

# *Havana's International Ballet Festival dedicated to Shakespeare*

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The curtains of Havana's Karl Marx Theater went up Tuesday, October 28th, as the 24th International Ballet Festival got underway in the Cuban capital with a tribute to the memory of William Shakespeare.

The opening staged the ballet *Shakespeare and his Masks*, choreographed by Cuban prima ballerina assoluta Alicia Alonso, with music score by Charles Gounod, based on one of famous English playwright, writer and poet's best known plays, *Romeo and Juliet*.

The biannual dance event, presided over by the dance legend and Director of the Cuban National Ballet Company, is celebrating Shakespeare's 450th birthday with some of the English writer's works which have been translated into the language of ballet. Under the slogan "For Shakespeare, dance", the international arts and dance gathering is running from October 28th through November 7th, 2014, at different Havana theaters, such as the National, Mella and Karl Marx as the main venues.

The Cuban company's principal dancers and corps de ballet will perform in the shows along with dancers and celebrities from other countries, including American Ballet Theater prima ballerinas Paloma Herrera and Xiomara Reyes, and dancers from the Norwegian National Ballet, the National Ballet of China, the Hong Kong Ballet, the New York City Ballet, Joburg Ballet, the Royal Danish Ballet and others.

Ballet and dance aficionados will be able to attend ballet- and dance-related fine arts exhibitions in several Havana galleries, lectures, conferences, book launches, presentations, and video and film

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