

Ballet Nacional de Cuba

Friday through Sunday, October 12–14, 2001
Zellerbach Hall

Alicia Alonso
Founder and General Director

Premier Dancers

Galina Álvarez Alihaydé Carreño Joel Carreño Lorna Feijóo
Víctor Gilí Laura Hormigón Nelson Madrigal Osmay Molina
Rolando Sarabia Óscar Torrado Viengsay Valdés

Principal Dancer
Octavio Martín

Premier Soloists

Hayna Gutiérrez Joan Reyes Félix Rodríguez
Javier Sánchez Idania La Villa

Soloists

Sadaise Arencibia Ivette González Carmen Hechavarría Ana Leyte
Rolando Sarabia Martínez Dalay Parrondo Mercedes Vergara

Coryphées

Verónica Corveas Ivis Díaz Jasmany Hernández Lissette Ojeda
Aymara Vasallo Marina Villanueva

Corps de Ballet

Yiliam Calzadilla Yolanda Correa Eduardo Cruz Yosbel Delgado Gema Díaz
Jaime Díaz Keila Fernández Liuva Horta Alberto Ledesma
Adrián Marrero Bettina Ojeda Karelia Sánchez

Ernesto Díaz Jorge Villazón

Abdul Manzano Javier Torres

Oscar Pérez, managing director
Josefina Méndez, ballet mistress
Salvador Fernández, technical director

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Coppélia

Music by Léo Delibes

(recording by the Orquesta Sinfónica del Gran Teatro de La Habana)

Choreography by Alicia Alonso
(after the original by Arthur Saint-Léon and the version of Marius Petipa)

Libretto by Charles Nutter and Arthur Saint-Léon

(based on a story by E.T.A. Hoffmann)

Set Design by Ricardo Reymena

Costumes by Ricardo Reymena

Lighting by Ruddy Artiles

Coppélia, or The Girl with Enamel Eyes, premiered at the Imperial Theater with the Paris Opera Ballet on May 25, 1870, with Guiseppina Bozacchi in the role of Swanilda. The role of Franz was interpreted by ballerina Eugenie Fiocre, in keeping with the tradition that women also performed male roles in ballet, and François-Edouard Dauty interpreted the character of Coppélius. When the Ballet Nacional de Cuba was founded in 1948, Coppélia was one of the first titles chosen by Alicia Alonso for the company's repertoire. Leon Fokine staged a version after Petipa for the company, which starred Alicia Alonso and Igor Youskevitch. This Coppélia premiered on December 28, 1948, at the Teatro Auditorium, which is now the Amadeo Roldan Theater in Havana. In 1957, Alonso premiered her own version of Coppélia with her company at the Los Angeles Greek Theater. Alonso interpreted the role of Swanilda, and was partnered by Andre Eglevsky as Franz. For this new production, Alonso meticulously worked to recapture and protect original elements of Saint-Léon and Petipa. At the same time, she enriched the choreography with moments of great technical virtuosity, established classical demi-caractère (semi-character) style, and took great care of the narrative coherence of the plot.

ACT I

Swanilda	Alihaydée Carreño (10/12); Viengsay Valdés (10/13); Lorna Feijóo (10/14)
Franz	Joel Carreño (10/12); Víctor Gilí (10/13); Óscar Torrado (10/14)
Doctor Coppélius Burgomaster (mayor)	Félix Rodríguez Yosbel Delgado (10/12 & 10/14); Alberto Ledesma (10/13)
Friends of Swanilda	Aymara Vasallo, Dalay Parrondo, Idania La Villa, and Marina Villanueva (10/12 & 10/14); Ivette González, Keila Fernández, Liuva Horta, and Ivis Díaz (10/13)
Friends of Franz	Joan Reyes, Javier Sánchez, Jasmany Hernández, and Adrián Marrero (10/12 & 10/14); Octavio Martín, Jaime Díaz, Ernesto Díaz, and Javier Torres (10/13)
Mazurka Dancers	Sadaise Arencibia and Octavio Martín (10/12 & 10/14); Aymara Vasallo and Javier Sánchez (10/13); and Corps de Ballet
Czardas Dancers	Laura Hormigón (10/12 & 10/14); Hayna Gutiérrez (10/13); and Corps de Ballet
Coppélia	Ana Leyte

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Swanilda/Coppélius/Franz/Friends

Dolls:

Chinese Rolando Sarabia Martínez (10/12 & 10/14);

	Javier Sánchez (10/13)
Scottish	Jaime Díaz (10/12 & 10/14); Adrián Marrero (10/13)
Harlequin	Eduardo Cruz
Colombina	Yiliam Calzadilla (10/12 & 10/14); Bettina Ojeda (10/13)
Spanish	Gema Díaz (10/12 & 10/14); Verónica Corveas (10/13)
Astronomer	Yosbel Delgado (10/12 & 10/14); Abdul Manzano (10/13)
Jack in a Box	Jorge Villazón
Soldiers	Jasmany Hernández and Alberto Ledesma (10/12 & 10/14); Ernesto Díaz and Javier Torres (10/13)

INTERMISSION

ACT III

Swanilda/Coppélius/Franz/Burgomaster/Friends

Villagers	Corps de Ballet
Dawn Solo	Hayna Gutiérrez (10/12); Idania La Villa (10/13); Viengsay Valdés (10/14)
Prayer Solo	Ivis Díaz (10/12); Sadaise Arencibia (10/13); Laura Hormigón (10/14)
Time Waltz Dancers	Corps de Ballet

ACT I

A village square in a town of Galitzia, at the end of the 18th century. Through the window of a house belonging to a mysterious old man known as Dr. Coppélius, we see a young girl who seems to be absorbed in reading a book. Swanilda tries to get the girl's attention (she is called Coppélia and is thought to be the old man's daughter). Franz, Swanilda's boyfriend, is also interested in the enigmatic reader. He waves flirtatiously to Coppélia, and it appears she looks up from her book and greets him. Seeing this, Swanilda confronts Franz and a dispute begins. Their argument is interrupted when the Burgomaster and villagers enter dancing the mazurka and then the czardas. The Burgomaster proudly announces that a new bell will be inaugurated, and that on this special occasion, a gift will be granted by the castle's owner to those couples who celebrate their wedding on the same day.

Night is coming and Dr. Coppélius leaves his house. He is quickly surrounded by a group of boys, teasing and joking. In the confusion, he loses his keys, which are found by Swanilda. Taking advantage of the situation, Swanilda and her friends go into the

old man's house to try to discover his mysterious identity. A few minutes later, Dr. Coppélius anxiously returns to the square in search of his keys. He is surprised to find the door to his house open and he enters. Later that evening, Franz arrives, hoping to meet Coppélia. Using a stairway, he enters Dr. Coppélius' room.

INTERMISSION

ACT II

Inside the shop of Dr. Coppélius, it is revealed that he is an ingenious inventor of toys. Swanilda and her friends observe the beautiful puppets created by the old man. Swanilda discovers, with relief, that Coppélia, her supposed rival, is just a mechanical doll. The girls begin to play with the toys until the furious Dr. Coppélius catches them. Afraid, all the girls escape except Swanilda. She decides to exchange her dress with Coppélia's in order to play a prank

on the puppetmaker. Then Franz appears before the window and is caught by Dr. Coppélius, who mistakes him for a thief. Franz quickly explains that he is only there because he seeks the love of Coppélia. The old man secretly puts a sleeping potion into a glass of liqueur and offers Franz a toast. The scheming Dr. Coppélius grabs a book to search for a magic potion to transmit Franz's soul into Coppélia's mechanical body. After a few magic words, he is amazed to see his favorite doll, for which he feels paternal love, come to life dancing a Spanish bolero and a Scottish jig. Dr. Coppélius doesn't realize that the doll is actually the disguised Swanilda. Worried about Franz's condition, she puts all the puppets in motion, and during the confusion, wakes up her boyfriend. When Franz safely escapes, Swanilda reveals to Dr. Coppélius the joke she has played on him. Finally, Dr. Coppélius laments for the failure of his dream.

INTERMISSION

ACT III

The announced celebrations of the new bell take place. Our reconciled couple, Franz and Swanilda, will get married. The Burgomaster gives them the gift. Everyone celebrates the happy couple's union.

Ballet Nacional de Cuba is one of the most prestigious dance companies in the world. Its artistic and technical standards, as well as its diverse aesthetic conceptions, have granted this ensemble a secure place among international dance institutions.

In 1948, Alicia Alonso founded and became principal ballerina of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba. Two years later, a school was established to create a strong artistic vision and promote the talents of young dancers in Cuba. Alonso set a tradition of Romantic and Classical excellence while encouraging the development of new choreography. Today, the company regularly tours Europe, Asia, and South America, and is a proud recipient of the Grand Prix de la Ville de Paris. Each year, Ballet Nacional de Cuba hosts an international ballet festival in Havana, which for the past 41 years has featured dance companies from around the world.

Alicia Alonso, choreographer and general director of Ballet Nacional de Cuba, is one of the most famous ballet personalities in our century. She was born in Havana, and in 1931 began her dance studies at the Ballet School of the Sociedad Pro Arte Musical. Later, she came to the United States, where she continued her studies with Enrico Zanfretta, Alexandra Fedorova, and other eminent teachers at the School of American Ballet.

In 1938, she made her professional debut in two musical comedies: *Great Lady* and *Stars In Your Eyes*. A year later, she joined the American Ballet Caravan (under the direction of Kirstein and Christensen), and in 1940, she became part of American Ballet Theater (under the direction of Pleasant and Chase). From that moment, her career flourished as she started dancing leading roles of masterpieces from the Classical and Romantic repertory. During this time, she worked regularly with Mikhail Fokine, George Balanchine, Leonide Massine, Bronislava Nijinska, Anthony Tudor, Jerome Robbins, and Agnes de Mille, among other major choreographers of the time.

Alonso performed leading roles in important world premieres such as *Undertow*, *Fall River Legend*, and *Theme & Variations*. As a member of ABT, she performed as a principal dancer in various European and American countries. Her desire to develop ballet in Cuba led her to organize the Ballet Alicia Alonso, which she maintained in Havana with little financial support. This company eventually became Ballet Nacional de Cuba. In 1950, she established the Escuela Nacional de Ballet Alicia Alonso. This school is a direct link to the company, encouraging choreographic and creative work, and combining Classical traditions with contemporary elements.

Between 1955 and 1959, Alicia Alonso danced every year as a guest performer with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. She was the first dancer from the West to perform in the Soviet Union, and the first American representative to dance with the Bolshoi and Kirov Theaters of Moscow and Leningrad (St. Petersburg), respectively, in 1957 and 1958. During the decades to follow, she made international tours through Europe, Asia, and North and South America, and danced as a guest star with the Opéra de Paris, the Royal Danish Ballet, the Bolshoi, and other esteemed companies.

Alonso has staged her versions of *Giselle*, *Grand Pas de Quatre*, and *The Sleeping Beauty* for the Opéra de Paris. She also staged *Giselle* at the Vienna Opera and the San Carlo Theater of Naples, Italy; *La Fille Mal Gardée* at the Prague Opera; and *The Sleeping Beauty* at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. She has served on juries at international dance competitions in Bulgaria, Russia, Japan, Brazil, and the United States.

Alicia Alonso is considered by dance critics as one of the greatest ballerinas of all time. She has been given numerous awards in Cuba, as well as in many other countries. Among them are: the Dance Magazine Annual Award in 1958; the Order of Work of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in 1964; the Grand Prix de la Ville de Paris in 1966, and jointly with her

company in 1970; the Anna Pavlova Award of the University of Dance, Paris, 1966; and the Gold Medal of the Gran Teatro by the Premio Gran Teatro de La Habana in 1985.

An eminent figure in Cuban cultural life, Alicia Alonso was granted an honorary doctorate in art from the University of Havana (1973), and an honorary doctorate in dancing art from the Superior Institute of Arts of Cuba (1987). She was named “National Hero of Labor” in Cuba and holds membership in the Advisory Council to the Ministry of Culture in the National Committee of Writers and Artists Union of Cuba, and in the Collaborating Council of the Governing Boards of the Federation of Cuban Women. In 1980, she received an international homage in Paris, organized by UNESCO, and in 1981, the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba gave her the Order Felix Varela. She has received the highest official awards from Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and Panama: the Order Aguila Azteca, the Order Vasco Nunez de Balboa, and the Order Duarte, Sanchez, and Mella, respectively. In 1993, she received the Commendation of Isabel Catholic Order, given by the King of Spain Juan Carlos I. In September 1996, a public recognition was given in her honor at the Scientific, Artistic, and Literary Ateneo of Madrid for her valuable artistic and cultural creations. ABT honored Alicia Alonso in May 1997 on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Theme & Variations, the great ballet created by George Balanchine for her and Igor Youskevitch. The following year, she received an honorary degree from the Universidad Politecnica of Valencia; a gold medal from the Circulo de Bellas Artes of Madrid; a National Prize for Dance from the Ministry of Culture of Cuba; and the Art & Letters Order, Commander Degree, from the Ministry of Culture and Communication of France. For her extraordinary contribution to dance, she was awarded the Pablo Picasso Medal by UNESCO in 1999, the Premio Benois de la Danza in 2000, and the Order José Martí by the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba in 2000.

As director and leading dancer of the Ballet Nacional de Cuba, Alicia Alonso has been an inspiration and guide to the new generations of Cuban dancers. With her own consummate style, she has left her mark on the international world of dance.

Léo Delibes (composer) was born in St. Germain du Val, France, in 1836, and died in Paris in 1891. At the Paris Conservatoire, he studied organ with François Benoist and composition under Adolpe Adam, the composer of Giselle. Delibes began his music career as an organist at the St. Pierre de Chaillot and as an accompanist at the Théâtre-Lyrique, but he was drawn to the theater. Between 1856 and 1869, he wrote several witty operettas staged by the Bouffes-Parisiens, Jacques Offenbach, and Variétés theaters. He served as chorus master at the Théâtre-Lyrique until 1864, when he became chorus master at the Paris Opera. Delibes’ first ballet commission was a collaborative score with Ludwig Minkus for Arthur Saint-Léon’s La Source in 1866. The success of this ballet lead Joseph Mazilier to ask Delibes to compose Pas de Fleurs for the second act of his Le Corsaire. After his success with Coppélia in 1870, Delibes married and left his post at the Paris Opera to devote himself full-time to composition, mostly for ballet and opera. His successful operas include: Jean de Nivelle, Lakmé, and Kassaya. His final ballet score was for Louis Mérantés’ Sylvia in 1876. Delibes was much admired by other composers at the time, notably Tchaikovsky and Bizet, and died honored for his brilliant orchestrations.

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