



# Cuba, Adios: A Young Man's Journey to Freedom

*Lorenzo Pablo Martinez*

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DEFINING FREEDOM IN EXILE Between 1960 and 1962 more than 14,000 Cuban children escaped Fidel Castro's communist regime as part of an airlift known as Operación Pedro Pan. LORENZO PABLO MARTÍNEZ was one of these children. In CUBA, ADIÓS: A Young Man's Journey to Freedom, Martínez vividly recounts his participation in a program that bridged two different cultures and achieved great political significance over the years. At eighteen, he forfeits a music scholarship to Prague to accept an unknown future of exile in America without knowing the language, money to pursue an education, or family to help. Plagued by guilt around his sexual identity and having to care for a younger brother, Martínez forges ahead to become the composer of his future; later he opens the door that enable his sisters and parents to join him after a harrowing sojourn in Mexico City. With the same determination, he attends college and pursues a music education, obtaining a master's degree from the Manhattan School of Music, then a doctorate from Columbia University. Even after his music compositions are published and performed on television and at international festivals, Martínez feels restless and spiritually unfulfilled. Until, that is, he is able to define the true music of his freedom. CUBA, ADIÓS is a poignant, thoughtful account of one boy's survival and self-acceptance, written with unflinching honesty and a wry humor.

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