

Interview with Faustino- Triunfo de la Cruz, Honduras ----

Faustino: Come on with the questions. I'm ready.

Ben: Okay, Beto, to start off will you say and spell your name.

F: My name is, uh, Faustino, it's spelled F-A-U-S-T-I-N-O, Faustino, Ramos R-A-M-O-S

B: Very good. Um, I want you to tell me first of all what you do and how you do it and everything.

F: Well, um, I only have about twenty years work in art. Before that I've been, I used to be a seaman. Traveling around the world and I'm very glad for this because I know more about the history, especially Garifuna history and I have a lot to... I've been in Africa and I can compare some of the things I see over, the same things we still using over here. So, I very very glad for this. So in art, uh, when I started this, I was doing just for for my family. One pair of ring with coconut and pair of bracelet for the family, then the rest of the people start seeing it, the other people say, "I need one, I need one, I need one". Now I've been traveling all Central America selling it and I have, I have been giving class for the, for the, for other people so for me I got a lot of people that already learn it from me. And I very glad with this. So I used to go to Roatan Islands, sell over there, but not necessary anymore because some people they learn from me and then they working over there. So not necessary anymore to go to Roatan, I've got people that been learned and then work in selling over there. So they have how to survive and out of drugs and, normally the Garifuna people are years ago, and they know we're, use more drugs than years ago. Now it's the new generation, now it's the uh, looking at turn to be corrupted. Always smoking, and that happens in every way. Especiallly young people get out more education it's a trouble. So with this, I been educated my children and uh, I still work in it. I have 60 years old and I still have power to continue doing the same thing. And uh, I hope the United States, where you coming from, someday they will buy something from us and then we be glad to, someday speak English, someday we gonna show up and we give them a special prize. We make earrings, we make necklace, we make rings, we make, bracelet, we make with the, with the, with the cow, with the coconut, you can see here, this is a coconut. And we have differerent kind of style. We have uh, let's see about 7 different style that we make the coconut. Different style you can see over here and we make pipes, anything you put in, the style burn. Anything. It's a pipe, make it by a small coconut. All Garifuna people are used to, used to use it. Let's see this is a pipe. And we also work with the horn. You can see here, a small horn. We make ring with this, we make buttons with this, we make chalk with it, we make different kind of horn. And uh, by the way, I survive especially so thanks for learn, learn something how to survive with it. Without no, not to be corrupted like other people used to be in different places. And you have been welcome to this place and we waiting for you anytime you come back so you still glad to give any information about life of Garifuna life.

B: Thank you.

F: And over here in this community, we don't have no police. Because normally the village of Garifuna people is not so, fighter. Over here we don't have no police. Police come only when

you call them. Not because they afraid, just because they know that the people is not troublemaker. Because more of the Garifuna... got thirty two village. And no one have police because not necessary, only in case they need it they call them to come. Not because they afraid, only, they know because it is not troublemaker.

Ben: Tell me, what similarities have you seen between la cultura Garifuna y la cultura de Africa?

F: Well, um, the thing is that uh, that time, the, when when our parents come in from Africa, there was no uh, they have no language. I mean can't speak with the people who bring them, or let's see that was uh, slave's time. And then, uh, people, they don't know where they go, where they are coming from. So, just catch them and bring them just, right away and then that time, the people, they start run away. After they slap them in Honduras, because always they keep them tight, so when they loose it then people start running, because they don't want to be slave all the time. So that's why the small places, beginning. Suppose they was living in, in the city, close the city, then look someplace where there have to be, uh, free that's why there's more people that start coming. And they have no school, we don't have no hospital, we don't have nothing, so they still have another, make the life, who they was in Africa. Because when I went to Africa the same smaller, uh, house that we have in Honduras and the same one I see in Africa. Make with the piece of uh, lumber like that, and uh, top that have no, no, not like that so... they have palm, coconut palm and same way. And they were... the place was uh, the Car. The north of Africa. There was Senegal, I've been in Senegal and, and, and also the the number in Garifuna from, from 5 to three thousand, four thousand is the same in French and then the official language in the Car is French. And there was proof that the Garifuna especially, they come in from French places in Africa. People from Haiti, people from, uh, they got two West Indian place there on their name. You got um...

Ben: Jamaica?

F: No, that's English.

Be: It's English?

F: Yeah. You got uh, uh, St. Vincent I believe they speak French.

B. Johnson: Yeah.

F: Uh, Guiana, uh you got um, how do you call that place, there are two French islands in the West Indian and the life over there is very expensive, quite expensive. Haiti is poor. But there's still one, they are very... one of them they have some uh, how do you call vulcan?

Ben/B. Johnson: Volcano

F: One of them have a big one. The more biggest one in the Caribbean is a french place over there. And then, and the number in Garifuna from 5 to 4 thousand is same one in French. That prove that we come in from, from a French place in Africa.

Ben: So tell me why, porque es tan importante mantener estas tradiciones Garifunas? He escuchado mucha gente decir que...

F: Because, because, um, uh, the Garifunas, they never be troublemaker. The garifunas, they don't like to kill. And, and uh, if you come to Garifuna place where you are now, they can, you can stay between hundred, two-hundred Garifuna around you and nobody won't try to do anything bad for you because uh, the Garifuna is a tricking people, that's uh, I mean, you don't have no problem staying between. Then I won't, uh, kill you then I won't uh, do anything bad to you. And that's why, a lot of people like to come over here. And we have right here in Triunfal, we have two guys that married with the Garifuna from from French Canada and French Europe. Yeah we have two, living over here. And we, we have one girl living with Garifuna boy and we have one Italian in Insinada, Insinada beach, we have one Italian, he got a hotel there and the, the other one, the French one, he got a chore, he got a chore, and the Italian one he got kids from sixteen years. He got a hotel and he lives here. And we don't have no problems to stay with us. The French one they have kids for the... twelve years. Yeah, that's right, yeah twelve, he married also with Garifuna. Don't have no problem. Everything gonna be changed like before, before it was only Garifuna living over here. Now it's, now it's everything mixed, mixed up.

B: How do people feel about that?

F: Okay, have no problem. The people understand that uh, must be like that. Because same thing happen, when we have to go somewhere. So, how we going to be allowed somewhere if we not allow somebody with us. So we understand that now the people have a school, and they come in different, but different when the people they have no schools. See? So uh, sometimes we don't have the chance to go to High School because you know that's very expensive. I don't have no chance to go to high school, I was a good pupil in my... when I was in school. But I have no money to support it. I was glad to be, to be uh, uh, captain, to be a selective of our delation that was what it was like when I was young. I like to be captain of big ships. But I have no money to make it, see? But I understand a lot about that because I used to be uh, with the captain on the bridge. And the captain told me, "Okay, you keep on this road and if you see any life in the night, you call me". I sail alone with Dutch Captain with the Chinese Captain, and he understand that if I see anything danger I call him in the night. And he come, and make prove that no dangers. So uh, he, all of them teach me something so I feel like I can navigate, not much but I can, I can do it, you see I can do it because most of the things of the life is, uh, sometimes you can learn something without going to school. Because that's the way the whole life start. Uh, we no doctors, now they have a university, they have a school there, different, that an anology of life. That's right. Any other question?

B: Yeah, what what, and this'll be the last one. What do you think is the future of the Garifuna?

F: Well, uh, that's very important. The future is, uh, over here in all Honduras there have been Garifuna born in different part of the world; they born there. Garifuna born in the states, born in Europe, born in West India, I got a mexican daughter. They born in any capital. So that's mean, that's mean this people, uh, probably some of them, uh, we we can find out that the one who born in the states sometimes the fathers do not speak to them in Garifuna. So they just learn English. Sometimes they are, they are, it's not like Chinese because, you can, Chinese speak Chinese

everywhere then they will use the skills. Or sometimes Garifuna he forget, he forget and then he start just, uh, talk the language where he are. And that can be happen with Honduras who born out of country, the Hondurean, the Garifuna born here in Honduras they keep it, they will keep it for long time because they have instruction to keep it. The only difference is, when, if any Garifuna go to, uh, university, and he a , he a doctor or he a engineer so so he got different kind of surviving. So that's sometimes, they come in here, they not going to be like me. Have patience to attend people, you know, because you don't have time because he works different, you know. That can be the difference in, in, in uh, longest maybe the next 5, ten years. And I believe I gonna stay on 5 more years. I got 60 already and probably in 5 more years it's, all finished. Never know. I don't know want to be 90 years, give trouble, I don't want to do that.

B: One last question, you said something about you'd been given instructions to...

F: Not forget the Garifuna...

B: Yeah. Can you talk a little about that?

F: Yeah, um, a lot of Humanitation, also from the government, they give help us, this house does not belong to me. We have a donation from the government and from the other countries to teach here to the rest of children. And sometimes they come in two three times a week to be learning about that to keep it. You understand? And they have then told us to take the language, to not forget the language because it's uh, culture and tourist people they like to be, come in and see, and sell, make sense? And these people, his father work with me, his father work with me and uh, he went to school here. They start talk Garifuna to them, they start when they can't talk nothing yet, they don't like use no clothes (laughs). Only three years old. That's it. So uh... B: Very good. Any other questions?

F: Any question?

B. Johnson: I think this is good.

F: Anytime you come in over here you need more question or have something to ask, I be give you to answer any question.

B. Johnson: Ud usa internet?

F: No I don't have the possibility to use it and uh, that's why, I hope to have it. But I don't have a... the internet to send email, right? Email. Email. I wish to have one because I want to get communicated. Sometimes you can learn something over there because how we, uh, how understand what happening with all the... if we don't have it. It's very misery. This is not no, um, uh, lujo... how you call it in English?

B. Johnson: Luxury.

F: This is, this is important. Something you want know, you know immediately. Just you know, it's not how I got. I got two, two daughters they got way in the computer and so, they got great in

that. So, uh, but sometimes over here we don't have a, we don't have cable. They using the one, they have the special thing to... traveling email.

B. Johnson: Tigo stick

F: That's really uh, you got to buy that. That costs over here about 4,5 dollars. I buy one but they use cable and we don't have no cable over here. The _____ that we have it sometimes not work for for... that's why we still living like that. With the government we have is not worried like about the poor places, you know, you can't expect nothing good in those corrupted governments. The Latin government is very... always trouble, always trouble and it's... Cuba have uh, internet before us, before... Cuba is poor but they know the internet is important, you know Cuba have internet, let's see, I believe in seventy two. Cuba have already internet and we, Honduras, it start over here, about let's see, maybe about twelve years? Cuba have it in seventy two cause I used to pass on the course of tour, and I always hear... heard radio talking they already have internet.

B: Muy bien. Perfecto. Beto, thank you so much for sitting down with us.

----END OF AUDIO-----