



## MARTINIQUE PROMOTION BUREAU/CMT USA MOURNS THE PASSING OF POET & POLITICIAN AIME CESAIRE

Favorite son & namesake of the island's Int'l Airport raised global awareness of  
Martinique through his works

NEW YORK, NY – April 17, 2008 – The Martinique Promotion Bureau/CMT USA is mourning the loss of the Isle of Flowers' favorite son, Aimé Césaire, who passed away earlier today in the island's primary city of Fort-de-France at the age of 94. Poet, playwright and politician, Césaire is widely hailed as a principal crusader for civil rights within the French West Indies, both through his writings and in his 55 years serving as the Mayor of Fort-de-France.

Muriel Wiltord, director Americas for the Martinique Promotion Bureau /CMT USA, commented on Césaire's passing, stating: "It is a sad day for Martinique as we've lost a true statesman, and arguably the person most responsible for the island's success today. Césaire's influence extended well beyond our shores, inspiring black people everywhere to take pride in their heritage, while also spearheading the effort to make all former French colonies departments of France. His impact is immeasurable and lives on forever."

Born in Basse-Pointe, Martinique in 1913, Césaire moved to Paris in 1931 on an educational scholarship. It was there that he created the literary review L'Étudiant Noir (The Black Student). This would serve as the forerunner to "la negritude," the artistic and cultural movement founded by Césaire to encourage black youths to maintain a positive racial identity. In 1939 he returned to Martinique and was elected Mayor of Fort-de-France in 1945, a post he held through 2001, except for a brief period in 1983-84.

In recognition of his great contributions to Martinique and French society, Martinique's International Airport was renamed Martinique Aimé Césaire International Airport in his honor in January 2007.

About Martinique ([www.martinique.org](http://www.martinique.org))

The Caribbean island with French flair, The Isle of Flowers, The Rum Capital of the World – by any one of its many names Martinique remains one of the most alluring and enchanting destinations in the world; as unforgettable as a summer romance or a first kiss. Martinique is an overseas region of France, and in keeping with its traditions, this vibrant island stirs the passions with awe-inspiring natural beauty, a rich cultural history, distinctive culinary delights, warm smiles and so much more. Napoleon's bride, Empress Josephine, was born and raised here. The Pompeii of the Caribbean, St. Pierre, is found here. The finest French products, from Chanel fashions to Limoges porcelain, are readily available here. La Route des Rhums, a tour of the world's finest rum distilleries based on France's famed Route des Vins, is offered here. A special place, to be sure, with so much to offer – Martinique c'est magnifique!

For more information on Martinique, contact the Martinique Promotion Bureau /CMT USA, 825 Third Avenue, 29th Floor, New York, NY 10022 – Tel: 212 838 6887 - Fax: 212 838 7855 – Email: [info@martinique.org](mailto:info@martinique.org) – Web site: [www.martinique.org](http://www.martinique.org).

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