

BALLET *ballet like you've never seen it before.* FANTASTIQUE

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World Premieres, BFAN Originals, and live music comprise Ballet Fantastique's 2019-20 season as tickets become available for purchase to the public for all performances

2019-2020 Season QUICK FACTS

The 19-20 season features **four** unique concepts from mother-daughter choreographer-producers Donna Marisa and Hannah Bontrager. Each original performance project—including two new world premieres—is filled with the company's innovating signatures: all live music, bold, playful concepts, vibrant all-original choreography, evocative cross-disciplinary collaborations.

"This season is a feast of storytelling at Ballet Fantastique," says Artistic Director and Choreographer-Producer Donna Marisa Bontrager. "We are loving getting ready for our world premiere of the haunting stories of Edgar Allan Poe this October with **Nevermore**, totally immersing ourselves in his gothic, romantic, and Victorian worlds. We're also preparing for our popular spin on **Babes in Toyland** this December in collaboration with Swing Shift Jazz Orchestra, playing Duke Ellington's *Nutcracker*." Ballet Fantastique's *Babes* world premiere last season was featured nationally in *Pointe Magazine* in 2018 and sold out with a waiting list for tickets. It's back by popular demand for 2019.

Co-Choreographer-Producer Hannah Bontrager adds, "And in March, we're bringing back BFan's all-original *Dragon & the Night Queen*, a story we wrote ourselves, inspired by fantastical characters from ancient Ireland and Scotland—**Dragon & the Night Queen**—we laughingly refer to this project as 'Outlander-meets Riverdance-meets the video game *Zelda*.'"

The season concludes in May 2020 with another world premiere, still in development by Ballet Fantastique's creative team: **Luna Mistica** features collaborations with Bossanaire as well as 28-year-old Argentinian musician Juan Luqui, ronoco musician and the only apprentice of Academy-Award and Grammy-winning composer Gustavo Santaolalla. *Luna* with Ballet Fantastique marks Luqui's first performance in the Pacific Northwest and will take audiences on a whimsical, evocative journey to Argentina and Brazil.

"Our goal at Ballet Fantastique is to create these immersive experiences where people get lost and fall in love with the experience of live dance theater. We love what we do, and we're ready to break ballet out of more boxes!" says Hannah. "The season is bold, fresh, charming, romantic, funny, and fun—and there's something for everyone," adds Hannah.

Ballet Fantastique's concert season runs October 2019 through Mother's Day 2020 in the Hult Center's intimate Soreng Theater. 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. Student outreach performance tickets are also available—email academy@balletfantastique.org.

FALL WORLD PREMIERE 2019: **Nevermore: Stories of Edgar Allan Poe** with live music: **Sebastian Chang, Sergei Teleshev, and more**

- Friday Oct. 25 and Saturday Oct. 26 at 7:30 pm; Sunday, Oct. 27 at 2:30 pm (Hult Center)

WORLD PREMIERE: A grand, luscious, and bizarre new ballet experience inspired by the dark romance and poetry of Victorian literary genius Edgar Allan Poe. Donna and Hannah's **Nevermore** casts BFan's actor-artists in Poe's blockbusters: *The Raven*, *Annabel Lee*, *Masque of the Red Death*, *Tell-Tale Heart*, and more. Gothic prose, electrifying encounters, and live songcraft.

LIVE MUSIC: Master guest musicians Sebastian Chang and Sergei Teleshev play the music of celebrity composers Lucas King and Peter Gundry. Surprises.

"We're so excited to be bringing world-class cross-disciplinary musical voices to the stage for *Nevermore*. For our world premiere project, LA-based composer-arranger Sebastian Chang will join Ballet Fantastique, playing the music of YouTube celebrity composers Lucas King and Peter Gundry live. This will be Sebastian's first-ever performance in the Pacific Northwest, and he'll be joined by area-based (and international-award-winning) Sergei Teleshev on accordion, as well as special guests on cello and sound engineering. Our audience is going to be completely spellbound by the custom score we're putting together to transport them to the worlds of Edgar Allan Poe."

HOLIDAY 2019: Babes in Toyland

with Swing Shift Orchestra LIVE

- Performance for local school children: Thursday, Dec. 12 at 10 am (Hult Center)
- Friday Dec. 13 and Saturday Dec. 14 at 7:30 pm, Sunday Dec. 15 at 2:30 pm (Hult Center)

BFAN ORIGINAL (2018): *Babes in Toyland* reimagines a lost holiday classic with BFan's trademark wit and whimsy. Victor Herbert's original madcap fairytale mashup collides with hot jazz and genre-defying dance. Contagious, retro-glam new choreography and an entirely new holiday tradition.

LIVE MUSIC: Swing Shift Jazz Orchestra plays Duke Ellington's Nutcracker with vocal guests from the UO Gospel Singers.

Project support: Nils and Jewel Hult Endowment // SPONSOR: Veronica Hennessey, Country Financial

WINTER 2020: Dragon & the Night Queen

with Gerry Rempel Ensemble + Eliot Grasso LIVE

- Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7 at 7:30 pm; Sunday March 8 at 2:30 pm (Hult Center)

BFAN ORIGINAL (2016): Ancient Ireland is a mesmerizing world driven by elemental powers and dragons, gatekeepers to other worlds and guardians of the treasures of the universe. Summers span decades. Winters can last a lifetime. And the struggle to battle Stoorwyrn begins. Fierce movement, riotous live music, dragons, goddesses, treasure.

LIVE MUSIC: Gerry Rempel Ensemble + award-winning guest Eliot Grasso (uilleann pipes) fuse new music, Celtic rock, and ancient Irish traditional.

MOTHER'S DAY WORLD PREMIERE 2020: LUNA Mística

with Juan Luqui + Bossanaire LIVE

- Performance for local school children: Thursday, May 7 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).

MOTHER'S DAY WORLD PREMIERE: Pulsing tango, swaying bossa nova, gaucho romance, and the immortal mystery of the Amazon. Stargaze in the Southern Hemisphere in Donna and Hannah's new *LUNA Mística*—a formidable cocktail of danced wanderlust.

LIVE MUSIC: International guest artist Juan Luqui (ronroco, Argentina) + Bossanaire

Project premiere support: Nils and Jewel Hult Endowment // SPONSOR: Alpha IT

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 delightful refreshments from various local eateries.

- ***Nevermore: Stories of Edgar Allan Poe Open Barre:*** Wednesday, Oct. 16 from 6:30-8 pm
- ***Dragon & the Night Queen Open Barre:*** Wednesday, Feb. 26 from 6:30-8 pm
- ***LUNA Mística Open Barre:*** Wednesday, Apr. 29 from 6:30-8 pm

COMPANY ARTISTS: Ballet Fantastique's season includes performances by the Company's international roster of resident artists, including Principal dancers Ashley Bontrager (OR), Hannah Bontrager (OR) and Gustavo Ramirez (Colombia); Soloist dancers Gabriel Ritzmann (Brazil), Carolin Koeplin (ID) and Tracy Fuller (CO); and artists Jim Ballard (TX) and Madeline Gambino (WI). Ballet Fantastique Company Corps dancer Sophia MacMillan (CA) has been promoted to Company Artist and Fellowship Apprentice Jenavieve Hernandez (WA) have been promoted to Ballet Fantastique Company Corps. We are also proud to welcome six apprentice dancers from across the country to train and perform alongside our professional dancers.

About Ballet Fantastique

Founded in 2000 in downtown Eugene, Ballet Fantastique brings to life great stories, with 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 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, the ancient epic of *The Odyssey* accompanied by the live looping electric violin of Cullen Vance (BFan marked Cullen's first-ever performance at the Hult; he now performs regularly with groups such as Oregon Bach Festival), *Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon* with the DaXun Zhang and the Oregon Mozart Players, and most recently, *Aladdin: A Rock Opera Ballet* with Satin Love Orchestra playing the music of Queen. 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. In 2014, Ballet Fantastique proudly became 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*).

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