

A drag show In Havana

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Havana, May 13. SLL photo

May 13, Havana — Almost the moment we arrived at the corner next to the state-owned club, Cabaret Las Vegas, a car with one of our friends from the National Center for Sex Education (Cenesex) stopped by. She called us over to say hello

before going on her way; she had just returned from airing a television roundtable with Mariela Castro Espín and others.

The place was nearly empty because we arrived too early, at 11:00 p.m. But by 1:00 a.m. and the start of the drag show, it was absolutely packed.

I was moved to see community members as well as foreign guests enjoying themselves. We experienced a brief blackout earlier in the night, reminding us of the blockade.

(The electricity came back online quickly, though; this is the only one we have witnessed since being here.)

There was a wide age range represented, from very young to elders. In the crowd, we saw another friend from Cenesex — a trans woman whom we happen to know is 74 years old! Congratulations to her for being a model of strength and determination, as well as grace.

With all the people gathered at tables sharing drinks, there was little room for dancing, though some did. People sat talking and laughing with their arms wrapped around one another. Some kissed.

The drag performers regaled the people not only with style but affection. Throughout their performances, people got up on stage to give them money, hugs, and kisses.

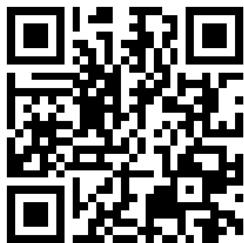
The patrons were relatively mixed. There were masculine-presenting people as well as feminine ones throughout the bar.

Overall there was a strong impression of affection and community.



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