

Drummers deliver holiday tunes with a Caribbean twist

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"You just want that feeling; there's going to be such a vibe!" says Karen Celestan, senior program manager of Music Rising at Tulane University, about the second "Rump-A-Pum-Pum" A Holiday Drum Summit." The event will take place Saturday (Nov. 16) at 6:30 p.m. in Dixon Hall on the uptown campus, and it is free and open to the public.



Cuban percussionist Alexey Marti performs at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival in 2012. Marti will be one of six musicians performing at the Rump-A-Pum-Pum Holiday Drum Summit on Nov. 16. (Photo from the New Orleans Center for the Gulf South)

Rump-A-Pum-Pum, hosted by Music Rising at Tulane, will consist of a repertoire of familiar holiday songs being played by six virtuoso New Orleans musicians. The songs will be performed as interpretations of the originals, incorporating distinctive New Orleans and Cuban rhythms, techniques and sounds.

"I hand-picked these musicians because I wanted to challenge them with this concept and see how they chose to tackle it," Celestan says. The featured musicians will be New Orleans greats Shannon Powell and Johnny Vidacovich each on a drum

set, Cuban percussionist Alexey Marti, pianist Larry Sieberth, saxophonist Roderick Paulin and bassist Chris Severin.

Music Rising at Tulane is a division of the [New Orleans Center for the Gulf South](#) at Tulane University, which works to research, promote and teach about musical cultures with origins in states touching the Gulf of Mexico: Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas. Cuba is also included in the focus of the center.

Music Rising is an initiative launched by U2's The Edge, legendary music producer Bob Ezrin, and Gibson Guitar chair Henry Juskiewicz in response to the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans' musical culture. Its goal is to restore and preserve NOLA's unique musical tradition through the donation of instruments to New Orleans youth, as well as the development of a coordinate major at Tulane, Musical Cultures of the Gulf South.

“Rump-A-Pum-Pum is just one way in which the center and Music Rising at Tulane can highlight the similarities between the musics of Cuba and New Orleans, and share this interconnectedness with the world,” Celestan says.

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