

attained the rank of general in 1797 for his service in Italy. Leclerc married Pauline Bonaparte in 1797 and played an important role in Napoleon's coup against the Directory in 1799.

In 1801, Napoleon selected Leclerc to lead a French expedition against Toussaint Louverture and the black rebels of Saint-Domingue. Leclerc encountered unexpected resistance from the rebels, attempted to restore slavery in the former colony, and arrested Toussaint L'Ouverture. He then contracted yellow fever and died at Cap Français. At the time of his death, Jean-Jacques Dessalines had organized the island's blacks for victory and independence from France.

See also Dessalines, Jean Jacques; Louverture, Toussaint.

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THOMAS O. OTT

LECONTE, MICHEL CINCINNATUS (?–1912). Michel Cincinnatus Leconte (*d.* 8 August 1912), president of Haiti (1911–1912). Leconte was one of six Haitian presidents who ruled for very brief periods between 1911 and 1915, an era of chronic political instability that encouraged the U.S. military to intervene in Haitian affairs in 1915. Leconte staged a successful coup against President Antoine Simone. Lasting

only from 14 August 1911 to 8 August 1912, Leconte's presidency was subject to the pressures produced by U.S. and German banking and commercial interests that were competing for control over Haitian economic life. With the support of the German merchants in Haiti, Leconte sought to appease native elite elements unhappy about the corruption that had occurred in Simone's dealings with U.S. bankers and railroad businessmen. U.S. diplomatic pressure, as epitomized by the visit of U.S. Secretary of State Philander Knox, encouraged him to impose order upon the country. Leconte reorganized the army and began developing a system of public education before he was killed in a mysterious explosion at the presidential palace in Port-au-Prince.

See also Haiti.

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PAMELA MURRAY

LECUONA Y CASADO, ERNESTO (1895–1963). Ernesto Lecuona y Casado (*b.* 6 August 1895; *d.* 29 November, 1963), Cuban pianist and composer. Lecuona, born in Guanabacoa, began to play the piano when he was barely four years old—he had to climb on a box to reach the keyboard. As the great Ignacy Jan Paderewski once noted, he gave the impression that “he had nothing to learn. Nature had made him a prodigious pianist.” Thus pianists sometimes have difficulty playing many of his works because they were composed by an extraordinary master of the keyboard. He had the same natural gift for composing. Many times his works went straight to the publisher without Lecuona's having played them even once.

In this somewhat undisciplined fashion Lecuona's creative genius produced three groups of works. The first encompasses the bulk of his early *boleros*, *guarachas*, and *criollas*—Cuban music with

European roots. The second is made up of Afro-Cuban compositions, which he began to write around 1920, the best known of which is probably the elegant and sensuous dance “La Comparsa.” The third, less numerous group is his Spanish-style works, among which the seven pieces that form his suite *Andalucía* stand out. It is said that the celebrated French musician Maurice Ravel believed that the semiclassical “Malagueña,” one of these Spanish-style works, was more melodic and beautiful than his own “Bolero.” Lecuona also wrote a number of works for the theater, from frivolous revues to tragic zarzuelas (Spanish operettas). Many of his best-known songs come from his stage work, among them “Siboney,” one of his most popular pieces outside Cuba.

Plácido Domingo, the world-acclaimed tenor, won the 1985 Grammy Award for Latin American songs for his performance of “Always in My Heart,” the theme song that Lecuona wrote for the film of the same title, released in the early 1940s. Lecuona died in Santa Cruz de Tenerife, Spain.

See also **Bolero; Theater.**

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JOSÉ M. HERNÁNDEZ

film production and was able to gain financial support for his first feature film. This debut was his acclaimed *Reed: México insurgente* (1970), which depicts and demystifies the Mexican Revolution. A series of noted and controversial films followed. *Frida, naturaleza viva* (1985) played an important part in establishing Leduc’s reputation. One of the most creative and original directors of current Latin American cinema, Leduc is equally adept at narrative film and documentary. He has consistently preferred to work as an independent film director. Leduc’s other films are *Historias prohibidas de Pulgarcito* (1981), *La cabeza de la hidra* (1983), *Como vas* (1989), *Barroco* (1990), *Latino Bar* (1991), *Dollar Mambo* (1993), and *El Cobrador: In God We Trust* (2006).

See also **Cinema: Since 1990.**

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DAVID MACIEL

LEDUC, PAUL (1942–). Paul Leduc is a Mexican film director. Leduc was born on March 11, 1942, in Mexico City, where he attended the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) and studied architecture and theater before receiving a scholarship to study film direction at the Institute of Graduate Film Studies in Paris. Upon his return to Mexico in 1967, he organized numerous film clubs and began his career as an assistant director and producer of various important documentaries. Under the government of Luis Echevarría (1970–1976), Leduc took advantage of the increased support for alternative

LEeward ISLANDS. The Lesser Antilles of the eastern Caribbean are divided into the Leeward and the Windward Islands. The Leeward Islands were so named because ships sailing south from the Atlantic did so on the leeward (sheltered, or facing the direction toward which the wind blows) side of the islands. The islands are administered by the United States (the U.S. Virgin Islands), the Netherlands (Saba, St. Eustatius, and the southern part of St. Martin), France (Guadeloupe, the northern part of St. Martin, St. Barthélemy, and a few