

BALLET

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FANTASTIQUE

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2015-2016 Season QUICK FACTS

Eugene's contemporary chamber ballet company, Ballet Fantastique, announces their 15-16 concert season: SPELLBOUND. The new season will feature all-live music as well as three unique concepts from mother-daughter choreographer-producers Donna Marisa and Hannah Bontrager. Each premiere is filled with the company's signatures: fresh perspective, original choreography, and evocative cross-disciplinary collaborations. The SPELLBOUND concert season runs Oct. 2015 through May 2016 in the intimate Soreng Theater at the Hult Center, and also features touring performances to Portland, the Oregon Coast, and Honolulu. Season and single ticket packages are now on sale by calling the Hult Center Box Office at (541) 682-5000 or online at www.hultcenter.org. Senior, youth, student and discounts for groups of 6+ are available. Touring and outreach performance tickets (Portland, Oregon Coast, Honolulu) are available at www.balletfantastique.org.

FALL 2015: Cirque de la Lune

with LIVE MUSIC Troupe Carnivale, Betty & the Boy, and Mood Area 52 + international guest circus artist Raymond Silos

- Saturday Oct. 3 at 7:30 pm (Lincoln Performance Hall, downtown Portland)
- Friday Oct. 9 and Saturday Oct. 10 at 7:30 pm; Sunday, Oct. 11 at 2:30 pm (Hult Center)
- Friday-Sunday, Oct. 16-18 (Honolulu)

Opening Ballet Fantastique's SPELLBOUND season is the company's all-original *Cirque de la Lune*, getting behind the scenes of a traveling band of Depression-era circus performers. Choreographer-producers Donna Marisa and Hannah Bontrager bring the dramatic dancers of Ballet Fantastique together with three guest folk orchestras—Troupe Carnivale, Mood Area 52, and Betty and the Boy—as well as international guest circus artist Raymond Silos on silks, trapeze, and Cyr Wheel.

"We wanted to explore the texture, illusion, faded grandeur, and romance of the Cirque," says Donna. "Think Cirque du Soleil meets BFan's trademark twist: we wanted to choreographically wonder what happens the hour *before* this circus begins. So we get to see the performers 'rehearse' their dramatic circus acts, but we also get to see where the love triangle is, who's the diva. And the ballet opens as we meet Simone, running away to join the circus."

"This isn't your grandmother's ballet," says Jackie Cowsill of Troupe Carnivale. "And [Ballet Fantastique's] style fits perfectly with the music Donna and Hannah have chosen from each of us in the participating bands. It combines elements of long-standing tradition with new, modern elements and ideas."

HOLIDAY 2015: An American Christmas Carol

with LIVE MUSIC Halie Loren + actor-singer Adam Goldthwaite as "Smokey Joe" Marley

- Performances for local schoolchildren: Thursday, Dec. 10 at 9:30 am and 12:30 pm (Hult Center)
- Friday Dec. 11 and Saturday Dec. 12 at 7:30 pm, Sunday Dec. 13 at 2:30 pm (Hult Center)

Continuing Ballet Fantastique's SPELLBOUND season is BFan's sparkling new holiday tradition, *An American Christmas Carol!* Donna and Hannah re-imagine Charles Dickens' beloved story in iconic post-WWII America with new choreography set to the velvet voice of international chart-topping jazz singer—and local sweetheart—Halie Loren. Retro-glam choreography fuses drama and

humor as it weaves the story of penny-pinching Ebenezer Scrooge's transformative quest. Seasoned actor-singer Adam Goldthwaite plays the Ghost of "Smokey Joe" Marley for lots of laughs.

"We wanted to imagine what it would look like to put Dickens into a ballet," says Hannah. "And we knew right away that the Spirits had to be women—we wanted to imagine Scrooge 'dancing out' his encounters with Past, Present, and Future."

"This project is such fun for us as designers," adds Donna. "With the story set in the 40's, we got to explore music, movement, and even costume design inspiration from the 20's for Christmas Past, the 40's for Christmas Present, and the futuristic 50's for Christmas Future. There's so much to play with, and Halie has been an incredible collaborator."

Equally as excited about the collaboration, jazz singer Halie Loren says, "Working with Ballet Fantastique on this production is the realization of a long-time dream of mine to integrate my music with dance performance. I truly could not ask for a better dance company to collaborate with! Ballet Fantastique is a truly inspired group with amazing visionaries at the helm."

Dragon & the Night Queen: Celtic Stories with LIVE MUSIC Gerry Rempel Ensemble + Irish musician Eliot Grasso

- Sat. Feb. 20, 2016 (Florence Events Center)
- Fri.-Sun. Feb. 26-28, 2016 (Hult Center)

BFan forges a bonny, defiant new telling of ancient Irish and Celtic legends—a vivid exploration of new borders, filled with elemental powers and riotous spirit. In *The Dragon & the Night Queen: Celtic Stories*, Ballet Fantastique resident Choreographer-Producers Donna Marisa and Hannah Bontrager forge a new retelling of ancient Irish legends with live original music by world-renowned Irish musician Eliot Grasso and the Gerry Rempel Ensemble.

"It's an interesting hybrid of Celtic, Medieval, hints of Middle eastern elements, contemporary and traditional material," says Gerry Rempel. "There is material ranging from dark and atmospheric to bright and festive."

"This is a project we've wanted to do for a long, long time," says Donna.

Ballet Fantastique's signature fusion of bold new choreography, dramatic dance theater, and live songcraft capture the rich Celtic myths of Morgan le Fay (the sea goddess of the legends of Avalon), the Night Queen Rhiannon, the Morrigan, and the Dragon King.

Scarlet Flower: Beauty and the Beast Retold with LIVE MUSIC International sensation Trio Voronezh

- Performance for local schoolchildren: Thursday, May 8 at 10 am (Hult Center)
- Friday, May 8 and Saturday, May 9 at 7:30 pm; Sunday May 10 at 2:30 pm (Mother's Day Weekend; Hult Center).

Closing the 2014-15 SPELLBOUND Season comes Ballet Fantastique's towering new gothic fairytale spoof. Mother's Day weekend, audiences will fall into an intoxicating and playful world of adventure inspired by the Russian telling of the Beauty and the Beast tale. With international music sensation Trio Voronezh live on stage, *Scarlet Flower: Beauty & the Beast Retold* will be at turns fantastically haunting—or fantastically rogue. In *Scarlet Flower: Beauty & the Beast Retold*, Donna and Hannah's storybook unfolds on stage through daring new choreography, dramatic virtuosity, a dash of humor, lavish costumes, and the luscious, madcap music of Trio Voronezh.

"It's been a long time since our last collaboration with Ballet Fantastique," says Sergei Teleshev of the Trio, who is looking forward to working with BFan on this unique performance. "We hope that everyone will enjoy our new production which will include a lot of new Russian music and a couple of surprises in between!"

Funding for *Scarlet Flower: Beauty & the Beast Retold* comes from Ballet Fantastique's inaugural Hult Endowment grant.

About Ballet Fantastique

Ballet Fantastique is great stories, mischievous innovation, all live music—and bold, visionary new dance theater. Under the direction of mother-daughter Producer-Choreographer team Donna Marisa and Hannah Bontrager, Ballet Fantastique (BFan)

creates and premieres genre-defying all original contemporary ballets. BFan's inimitable new works include *Cinderella* as a rock opera ballet set to 1960's billboard hits, a Roaring 20's Parisian jazz version of Jane Austen's *Pride & Prejudice*, a Wild West spin on Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, the first-ever authorized ballet version of *Zorro*® with the LA-based band Incendio and virtuoso violinist-composer Kim Angelis, and the biblical story of *Esther* as a rock gospel ballet with the UO Gospel Singers. Ballet Fantastique has forged new cross-disciplinary collaborations with sculptors, choirs, opera and soloist vocalists, symphony and chamber orchestras, literary and visual artists, actors, break dancers, circus artists, and composers. Ballet Fantastique is proud to be the first new Resident Company at the Hult Center for the Performing Arts in over a decade. BFan has been heralded "a bold, cross-disciplinary dance company" (*Eugene Weekly*) "imaginative geniuses" (*Portland Monthly Magazine*), "not your grandmother's Swan Lake" (*Register-Guard*), and "a company to watch" (*Eugene Magazine*).

Meet BFan's New Dancers 2015-2016

Anthony Rosario was born in the Dominican Republic, and moved to New York City at the age of three. He started dancing at Ballet Hispanico, where he studied ballet, flamenco, jazz, Latin jazz, and modern. Anthony competed in the New York Flamenco Certamen—a Flamenco competition held at Lincoln Center, New York City—and won 2nd place. Anthony continues to study Flamenco in his spare time, and recently traveled to Spain to study under Raquel Heredia, a very respected dancer in the Flamenco world. On starting this new chapter with BFan Anthony says that he is most excited "to embrace the stage, and studio with Ballet Fantastique—to move differently, inspire, and uplift the audience to a whole different sphere of dance!"

Martino Sauter is from Galax, Virginia started his training there at the Conservatory of Dance and Theatre. Soon after, Martino found his passion and went away to prestigious schools, such as The Rock School for Dance Education and Joffrey Ballet. He joined MOMIX Dance Theatre; while with MOMIX, Martino performed all over the US and Europe. "I'm so excited to join Ballet Fantastique this upcoming season," says Martino. "Ballet Fantastique is very innovative and fresh. It will be awesome to be apart of something so different. The repertoire is very different than I am used to and I cannot wait to learn, grow and get started!"

Summer Reed is from New Salem, Pennsylvania. She began her ballet training locally, expanding to include studying privately with Mansur Kamaletdinov, former principal dancer and acting director of the Bolshoi Ballet and summer training at Central Pennsylvania Youth Ballet. In 2011, Summer joined Kentucky Ballet Theater as a Trainee and advanced to Apprentice in 2013. While with KBT, she had the privilege of dancing many soloist roles, including those in *Nisi Dominus* and *Boleros*; Demon Queen in *Dracula*; Mercedes in *Carmen*; Canary Fairy in *Sleeping Beauty*; and Arabian, Nutcracker Doll, and Spanish in *The Nutcracker*. This past season, Summer danced with the Grand Rapids Ballet company under the direction of Patricia Barker. She was honored to have the opportunity perform several soloist roles, including Arabian in *The Nutcracker*, after being chosen to work closely with renowned choreographers, including Val Caniparoli, Sagi Gross, and Gina Patterson. "I'm very excited to be joining Ballet Fantastique and looking forward to a great season!"

OPEN BARRE: Also this season, Open Barre, Ballet Fantastique's unique Wednesday night open rehearsal series at the City Center for Dance (960 Oak, downtown Eugene), is back. Join the Ballet Fantastique dancers, choreographers, and musicians on selected Wednesdays throughout the season for a behind-the-scenes open rehearsal preview of new performance premieres in progress, plus tastings of wine from local artisan winemaker William Rose Wines and custom hors d'oeuvres from Party Downtown.

- **Cirque de la Lune Open Barre:** Wednesday, Sept. 23 from 6:30-8 pm
- **Dragon & the Night Queen: Celtic Stories Open Barre:** Wednesday, Feb. 17 from 6:30-8 pm
- **Scarlet Flower: Beauty and the Beast Retold Open Barre:** Wednesday, Apr. 27 from 6:30-8 pm