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Int'l Ballet Festival in Cuba Honors Master Marius Petipa

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Havana, Nov 1 (Prensa Latina) The 26th International Ballet Festival in Havana Alicia Alonso dedicates on Wednesday a gala to the famous French master and choreographer Marius Petipa, whose work marks the development of dance until the present.

Several companies, universities and other institutions around the world are celebrating 2018 the 200th anniversary of the creator's birth in Russia.

If we ask anyone to mention a ballet piece, the most likely answer will be a title related to Petipa: Swan Lake, Sleeping Beauty, The Bayadera, Don Quixote, The Corsair.

Even Nutcracker was to be his version, but after becoming ill he gave this work to his pupil Lev Ivanov.

During a period of ballet decline in France and strong political and social tensions, the Marseilles artist settled in the Russian city of St. Petersburg, where in 1847 he was appointed first dancer of the Mariinsky Theatre.

As choreographer and teacher, Petipa would lay the foundations of a new style:

classicism, within which he rescued the protagonism of the male dancer, so relegated from the scene during the Romantic period, and - at the same time - trained several dancers who could only rival each other in terms of technical power.

Nobody doubts in cataloguing him as the most universal choreographer, nor in recognizing that with Petipa the fourth ballet school in the world arose: the Russian one, which would join the Italian, French and Danish schools.

According to specialists, the French creator's talent boosted the technique and expressiveness of ballet to higher levels. His works had a higher degree of exigency and included dissimilar popular dances he knew and inspired him.

Many of the works by Petipa remain sacred in the repertoire of all the world's major companies.

He and Ivanov gave us the opportunity to know Swan Lake, a piece whose premiere in 1877, at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, was booed.

The legacy of the so-called 'father of classical ballet' has set standards, unavoidable until now for any dancer or company in the world.

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