

# Cuba en Tampa

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This small collection of images of black Cubans in Tampa, Florida, is a reference to the visibility of Afro-Cubans in this city after the establishment of the cigarmaking community there in 1886, and their considerable invisibility in official history, documentation and popular memory about Cuban Tampa.

The first photos in this essay\* affirm the integral role played by black Cubans from Ybor City and West Tampa (communities within Tampa) in the Cuban wars for independence and acknowledges only a few of the individuals and institutions that influenced the formation of the city's tobacco-related and civic culture. The later photos offer a broader perspective of the place of Cuba and Cubanness in the city of Tampa, to which, for example, Cuban cigar leaf arrived from the island for the manufacture of "double *claro*" Havana cigars, which for a number of decades caused cigar production in Tampa to surpass even that of Cuba. The history, industry and culture of the island marked and continue to influence this city in Florida. This is evident in, for example, the recently painted graffiti in West Tampa, the fact there is a República de Cuba street in the heart of Ybor City, the botánica stores that sell articles for the practice of Afro-Cuban religions, and the street vendors who sell fruits and vegetables who are so common in Cuba.

If the city of Tampa constitutes an extremely important chapter in Cuban history, it is also true that Cuba can be found in many of the historical chapters of the city of Tampa and its people.

\* Archival photos appear courtesy of the University of South Florida Digital Photo Collection.



*Training of Mambi soldiers in Tampa. 1898*



*Tampa Cuban  
cigarmakers on strike.  
1899*



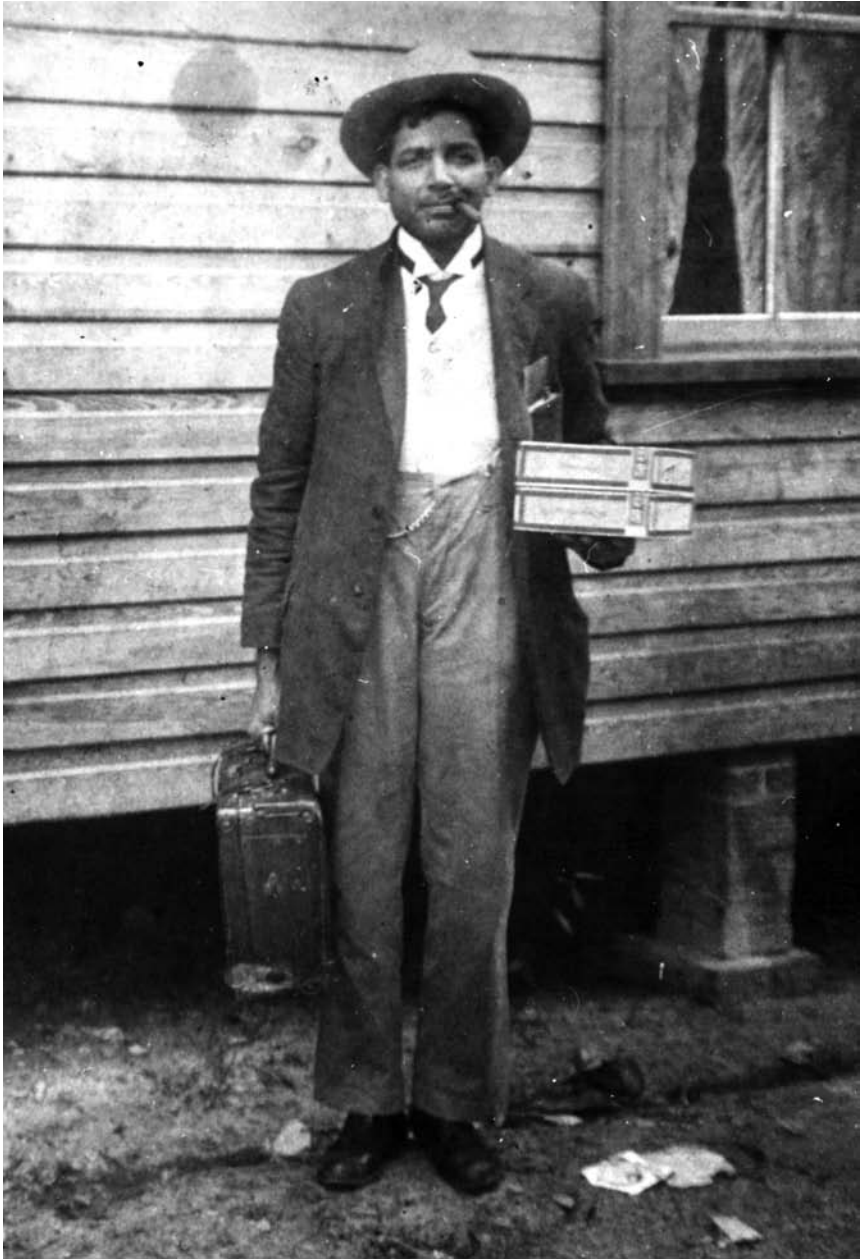
*Founders of La Unión Martí Maceo Society. 1904*



*Pablo Casellas Family*



*Hipólito Arenas, Negro Leagues baseball  
player*



*Pablo Casellas, cigarmaker and civic leader*



*Marti-Maceo theater notice. 1940*



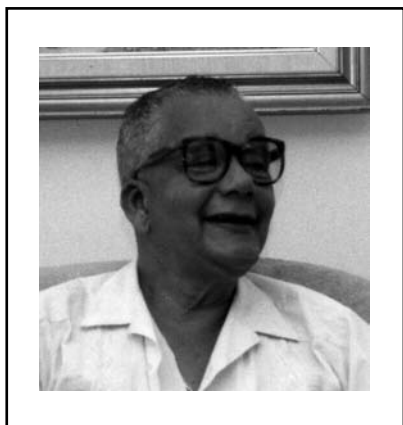
*African American dance in La Unión Martí-Maceo*



*Dignified Afro-Cuban Woman*



*Juan Mallea, former Martí-Maceo president*



*Manuel Alfonso, former Martí-Maceo president*



*Carl Upmann, Inc. cigar factory in Tampa*



*Wartime coat of arms in Circulo Cubano window*



*Patriotic Cuban graffiti in alley in West Tampa*



*Intersection of República de Cuba Street and Seventh Avenue in Ybor City*



*Botánicas: Stores that sell religious articles associated with Cuban religions of African origin*



*Produce street vendor in West Tampa*

