



carlos acosta

the reluctant ballet dancer

imagine... *carlos acosta* the reluctant ballet dancer

The son of a Cuban truck-driver, Carlos Acosta has leapt into the heart of the classical ballet world and has been hailed as the next Nureyev. *Imagine* follows the 29 year old back to his roots in Havana where he is preparing his first choreographed show, based on his own life story. The film travels from the scene of Carlos's troubled childhood to his triumphant emergence as the first black principal dancer at the Royal Ballet.

The film culminates in the show's glittering Havana premiere, attended by Fidel Castro, who seeks out Carlos backstage to congratulate him.

One of 11 children, Carlos grew up in a cramped Havana apartment, played truant from school and became a champion break-dancer. The fear of his wayward son becoming a delinquent prompted his father to send him off to ballet school. But Carlos had always dreamed of becoming a footballer and hated ballet. Despite this, his extraordinary natural talent as a dancer was quickly recognised, and by the age of 17 he was achieving world acclaim.

Carlos has recently been receiving rave reviews performing with Darcey Bussell in *Apollo* and starring in the *Nureyev Tribute* season. He is currently performing in *Manon* at The Royal Opera House. His new show, *Tocororo – A Cuban Tale*, opens at Sadlers Wells in July.

Award winning film-maker Lucy Blakstad captures the inspirational rags-to-riches tale of the charming, determined young Cuban who defied the expectations of the conservative world of ballet.

Carlos Acosta – The Reluctant Ballet Dancer is a Lucy Blakstad Films / Horsepower production for the *Imagine* strand on BBC One.