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# The Last Exile and A Cuban in Mayberry

Cuban Research Institute, Florida International University

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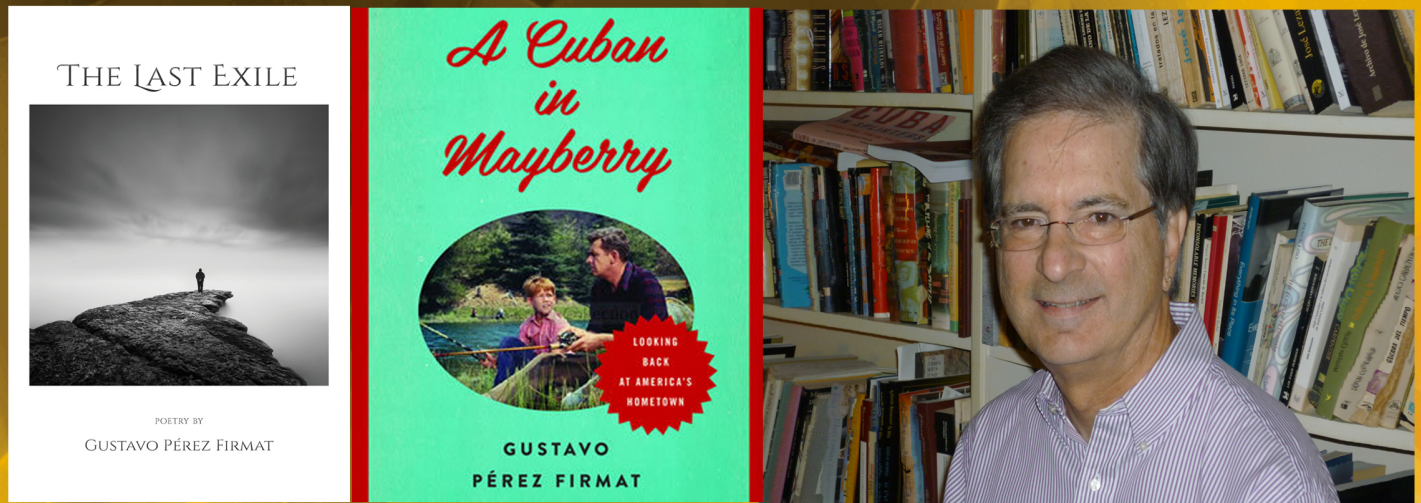
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# The Green School at Books & Books

## Cuban Research Institute



## The Last Exile and A Cuban in Mayberry

Presentation of Books by Author Gustavo Pérez Firmat

Friday, June 3, 2016 | 8:00 PM | Books & Books | 265 Aragon Ave., Coral Gables

An exile's vacillating search for a second home: this is the overriding theme of Gustavo Pérez Firmat's two most recent books, *A Cuban in Mayberry* (2014) and *The Last Exile* (2016). In *A Cuban in Mayberry*, Pérez Firmat approaches one of the most popular programs in the history of American television, *The Andy Griffith Show*, from a unique perspective, that of someone who has never experienced the rootedness that Andy and his fellow Mayberrians take for granted. By weaving his personal recollections of exile with an analysis of the show, he makes a convincing case that the sitcom's lasting relevance emerges from its depiction of the intimacy of person and place.

This intimacy, or its absence, forms the central subject of the poems in *The Last Exile*, where the author, having grown up in exile, reflects on what it means to grow old in exile. Envious of those who have moved on but unwilling to do so himself, the "last exile" of the title is a Noah who refuses dry land: "Fifty-five years later, the Deluge long ended, everyone has left the Ark—except him."

Born in Cuba and raised in Miami, Dr. Gustavo Pérez Firmat is the David Feinson Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University. A writer and scholar, he is the author of more than a dozen books, among them *Life on the Hyphen* (1994/2012), *Next Year in Cuba* (1995/2000), *Scar Tissue* (2007), and *The Havana Habit* (2010).

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