

American photographer Exhibits Photos of Cuban National Ballet



The future stars of the Cuban National Ballet, students of the famed National Ballet School in Havana are the subjects of an exciting new exhibition by American photographer, Rebekah Bowman. Curated by Roberto Chile and Rebekah herself, the exhibition will open next Monday October 27 at Havana's José Martí Memorial in Revolution Square, as part of activities of the International Ballet Festival of Havana, running October 28 to November 7.

The images in medium and large format reflect many aspects of the daily ritual of classes and rehearsals at the National Ballet School.

Commenting on the photographic display, Miguel Cabrera, Historian of the National Ballet of Cuba, said: "This exhibition, which we gratefully welcome, besides constituting a valuable testimony, is a tribute to the rich heritage of the institution, showcasing the inexhaustible yeast that nurtures the future of Cuban ballet."

The National Ballet School in Havana was originally founded in 1931, but grew into the prestigious institution it is now in the 1960s, after Fidel Castro came to power and declared that art and education were for the people. Talented children from all over the island could get free ballet training; the school is open to every child.

Since the '60s, the Cuban ballet style has been chiefly formed by prima ballerina assoluta Alicia Alonso, now 93, and her husband Fernando Alonso. According to Bowman, along with its rigorous attention to classical form and technical precision, “the Cuban style has borrowed elements from the then-dominant European schools, influenced by aspects of Cuba’s Spanish and Afro-Cuban cultural heritage, and adapted them to the Cuban dancer’s physiology to express a Latin sensibility and aesthetic.”

Many of Cuban ballet school graduates are dispersed all over the globe in prestigious companies such as the San Francisco Ballet, the Royal Ballet, and the American Ballet Theater.

So remember, this exhibit, “Portrait of the Cuban School of Ballet” launches on Monday at 6 pm and runs through November 11 at Havana's José Martí Memorial in Revolution Square.

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