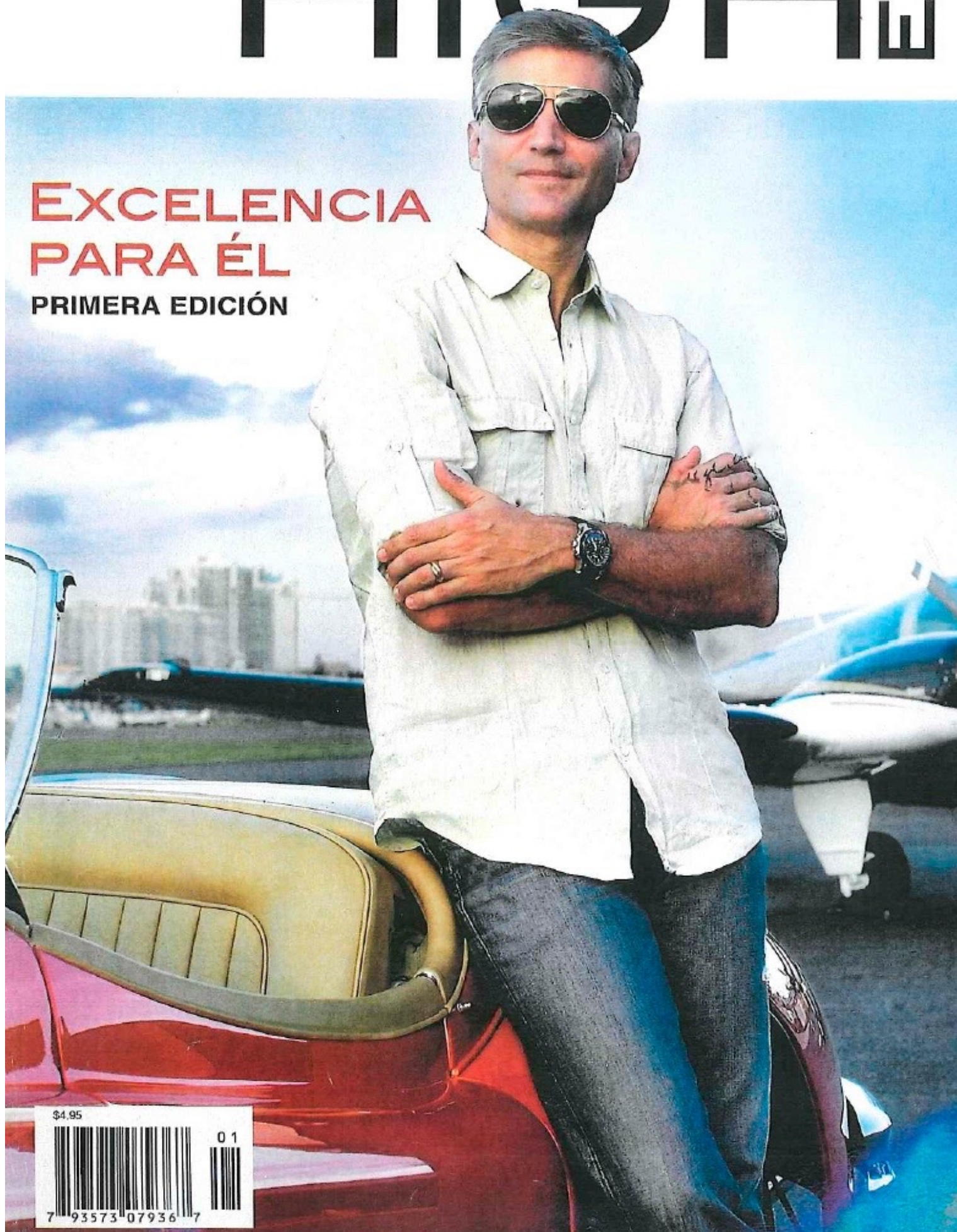


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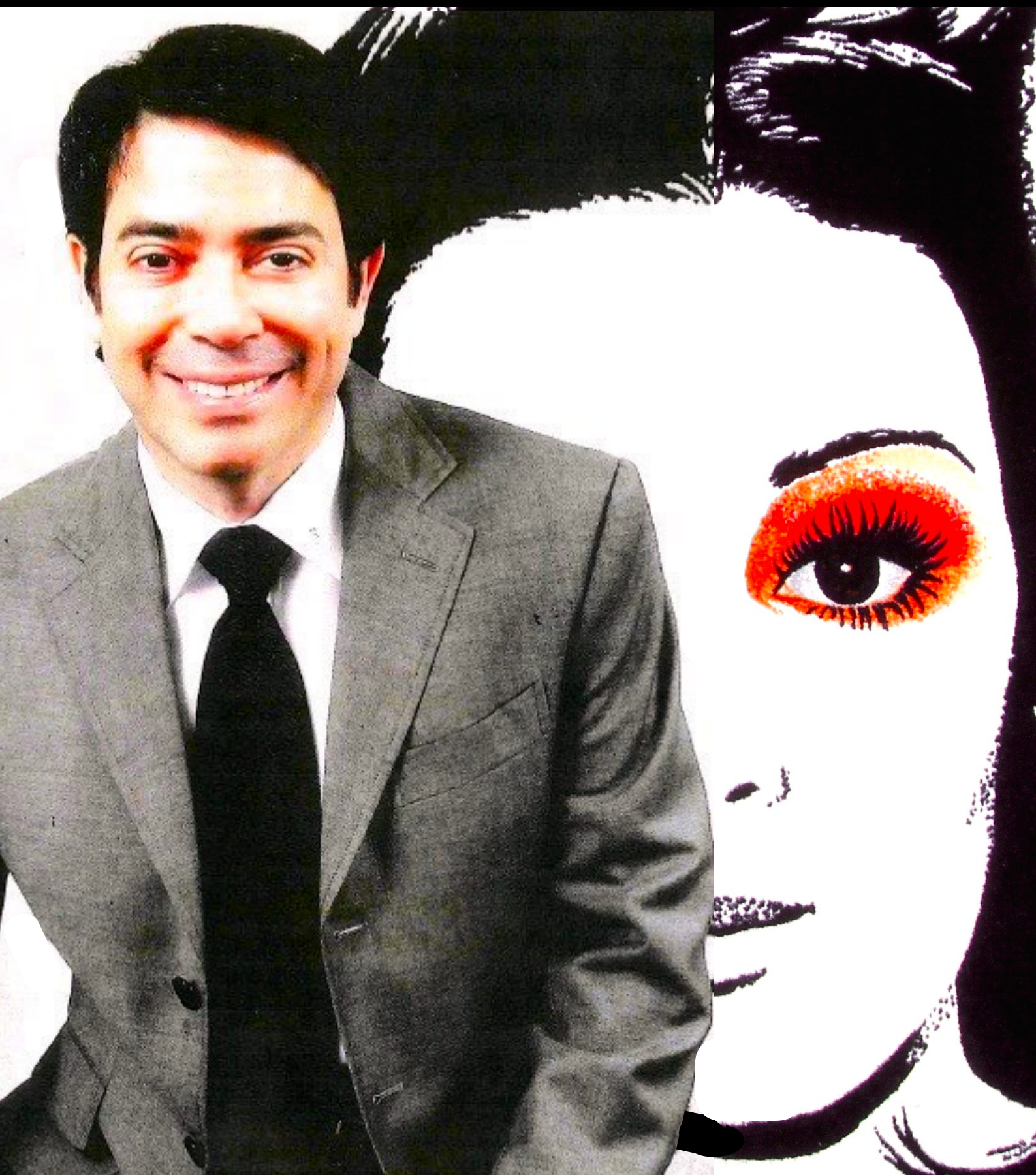
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INTERVIEW

THE BALANCE BETWEEN MEDICINE AND ART

Dr. José Raúl Montes





WHEN WE TALK ABOUT ACCOMPLISHED PEOPLE, WE REFER TO THAT GROUP OF MEN AND WOMEN WHO PROPORTIONATELY STAND OUT IN THEIR PROFESSIONS, IN THEIR PERSONAL LIVES AND IN THEIR DEGREE OF INTEGRATION TO THE REALITIES OF THE CULTURAL AND SOCIAL WORLD THAT SURROUNDS THEM.

We are talking about people like Dr. José Raúl Montes. He is currently one of the most recognized surgeons on the island specializing in the improvement and reconstruction of the upper face, in addition to possessing a privileged reputation internationally. His work in the field of ophthalmology, particularly Oculoplastic, keeps him moving constantly between the research and academic world, and a successful private practice. He is fascinated by his profession and the academic and investigative depth that he has acquired, in addition to his artistic background, which completely displaces him from the superficiality that could be associated with plastic surgery.

transition from a recognized professional to an expert and teacher in his profession: first, at the Third Congress of Ophthalmology and Oculoplasty: Decades of Progress, on the island of Elba, and days later as keynote speaker in his specialty, at the Twenty-ninth ESOPRS Congress in Cernobbio, near Lake Como in Italy.

When asked what his collaboration at these congresses meant, he explains: "This trip was important. I had been invited since they wanted someone they considered an expert on the subjects that I have worked on for a long time, which are injectables, such as Botox and fillers, for minimally invasive rejuvenation. Also, some of the organizers had already seen me at other conferences where I participated, and viewed me as a good resourceful teacher". José Raúl adds, "in the first congress I was responsible for two conferences and a workshop to teach the techniques that I use when injecting, while the second it entailed a much broader participation as a keynote speaker in my field, which is a huge responsibility in a Congress of such a prestige and



ESOPRS Meeting 2011

We have agreed to meet for coffee and catch up in Old San Juan, especially now that he returns from Italy where he played a leading role in two important medical congresses. With so many affectionate greetings I receive from countless people in every place I visit, it is no joke when I say that it is like meeting a movie star. After a few hurdles, this interview is finally taking place. I am familiar with his career in the fields of medicine and art, being fortunate to associate with him for years professionally and informally. As is the case with many people in Puerto Rico, I have taken for granted that José Raúl, after years of success, has been at the top of his profession. Nevertheless, he does not see it that way. Distinguishing himself professionally and personally with integrity, he has relayed his recent projects and achievements, which have positioned him in a defining moment of his career in 2011.

His participation in these two international conferences has meant a significant turn in a career for which he has a great passion. Being still young, he has been able to experience this much-desired

where the injectables subject was recently added. In both conferences, I shared the forum with leaders in the field, those esteemed experts that I have admired for so many years and who in certain cases have been my mentors. This gave me the gratifying opportunity to establish professional links and friendships. Through my participation, I was able to see how my efforts and hard work for so long has positioned me as a leader in my field. The respect and recognition of the attendees was well marked and my peers' support was unexpected, especially from people who I have admired for a long time."

His lectures were of great interest in both the topic inclusion in the congress and the thoroughness of his theoretical and practical work during the past fifteen years of work in the field of injectables. Following his medical work and presentations, José Raúl Montes has become well respected among his former teachers and the most privileged scientific minds in ophthalmology and ophthalmoplegia. Nonetheless, it goes much further, his reputation has been magnified to such a degree that his colleagues in Mexico, Brazil and Argentina, United States, England, France, Italy,

Spain, Turkey and Tunisia, among others, have asked him to share his work via seminars, conferences and academic exchanges to educate their contemporaries and new generations. He says enthusiastically, "This validates my 15-year effort, reassuring that I have been doing the right thing, and nourishes my conviction that at the moment I am at the best in my professional career."

In addition to what this participation has brought to him, he is proud of what this means for Puerto Rico that, through its excellent professionals, it as a country that distinguishes itself among the most advanced in the world. These are great news at a time when we need to redefine our national representatives and ambassadors who are the best that Puerto Rico has to offer.

I cannot miss the opportunity to talk about the formula for your success. His response: "I have been very careful, I have listened and worked with many people, quietly, I have been discreetly responsible, consistent, very studious. I try to live properly, both personally and professionally, discipline is the key. I think the message I would give to anyone who wants to be successful is that as they strive and put their best efforts into it, they will be able to see the results. If one could aspire to be an example to younger generations, I would tell them that the most important thing is to believe in themselves. Improvisation or immediate gratification are elements that we should ignore, you have to do things right - when you do things with passion and work for them, and you are honest, you will always win".

Thinking about the Puerto Rican man to whom this magazine is directed, I asked him as a male figure who has entered the facial cosmetic surgery field, not as a professional but as a patient. "The Puerto Rican man is more receptive to undergoing cosmetic surgery. In the past, it was mostly women who came to my office; now more than 40% of my patients are men and, although on a smaller scale, there has also been an increase in the area of injectables. Men are looking into these things in the same way that they see exercise, to stay healthy as part of feeling and staying competitive".

This "Ivy Leaguer" who graduated from Cornell University in 1984 with a concentration in Chemistry, has in turn a magnificent voice with a great affiliation for the scenic-musical arts. Even taking into account his obvious taste and musical talent, medicine was always his great passion. He studied at the University of Puerto Rico School of Medicine, where he also made his residency in Ophthalmology. He completed a sub-specialty in Oculoplastic-Plastic and Reconstructive Eyelid and Orbital Surgery at the University of Cincinnati in Cincinnati, Ohio, and performed orbital studies at Moorsfield Eye Hospital in London.

He has a private practice in San Juan, which intertwines with his Role of educator as Associate Professor of Ophthalmology in University of Puerto Rico, School of Medicine. He is licensed by the Medical Board of Puerto Rico, New York Medicine and Surgery Board and Florida Medical Board. As a surgeon with an emphasis on oculoplasty, he performs from the simplest procedures to the most complex reconstructions, such as orbit and eyelid tumors, enucleation, facial paralysis, Bells Palsy, watery eyes, orbital bills, eyelid malformation and orbitopathy. Injectables such as Botox and fillers are specialties that have been innovative for over 15 years and are now part of the reason for his international success.

In addition to the many medical associations to which he belongs, arts and philanthropy are basic in his life. Together with his great friend Guillermo Martínez and his wife Bertita –people who have been vital in his life and of whom he speaks with an endearing affection– he is a member of the Culturarte board and has been its artistic coordinator since 2004. The frequent travels taking him around the world allow him to attend the concerts of the best classical and contemporary performers, as well as provide him a unique opportunity to establish contact with these artists and ensure their participation in the musical seasons this magnificent cultural entity offers. Opera star Frenchman Robert Alagna, and his wife Romanian soprano Angela Gheorghiu, are among his close friends. His love for music and art in general are factors that have been decisive in the success of his medical career, imparting the artistic touch to each of his works. He intermingles medicine and art to create beauty.



Bertita Martínez, Roberto Alagna,
Dr. José Raúl Montes and Guillermo Martínez

The Historical Foundation of the Supreme Court is another one of his interests. As a member of the Board of Directors, he works hand-in-hand with Luis Álvarez, whom we also introduce in this issue, along other dedicated board members in innovative projects to protect the country's judicial legacy. To meet José Raúl Montes in his professional and personal capacity is to discover the prototype of a multifaceted and incomparable man, who we are pleased to feature in this first edition of High End.