

In Memoriam
Miguel Ángel Céspedes Pino



July 22, 1942 - April 6, 2020

With heavy hearts we inform you that we lost our comrade Miguel Ángel Céspedes Pino to COVID-19 in Montreal on April 6. Miguel was 77. We are informed he died peacefully in his sleep.

Miguel was born in Chile on July 22, 1942. He left his country of birth during the Pinochet dictatorship, at first to study and work in France, following which he came to live and work in Quebec. There he soon joined the work to defend the rights of all, uphold the sovereignty of the peoples of the world and champion the cause of making Canada a zone for peace. In the course of this work, Miguel became a member of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), as well as a founding member of the Parti marxiste-léniniste du Québec, ever upholding Quebec's right to self-determination and the rights of all against state-organized racist attacks and other acts of injustice.

Miguel was a very talented artist. He worked as a window dresser a good part of his life, at The Bay on St-Catherine Street in downtown Montreal. After he retired he was able to devote his life to his art. His complex and colourful paintings of geometric shapes and their 3D structures which he exhibited whenever he could brought great joy to colleagues and friends who reveled in his quiet joie de vivre and fidelity to the principles he stood for his entire life.

We send our most heartfelt sympathies to his comrades in the Party and his many friends. Our deepest condolences also go out to his family, his brothers and sisters and to his many nephews and nieces, whom he dearly cherished. Special thoughts and appreciation for the loss of Miguel go to his dear neighbour and friend Nancy who, for many years, watched over Miguel, just as Miguel watched over her.

“It’s the saddest of news,” Nancy wrote. “Each of us has lost a friend, an exceptional person who changed our lives. For my part, I realize that my day-to-day life will be changed, as for 14 years Miguel and I have looked after each other. He is a friend who over the years has nourished me with stories, projects, love and it is within this sad confinement that my daughter and I will realize this huge loss in our lives. My heart goes out to you. Within the space of our confinement, I hope we are all able to find comfort with those we love.”

Miguel was always present, rain or shine, bone-chilling cold or exhausting heat, at the monthly pickets against the brutal U.S. blockade of Cuba and at all actions in support of the struggles of the Haitian, Palestinian, Venezuelan, and other peoples of the world valiantly fighting for their right to be. Very concerned about Canada’s integration into the U.S. war machine and its policy of appeasement of U.S. imperialist wars of aggression and occupation and its coups d’état in the Americas, Miguel was a stalwart in uniting fellow Montrealers of all nationalities to support the peoples of Cuba, Haiti, Venezuela, Brazil, Bolivia and other countries. Devoted to the cause of making Canada a zone for peace, he did his utmost to collect signatures to demand peace on the Korean Peninsula and make sure the people were not divided by state-organized disinformation spreading Islamophobia and the like. When the people of his native land rose up in 2019, he wholeheartedly joined their struggle to rid themselves once and for all of the Pinochet Constitution. All together we sang as one the anthem Stand Up and Sing -- Victory Will be Ours! which we dedicate to you, our dearest Miguel, on this saddest of occasions.

By decision of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist), the name of Miguel Céspedes will be added to the Party Memorial at Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa.

Miguel, you are forever with us, in our hearts, as one of those precious people who has taken a stand for the progress of society, sharing all your concerns which humanity holds in common, with your comrades, your family, your colleagues and friends. In your quiet determined way, yours was a life that shows us: only in fighting are we unvanquished.