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**Viengsay Valdes Represents Cuba at Tokyo Ballet Festival**

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Cuban National Ballet Prima Ballerina Viengsay Valdes considered today an honor to represent her country at the 15<sup>th</sup> Tokyo Ballet Festival, which brings together world dance figures.

This festival began on July 27<sup>th</sup> and brings together artists from the best companies of the world. The aim is to provide a general description of the ballet scene today.

The artistic level here is very high and my performances have been exciting, I danced *Muñecos*, a Cuban piece by choreographer Alberto Mendez, said Valdes after one of her performances.

I did not do it a long time ago and returning to this piece gave some fresh air, I also had the pleasure and honor to work the details with Mendez in Havana, and later transmit them here to my partner, Brazilian Daniel Camargo, leading dancer for the Danish National Ballet, she said.

According to Valdes, if the artists manage to personalized well the characters of the tin soldier and the typical Cuban doll that are found thanks to moonlight magic, they reach the audiences' hearts; and she believes she has achieved it in Tokyo, the same city where the piece was premiered 40 years ago.

***Muñecos*** won in 1978 the Choreography Prize during the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Ballet Competition in Tokyo, and the relationship between the Cuban and universal dance, along with a dramatic end for the appearance of the sun and the return of the characters to their initial state, still attracts audiences from several countries.

After the closing gala on August 18<sup>th</sup>, Valdes hopes to return to Cuba to prepare herself to perform during the 26<sup>th</sup> International Ballet Festival in Havana, to be held from October 28<sup>th</sup> to November 6<sup>th</sup>.