

Arts

The Register-Guard

**Ballet at Tiffany's**  
***Eugene dance troupe choreographs a piece based on a classic Audrey Hepburn film***

By Bob Keefer

*The Register-Guard*

Published: May 15, 2008



Brian Davies/The Register-Guard

*Ballet Fantastique's dance performance, "Tour de Suites," includes (from left) Hannah Bontrager, Nicola Thieme, Alonzo Moore, Ashley Bontrager and Julia Hakes.*

Nicola Thieme has always loved the movie "Breakfast at Tiffany's."

"Well, ever since I was a kid I really loved Audrey Hepburn," she says. "And the movie just has such bubbly, sparkly music that Henry

Mancini wrote.”

So Thieme, a dancer with Eugene’s little dance company Ballet Fantastique, had an idea.

“The movie made me think about doing a ballet. So I had some creative ideas and brought them to Donna (Bontrager, the ballet’s artistic director). And I said, ‘Hey, this would be a great thing to do a dance for our show.’”

Bontrager agreed, and Thieme went to work on choreography.

So on Sunday, the dancers of Ballet Fantastique will conclude their program “Tour de Suites” with an upbeat interpretation of the party scene from “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” — black dresses, white gloves and all.

“It’s jazzy, but we put a lot of classical ballet in as well,” Thieme says of her “Breakfast at Tiffany’s” choreography.

“The dance is inspired by the music and by the movie: the way they were dressed in certain scenes — black dresses and long white gloves, ’50s mambo style. So it has a ballroom feel to it. But it’s classical ballet as well. It’s fun to dance!”

“We really have a lot of teamwork with the five dancers and myself,” Bontrager says. “Usually I come in with ideas or music, and we start working with me coaching and choreographing. This was a little different.

“The dancers themselves in this particular piece decided to get together and start working on choreography on their own. And then we worked in a collaborative way.”

The result, Bontrager says, is an engaging take on a party scene from the 1950s.

“There are four female dancers and one young man, they are doing a lot of choreography that is really fun and upbeat, not traditional classical ballet. The moves and the choreography are very stylized to

give a party atmosphere.”

The early part of the program will include a variety of works, many rooted in the company’s Russian ballet tradition.

Hannah Bontrager, Donna Bontrager’s daughter and co-director of the company, will perform the Russian “Le Corsaire” pas de deux with Alonzo Moore.

“You know that you’re performing repertoire that is the same across oceans and generations of professional dancers,” she says.

“And you have to rise to the expectation, even as you make it your own.”

Another Russian work on the program is “The Fairy Doll,” in which clowns compete for the attention of dolls. Children from Ballet Fantastique’s dance school will join the company dancers on stage for part of the show.

**Copyright © 2007 — The Register-Guard, Eugene, Oregon, USA**