC Percussion Ensemble**  
Tuesday, November 5 | 7:30 pm | Fulton Recital Hall, Goodspeed Hall, 1010 East 59th Street

**Workshop II with the UC Percussion Ensemble**  
Thursday, April 30 | 7:00 pm | Fulton Recital Hall, Goodspeed Hall, 1010 East 59th Street

###