

Carlos Acosta: With his feet in the sky and his soul in Cuba



Photo> Prensa Latina

Havana, June 3 (RHC)-- Those feet that, in order not to get lost, touched the small board, belong to Cuban dancer Carlos Acosta. He has accomplished great achievements in a profession that he made his own and carries to the world with the soul of Cuba.

Thanks to his father, Acosta took his first steps -almost by obligation- in this expression of art that soon became an inseparable companion and accomplice of his more than deserved triumphs in the dance universe.

As she reaches her 50th birthday this Friday, it is impossible to reflect in a small text space her artistic life, since her innumerable awards and her career in itself are a challenge for any storyteller.

His virtuosity allowed him to graduate in 1991 with the highest qualification from the National Ballet School, a showcase for important companies that bet on him, from the National Ballet of Cuba or the English National Ballet, to the Houston Ballet and the American Ballet Theatre.

Previously, his talent led him to dance in prestigious formats such as the Compagnia Teatro Nuovo di Torino, in Italy, and the ensemble of the Teatro Teresa Carreño de Caracas, in Venezuela.

But his work was especially inscribed in the Royal Ballet of London, a prestigious group that he joined in 1998, and where he was promoted to principal guest dancer in 2003.

With that company, his proven skills earned him in 2014 the medal of Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE), received from the hands of Queen Elizabeth II of England.

A year later he bid farewell to the renowned ensemble, but not to the London stage, as since 2020 he has directed the Birmingham Royal Ballet and is a member of the Board of Governors of The Royal Ballet School.

When reviewing his life in detail, the words that pay tribute to him become minimal before the commitment to exalt the artistic work of a man who needs no further praise, while Carlos Acosta is, in its entirety, Art.

In Havana, the also choreographer passionately leads his company Acosta Danza, with which he fulfills, since 2015, an intense agenda of shows throughout the orb and combines the classical with the contemporary, fused with elements of Cuban dance.

"Now we have this space, which also houses the academy. My great dream is to save the building of the ballet school of the Higher Institute of Art (ISA), to constitute the headquarters of the project there," said the interpreter in an interview.

The opportunities given to him when his name was barely ringing in this universe, prompted him to create in 2017 the Carlos Acosta Dance Foundation, which provides young talents with a free dance training program for a period of three years.

In this way, Acosta responds with gratitude to life and to his father for showing him the path of this manifestation, in which he found, he said, the salvation he needed so much in his beginnings to carve out a world of dreams and conquests without looking back.

Precisely, No Way Home is the title of the book he wrote in 2007, in which he described the ups and downs he experienced throughout his career. The volume served as inspiration to filmmaker Paul Laverty to develop the screenplay for the film work Yuli (2018), his nickname as a child.

Under the direction of Iciar Bollain, the film was shot on location in Havana, London and Madrid, and takes place in a contemporary setting where the protagonist returns to the Cuban capital to stage a choreography about his life.

Reliving my past, acting it and dancing it during the filming was an intense and painful experience," Acosta once confessed.

Owner of an impeccable performance that makes his movements unique, he has won the highest awards to which a dancer can aspire.

His catalog includes the Gold Medal at the Prix de Lausanne (1990), the Frédéric Chopin (1990), awarded by the Polish Artistic Corporation, and the Merit Award at the Young Talents Competition in Italy (1991).

In addition to these, she received the Princess Grace Foundation Dance Award (1995), the Laurence Olivier Award (2006), and the National Dance Award (2011).

Acosta recently received the Lifetime Achievement 2023 award from Lausanne, Switzerland, the decision being a true symbol of success and a "mission accomplished" to present him with the award as the event reaches its 50th anniversary, the press release noted.

The artist recently announced that he will return to the stage of the Royal Opera House in London, UK, to celebrate his half-century of life and thousands will dance with him in his homeland as a token of affection for the one who holds in his heart and feet the dance of all Cuba.

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