
US Art Museum Honors Cuban Dance Company

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The Los Angeles Museum of Latin American Art awarded a certificate to the Irene Rodríguez Spanish Dance Company of Cuba, in recognition of its recent performance at that U.S. institution.

The certificate thanks the Irene Rodríguez company for delighting its southern California audience with outstanding performances of Cuban and Spanish dance, and for creating a cultural bridge through art.

Rodríguez told The Havana Reporter that the museum had initially expected an audience of 500, but received so many calls from people wanting to attend the show that the museum's directors agreed to place an extra 300 seats in the patio.

According to Rodríguez, when the two-hour performance was over, they received such an enthusiastic ovation from the audience that the performers were overcome by emotion as they took their bow.

As the accolade reads, her great passion for art enriches the life of her audiences.

On stage, Rodríguez stands out for her fine mastery of dance techniques such as classical ballet, Spanish dance, and Flamenco.

The two act Los Angeles show included several of her choreographies like Zapateao, Sambra, Habanera tú, a solo performance for a lead dancer, a duet, and the guaguancó from her piece Emigrantes (Emigrants).

Rodríguez considers it an honor to have performed at the museum which was hosting an exhibition by renowned Cuban painter Roberto Fabelo, the 2004 National Plastic Arts laureate.

She also felt flattered when the director of the San José Ballet Company in California, Cuban José Manuel Carreño, asked her to present two master classes at the company headquarters, with himself in attendance at the

second.

The prestigious Cuban dancer also gave a conference for ballet students at West Valley College, and performed at Carriage House Theater of the Montalvo Arts Center, both in Saratoga, California.

The dancer had presented several workshops on Spanish dance at that same institution in August.

Back in Cuba, Rodríguez has been preparing a world premiere for the upcoming International Ballet Festival of Havana, where Prima Ballerina Assoluta Alicia Alonso presented her with the Ibero-American Choreography Award two years ago.

The new piece is entitled Aldabal, which refers to a place with many doorknockers and hence many doors.

The artist defends the idea that every spectator should feel free to make his/her own interpretation of the doors; she does not impose her own perceptions.

Rodríguez is also in charge of costume and set design while guitarist Noel Gutiérrez wrote the electroacoustic music.

Aldabal's premiere is scheduled for November 4 at Havana's Teatro Mella.
