

BALLET

ballet like you've never seen it before.

FANTASTIQUE

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+ HANNAH BONTRAGER**
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For Immediate Release: Tuesday, April 14, 2015

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QUICK FACTS:

- **WHAT:** Ballet Fantastique's critically acclaimed *Cinderella: A Rock Opera Ballet* with local favorites Shelley and Cal James and their Agents of Unity Band LIVE ON STAGE, playing all-original arrangements of 1960's billboard hits
- **CONCEPT + CHOREOGRAPHY:** All-original choreography by Ballet Fantastique co-directors/producers Donna and Hannah Bontrager; original premiere in 2012
- **EUGENE PERFORMANCES:** Fri. May 8, 7:30pm; Sat. May 9, 7:30pm; Sun. May 10, 2:30pm, Soreng Theatre, Hult Center
- **TICKETS:** \$29-49 (students/youth \$17-23), with \$5 off regularly priced tickets for groups of six or more. On sale NOW through the Hult Center Box Office: 541-682-5000 or www.hultcenter.org; Box Office hours T-F, 12-5pm; Sat. 11am-3pm

Cinderella: A new "Twist" from Oregon's innovative contemporary chamber ballet company

Eugene, OR—Imagine a version of *Cinderella* where the setting is 1964, the ball is prom, the dance moves are the Twist and the Mashed Potato, and Cinderella goes by "Cindy." Ballet Fantastique mother-daughter producer-choreographer team Donna Marisa and Hannah Bontrager have! In their all-original *Cinderella: A Rock Opera Ballet*, local favorites Shelley and Cal James (of the famed Satin Love Orchestra) join the unstoppable dancers of Ballet Fantastique live on stage this Mother's Day weekend, playing their original arrangements of such classic 60's billboard hits to Donna and Hannah's charming, laugh-out-loud choreography. It's ballet like you've never seen it before.

Cinderella: A Rock Opera Ballet set in 1964 closes Ballet Fantastique's 5th performance season of all-original contemporary ballets at the Hult, and the company's inaugural season as the first new Resident Company at the Hult Center in over a decade.

As a signature hallmark of Ballet Fantastique's hybrid brand of dance theater, Donna and Hannah use well-placed dialogue and cross-disciplinary collaboration to guide the audience through the story's action. In *Cinderella: A Rock Opera Ballet*, Fred Crafts joins the dancers on stage as the live DJ-narrator.

"We imagine our updated *Cinderella* twist as a live radio broadcast that Cindy, her stepmom and stepsisters, and the whole town of Sunnydale are listening to as the action unfolds," says Donna Bontrager, Artistic Director of Ballet Fantastique. "It seemed only right that Fred Crafts [director of Radio Redux] play the role of our DJ!"

“With a familiar story like *Cinderella*, you don’t need much,” says Hannah. “But just add a few lines add tremendous context and humor to the narrative arc of the ballet. Having Fred work with us definitely adds a lot to our *Cinderella*.”

Act I opens when Stepsisters “Drizz” (Krislyn Willes) and “Stasia” (Ashley Bontrager) and their mother (Jocelyn Wright) harass Cindy (Hannah Bontrager) in “Big Girls Don’t Cry”; meanwhile, the Sunnydale Fairy Godmother (Leanne Mizzoni) reminds Prince Charming (Casey Myrick) that “You Can’t Hurry Love,” as she gives him the idea to throw a prom to find an eligible local lady for a princess. Our radio DJ (Fred Crafts) breaks the hot news that the Prince is handing out invitations to his prom *personally* in “Today I Met the Boy I’m Going to Marry.” When her stepsisters rip up her prom invitation, Cindy dances her defiance to “You Don’t Own Me,” complete with backup dancers.

“We imagine our ‘Cindy’ as a spunky, brave heroine,” says Donna. “This fierce piece of choreography is where Cindy stands up for herself, if only while she’s alone.”

When the doorbell rings, it’s the Sunnydale Fairy Godmother (“Tell Him”) to help outfit Cindy for prom. Act I closes when the stepsisters dream of the ball in their nighties to “Mr. Sandman.”

In Act II, Cindy enters to the Beatles’ “Saw Her Standing There,” the clock strikes twelve to “Save the Last Dance for Me,” and when Prince Charming shows up with Cindy’s missing pointe shoe, we hear “My Boyfriend’s Back.” For each of the show’s fourteen pieces, Shelley and Cal have created an original arrangement that pays tribute to the original 60’s hit, and Donna and Hannah have created choreography that references movement from the period while still challenging the Ballet Fantastique company dancers’ classical technique and virtuosity.

“We are thrilled and honored to be working with Shelley and Cal on this exciting, challenging artistic endeavor. They are world-class musicians and so much fun to collaborate with!” says Donna, Artistic Director of Ballet Fantastique.

Shelley and Cal are equally excited about the collaboration, adding that, “what makes this show so unique and fun is bringing in a modern musical twist to these iconic 60’s billboard hits along with the updated story line of *Cinderella*.”

Casey Myrick says he “is positively charmed to play Prince Charming for Ballet Fantastique’s fantastic production of this one of a kind *Cinderella*.”

Ballet Fantastique’s contemporary chamber company is comprised of ten professional dancers from across the US and has made a name for itself in these kinds of out-of-the-box revisions of classic story ballets.

Ballet Fantastique’s trademark twist on *Cinderella* has earned sell-out crowds and standing ovations across Oregon, and has earned the company the accolade “imaginative geniuses” (*Portland Monthly Magazine*). The ballet is the company’s fastest-selling production to date. Tickets to *Cinderella: A Rock Opera Ballet* are available in person or by phone through the Hult Center Box Office (541-682-5000) or online at balletfantastique.org.

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For high-resolution digital images of this production, please email info@balletfantastique.org.