

Paraguay at the Dominican Republic Environmental Film Festival

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SANTO DOMINGO – A few days ago I landed in Santo Domingo. The capital of the Dominican Republic is a beautiful city full of nature and culture. Due to its geographical location, the city hosts many international events in various fields. Yesterday for instance, I attended the opening night of the [Dominican Republic Environmental Film Festival](#) (DREFF) and you will never guess who I ran into: [The Recycled Orchestra](#) from Paraguay! The orchestra, comprised of young people from Cateura, a precarious neighborhood in the outskirts of Asunción, has become widely known for the fact they play music with instruments made out of recycling material.

Their story is told in the touching documentary, [Landfill Harmonic](#), directed by [Brad Allgood](#) and [Graham Townsley](#). Screened at the opening night of the DREFF, the documentary shows how music and recycling can be combined and used as tools for sustainable development. The Orchestra’s director, the Paraguayan environmental engineer, Favio Chávez, also highlights how learning to play an instrument can change a child’s life for the better.

It is, indeed, incredible how far this orchestra has come; in the past years, they performed at important events all over the world, they played in front of the Queen of Spain, and they performed with [Megadeth](#) and [Metallica](#), among others.

After the screening, the Orchestra performed in front of a large audience who literally stood on their feet to congratulate them. I was happy to be there, as for me, the Recycled Orchestra, is the greatest example of how art and recycling combined can contribute to sustainable development.

The film festival is an initiative of [Global Foundation for Democracy and Development](#) (GFDD). Since its creation in 2011, the festival functions as a platform to discuss challenges and issues related to the environment and sustainable development, while celebrating Dominican Republic’s unique natural heritage. During the five-day festival, people can attend various activities, ranging from film screenings to panels, workshops, seminars, and community activities. Environmental experts, as well as renowned directors from around the world are attending the event (source: DREFF handbook).

The Recycled Orchestra will be performing again today in Santo Domingo and later in the week in Punta Cana. These kids are not only talented, but they are a true example of how “when there’s a will, there’s a way.”



The Recycled Orchestra in Paraguay (FB page)

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