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**Mexican embassy awards Cuban artists**

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Havana, Nov 19 (Prensa Latina) The Mexican Embassy in Havana granted the Cultural Merit award to Cuban prima ballerina Viengsay Valdes, choreographer Alberto Mendez and Cultural Director of Habana Vieja municipality, Reinaldo Mendez.

Valdes, deputy artistic director of the National Ballet of Cuba (BNC), has shined with her dance in all five continents and has been the guest artist of several galas, companies and festivals in many countries, a Mexican diplomat noted at a gala in Havana's Cathedral Square.

Cuban Deputy Culture Minister Fernando Rojas and Russian Ambassador Andrei Guskov were present at the ceremony, at which the Mariana de Gonitch Singing Academy, the Okantomi group and the BNC performed.

During the event, Valdes was also presented with the Gitana Tropical distinction, which is granted every year by Havana's Provincial Culture Directorate to those who contribute to the development of Cuban culture.

'I would like to express my deepest gratitude to those who appreciate art and all the organizations involved in such a beautiful event. It is a great honor for me to receive this award and above all to dedicate it to all those Cuban women who are also heroines of the dance we have today in Cuba,' Valdes said.