



News Release

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Re: WSCC's Humankind Series to focus on Cuba

SCOTTVILLE - West Shore Community College embarks on its 2019-2020 Humankind series with a presentation by Ruth Behar, who will be reading from a variety of her texts, poetry and prose, and reflecting on her experiences as a Cuban immigrant, on Sept. 12, at 7 p.m., at Ludington's Public Library.

Year three of the Humankind series will focus on cultural, social and political parallels between Cuba and the U.S. The series of lectures, exhibits, activities and performances will provide diverse perspectives on a country that has a complicated relationship with our own.

Behar was born in Havana, Cuba and grew up in New York City. She is the Victor Haim Perera Collegiate Professor of Anthropology at the University of Michigan, where she is affiliated with programs in women's studies, Latina/Latino studies, and Latin American and Caribbean studies.

Her honors include a MacArthur "Genius" Award, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, a Distinguished Alumna Award from Wesleyan University, and being named a "Great Immigrant" by the Carnegie Corporation.

Known for her ability to move seamlessly between anthropology and the arts in her writing, teaching, and public speaking, Behar has worked as an ethnographer in Spain, Mexico, and Cuba.

A longtime return traveler to her native Cuba, she is the author of *An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba*, which offers an unusual blend of chronicles, stories, and images. In *Traveling Heavy: A Memoir in between Journeys*, she calls herself a specialist in "homesickness," telling the story of how she came to define her identity through a lifetime of travel.

Behar has written editorials about Cuba for the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *Washington Post*, and the *Huffington Post*. Behar also wrote, directed, and produced *Adio Kerida/Goodbye Dear Love: A Cuban Sephardic Journey*, an 82-minute video documentary distributed by Women Make Movies that has been shown in film festivals around the world. Most recently she has published the widely acclaimed children's book, *Lucky Broken Girl*.

During her visit to the area, Behar will also perform a bookmaking workshop and demonstration for the college's students and area high school art/creative writing students.

"Bookmaking is a very important form of cultural expression in Cuba, and Ruth has partnered with Cuban artists to produce visually powerful and expressive editions of her poems. We are excited to have Ruth in our community for the first event in our series about Cuba," said WSCC Professor of English Seán Henne.

Through connections with the cultures and peoples of Cuba, Humankind offers an opportunity to explore the similarities and differences between our lives here in the U.S. and lives of those throughout the world.

For information about the entire series, contact humankind@westshore.edu or call 845-6211. All Humankind events are free and open to the public.

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