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German Theater takes home the 'Raquel Revuelta' International Award

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Two German theater directors have been presented with the International 'Raquel Revuelta' Award granted by the Cuban Writers and Artists Association –UNEAC– at Havana's 18th Theater Festival Oct. 19/27. The awardees are Berliner Ensemble's General Director Oliver Reese and German artistic and theater director Michael Thalheimer. The prize is named after Raquel Revuelta, an important Cuban TV, radio and theater actress and director.

At UNEAC's Rubén Martínez Villena hall, the ceremony took place with outstanding performing art figures from all over the world being awarded. On hand were Deputy Culture Minister and President of the National Performing Arts Council Fernando Rojas; UNEAC's President Luis Morlote Rivas; Germany's ambassador to Cuba Heidrun Tempel and the embassy's cultural attaché Petra Röhler.

The award-winning artists have expressed their gratitude to Havana Theater Festival organizers for such a high honor, to Cuba and to Bertolt Brecht's legacy. 'It is a great honor for us to be able to stage The Caucasian Chalk Circle tomorrow and the day after tomorrow at the Martí Theater at 7:00 pm, already in the festival's final days. We know the great importance that this Brecht piece has for Cuba. For an actor, for a director, the ensemble is the most important, because it is at the center of creation,' said Oliver Reese.

For his part, Michael Thalheimer stressed: '20 years ago I was in Cuba as a tourist. I was a practically unknown theater director. At that time I fell in love with this city. I promised myself that I would return and never thought of this opportunity of being invited to the Festival, let

alone, to receive the award. I have always enjoyed the kindness of Cubans, the passion, the life, the joy of this country. ”

Cuban playwright and critic Norge Espinosa said the eulogy, in which he stressed the need to reconnect with Brecht's work over and over again: 'Take him out of the museum, review his poetry in times of social media and so many disturbances, show his works to audiences as if you were attending a spectacular debate, it is necessary from time to time. That is why, Brecht has survived tributes, dates and formal celebrations, attacks and excessive praise, because deep down he was a poet and the world cannot seduce the habitable, if not heard in the voice of poets.'

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