

Ballet Festival winds up in Havana with a gala highlighting Latin American choreography



The 24th International Ballet Festival wound up with Cuban ballet stars, Viengsay Valdés and Víctor Estévez, dancing the piece *Valsette*, with music score by Venezuelan Teresa Carreño, and Nelson Madrigal playing the piano live on stage.

Valsette is a version of *Nuestros Valses* (Our Waltzes) by late Venezuelan choreographer, Vicente Nebrada, shortened and recreated by Zane Wilson and Yanis Pikieris from the New York based Nebrada Center. Standing out at the closing gala were two different versions of *Carmen*, assumed by Natalia Berrios and José Manuel Ghiso, from the Municipal Ballet Theater of Santiago de Chile, and by Alesandra Meijer and Cuban star and former principal with ABT, José Manuel Carreño, who currently dances and directs the California based San Jose Ballet.

The *Death of a Swan* was another classic that delighted audiences with the performance of Cuban Javier Torres, from the Northern Ballet Company of England, showing the beauty of the masculine physique, as well as New York City Ballet principal, Joaquín de la Luz, another example of virile attraction on stage. The pas de deux *Spring Waters*, danced by Cuban National Ballet principals, Annette Delgado and Dani

Hernández, also stunned audiences, along with the Cuban premier of a version of Romeo and Juliet by Cuba's Yolanda Correa and Yoel Carreño from the Norwegian National Ballet.

Havana's International Ballet Festival paid homage to the 450th anniversary birthday of great English playwright, William Shakespeare; to the Father of Cuban Ballet, Fernando Alonso, with master classes by several ballet celebrities, such as Julio Boca, José Manuel Carreño, Xiomara Reyes, Ciril Atanasof, Eric Vu An, and Marta García and Orlando Salgado at the National Ballet School of Cuba; and also to recently deceased company choreographer, Iván Tenorio.

Cuban National Ballet prima ballerina assoluta and director, Alicia Alonso, and local and foreign guest ballet stars received standing ovations to close the famous ballet festival.

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