4 APRIL 2026 **VOLUME 55**

NEWSLETTER

A VISION OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN COUNTRIES

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER COVERING LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN ISSUES A PROJECT BETWEEN GREEN ZONE FOUNDATION AND TELESUR



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Academic Ballet Encounter Reaches Cuban Communities



Brazilian Novel by Ana Paula Maia shortlisted for the 2026 International Booker Prize

The narrative focuses on life in a remote penal colony in Brazil, where the lines between justice and cruelty become blurred....



Cuba's Piña Colada Music Festival Opens its Doors in April

This edition of the Piña Festival will prioritize the community aspect and maintain artistic quality despite program adjustments...



Peru Requests UNESCO to Declare the Marinera an Intangible Cultural Heritage

Peru is promoting international recognition of the marinera dance before UNESCO as part of its strategy to preserve intangible



Uruguay: The Historical Reason for 'Tourism Week'

The designation "Tourism Week in Uruguay" guarantees state neutrality and promotes cultural and economic activities during

GZ Language
Green Zone Foundation
emsyma@gz.foundation
gzflanguage

www.gz.foundation/language

GREEN ZONE FOUNDATION



Brazilian Novel by Ana Paula Maia shortlisted for the 2026 International Booker Prize

The narrative focuses on life in a remote penal colony in Brazil, where the lines between justice and cruelty become blurred.

The work ‘As Above, So Below’ is among the six selected for the prestigious award that recognizes fiction translated into English.

The prize organization confirmed this Tuesday that Brazilian author Ana Paula Maia is among the finalists for the 2026 International Booker Prize.

Her book, originally published in 2017 and translated into English by Canadian Padma Viswanathan in 2025, is the shortest text in the competition at 101 pages.

The narrative focuses on life in a remote penal colony in Brazil, where the lines between justice and cruelty blur, according to the official statement.

Maia and Viswanathan are vying for the £50,000 prize, which is split equally between the author and translator. Each finalist receives £5,000, divided equally. In this edition, Maia is the only Latin American author recognized, following the elimination of Argentinian Gabriela Cabezón Cámara from the initial shortlist of thirteen books

The list of finalists is completed by works from Germany, Bulgaria, France, and Taiwan. Titles such as ‘The Nights Are Quiet in Tehran’ by Shida Bazyar, about an Iranian family marked by exile, and ‘The Director’ by Daniel Kehlmann, which addresses the career of a filmmaker in Nazi Germany, complete the list. Also competing are ‘The Witch’ by Marie NDiaye and ‘Taiwan Travelogue’ by Yáng Shuāng-zǐ.

Of the six finalists, five are women, as are four of the translators, representing eight nationalities across four continents and five original languages.

Natasha Brown, president of the jury, stated that the list offers a journey through the best of translated fiction, with stories that span different periods of the last century.

Brown added that, although there is hardship and loneliness, each work leaves a feeling of hope and humanity, with characters that will remain in readers’ memories.

The winner will be announced on May 19 at the Tate Modern museum in London. The prize will add to the list of authors honored in previous years, such as Han Kang and Olga Tokarczuk, who later received the Nobel prize in literature.



Cuba's Piña Colada Music Festival Opens its Doors in April

This edition of the Piña Festival will prioritize the community aspect and maintain artistic quality despite program adjustments.

The cultural event will take place from April 2nd to 5th.

During an appearance on national television, singer-songwriter Arnaldo Rodríguez, president of the Festival and director of the Arnaldo y su Talisman group, emphasized that this year community issues will take priority over other aspects.

The musician stressed that the program adjustments do not imply a decrease in the level of artistic quality, maintaining the standard of the event.

This year, the cultural initiative will be held under the slogan "Culture, Tradition, and Modernity." The event will pay tribute to the 40th anniversary of the Hermanos Saíz Association (AHS), the Union of Young Communists, the José Martí Pioneer Organization, and the Ciego de Ávila-born singer Lucy Safont.



The province is preparing to host the event at the city's Teatro Principal, designated as the central venue. Other venues include the provincial branches of the Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba (UNAJC), Artex, the Patio El Mulato Acelerao cultural center, and the Teatro Reguero in Morón, among others.

Rodríguez reaffirmed that this is a scaled-down edition, adapted to the current circumstances, but the collective goal is to ensure there is no cultural blackout.

The initiative will begin in the city of Morón with the El Águila de la Trocha parade, a tribute to the province's traditions and cultural identity.

Among the artists invited to this Piña Colada festival are Niurka Reyes, the duo Buena Fe, Nelson Valdés, Kíkiri de Cisneros, and Santa Masiel. Additionally, the Latir Avileño cultural campaign will take place.

Due to the current situation in the country, the 10th Music and Youth Symposium has been postponed until August; however, some discussion forums are planned. The musician concluded by declaring: "We want culture to continue being a beacon of light for our people amidst these challenges; we will keep the culture of Ciego de Ávila and Cuba alive."



Academic Ballet Encounter Reaches Cuban Communities

The 31st International Meeting extends its training program to community spaces in Havana, while linking dance, history and public participation.

The 31st International Encounter of Academies for Ballet Teaching developed its community component at the Cabildo Quisicuaba Sociocultural Project, located in the Los Sitios neighborhood of Central Havana.

The event brought together national institutions to showcase dance, theater, and music pieces, facilitating direct access to artistic training for the public. The program will run until April 4, coinciding with the centennial commemoration of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro and the anniversary of the founding of the José Martí Pioneer Organization and the Union of Young Communists.



The program featured works performed by students from specialized Cuban schools. The Vocational Workshop of the Fernando Alonso National Ballet School performed Tiempo de Vals and La Ternura. The National Dance School presented En Clave, while the Olivian Danza company presented Tango para un Encuentro.

The Corina Mestre National School of Theater presented a theatrical showcase, and the group Todo Concuerda performed Mozart's Alla Turca alongside Ernesto Lecuona's Comparsa. The day concluded with a tribute to Benny Moré, presented by the L y 19 Elementary Dance School, which captivated the audience.

Lien Lucía García, vice president of the Quisicuaba City Council, stated that "we are proud to be able to celebrate this event at our institution, as communities are a vital artery for national artistic work." She added that the institution supports a long-standing sociocultural project and that bringing artistic expressions to neighborhoods is fundamental to cultural dynamism.

For her part, pianist Lya Azul, a member of Todo Concuerda, explained that her group "fuses classical and popular music" and emphasized that the event allows them "to showcase our talent at such an important event as the Meeting of Academies for Ballet Teaching and, at the same time, bring our work to the community."

This edition of the Academic Ballet Meeting brings together participants from national and foreign academies, reinforcing its international character and its role in the training of new generations of dancers.

Peru Requests UNESCO to Declare the Marinera an Intangible Cultural Heritage



Peru is promoting international recognition of the marinera dance before UNESCO as part of its strategy to preserve intangible cultural heritage.

The Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Affairs submitted the dossier to UNESCO to include the marinera, a traditional dance from the Peruvian coast with more than two centuries of history, on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The evaluation process will conclude in 2027, after analysis by the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

Peru's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Carlos Herrera, delivered the dossier entitled 'Marinera: Traditional Regional Forms of Dance, Music and Song' to Fumiko Ohinata, Secretary of the 2003 Convention.

Herrera emphasized that this artistic expression contributes to the construction and reaffirmation of is practiced not only in the Andean country, but also in various parts of the world by Peruvian communities abroad.

The marinera is a mestizo cultural expression resulting from the interaction of indigenous, African, and European traditions, practiced in Peru for over two centuries. It represents, through dance, the courtship of a man and a woman.

Recognized as a Cultural Heritage of the Nation since 1986, this dance remains alive in various regions of the country and reflects the cultural diversity and creativity of its practitioners, contributing to social cohesion and cultural development, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated.

The performance of the marinera, one of the main expressions of Creole music, reaches its peak at the annual festival where the best dancers are awarded prizes in various age categories, both individual and group.

The dossier will be evaluated during the period 2026–2027 and could eventually be inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in December 2027.

Currently, Peru has 15 elements inscribed on the lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage, reflecting its active policy of safeguarding and promoting living heritage, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs added.



Uruguay: The Historical Reason for 'Tourism Week'

The designation "Tourism Week in Uruguay" guarantees state neutrality and promotes cultural and economic activities during the 2026 holidays.

Uruguay distinguishes itself from the rest of Latin America by not officially celebrating Holy Week in 2026, replacing the date with Tourism Week.

This measure, consolidated under the government of José Batlle y Ordóñez, responds to a historical process linked to the construction of a secular state, designed to "guarantee the neutrality of the secular state."

The civil calendar maintains a structure detached from dogma, prioritizing institutional rest and the organization of cultural and recreational activities.

The origins of this policy date back to the 1860s, when the government began the secularization of cemeteries and established independent civil registries. Although the population was predominantly Catholic, the lack of a consolidated ecclesiastical structure facilitated the transition.

The definitive impetus came at the beginning of the 20th century, when the Batlle administration promoted modernization based on rationalist ideals.

These reforms paved the way for subsequent legislation that defined the organization of the national calendar. Among its measures were divorce at the sole discretion of the woman, the prohibition of religious instruction in public schools, and the removal of Catholic symbols from state buildings.

Through specific legislation, religious references were eliminated from holidays with the express objective o "constructing an official calendar without religious references." This transformation encompassed multiple dates: Christmas was redesignated as Family Day, Three Kings' Day became Children's Day, and the Marian feast day was renamed Beach Day. The modification consolidated a model of public administration focused on the civility of non-working days.

Currently, Tourism Week in Uruguay coincides with the Christian commemoration, but its focus is exclusively on rest, domestic travel, and economic promotion. During this period, national events take place: Criolla Week in Montevideo, with rodeo competitions; Beer Week in Paysandú, one of the most popular festivals; and the Tour of Uruguay, a historic cycling race that has traversed the country since 1939.

These events solidify the period as a strategic time for domestic tourism and economic activity. Cities like Montevideo, Paysandú, and Colonia del Sacramento host traditional fairs and competitions that attract visitors from various regions.

The institutional stance does not limit religious practice. The Catholic Church continues to celebrate Holy Week privately throughout the country.

By 2026, holidays will retain their official names, "promoting rest from work and domestic consumption without altering freedom of worship." Uruguay thus reaffirms its history of separation between public and religious institutions, maintaining a unique regional model.


GZ Language
Green Zone Foundation
omayma@gz.foundation
gzflanguage
GZ
FOUNDATION
GREEN ZONE FOUNDATION