

SVETLANA VIOLETA BALLESTER AKIMOVA

is a distinguished Cuban/Russian ballet dancer and educator, renowned for her contributions to the National Ballet of Cuba (Ballet Nacional de Cuba).

A graduate of the prestigious National Ballet School of Cuba, where she earned her qualifications as a dancer and ballet teacher in 1983, Svetlana's journey through the art form has been marked by excellence and dedication.



Her professional career began with the National Ballet of Cuba, where she became a central figure under the iconic direction of Alicia Alonso. Rising through the ranks, she performed until 1999 as a principal dancer of this prestigious company. Svetlana's repertoire included lead roles in celebrated ballets such as *Giselle*, *Cinderella*, *Don Quixote*, *Swan Lake*, *Coppélia*, and *La Sylphide*, showcasing her technical brilliance and emotive artistry. Her talent was internationally recognized early in her career, earning her a Bronze Medal at the New York International Ballet Competition in 1987.

Beyond her performance career, Svetlana transitioned into teaching and became a cornerstone of the National Ballet of Cuba's artistic operations. Since 1999, she has been instrumental in training new generations of dancers, preserving the traditions of the Cuban ballet school, and serving as an assistant choreographer for various productions.

Svetlana's contributions have been recognized not only through awards but also by her appointment as Maître and Régisseur of the National Ballet of Cuba. In this role, she oversees the technical training of dancers and ensures the artistic excellence of the company's productions, while continuing to work with ballet institutions worldwide.

Her expertise has reached a global audience through her work as a guest teacher and assistant choreographer with renowned international ballet companies. Svetlana has collaborated with the National Ballet of China, Royal Swedish Ballet, Norwegian National Ballet, Nederlands Dans Theatre, Ballet of the Rome Opera House, Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo, Ballet de l'Opéra National de Bordeaux and Finnish National Ballet, among others. Her ability to inspire and refine talent has solidified her reputation as one of the most sought-after ballet masters in the world.

Fluent in Spanish, Russian, English, French, and Italian, Svetlana's work transcends cultural and linguistic boundaries. Her profound knowledge of classical and contemporary ballet, combined with her dedication to nurturing dancers, has left an indelible mark on the global ballet community.