

Ultimate Costume Party

Eugene Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty* 'motivated by love'

Awicked witch, a dastardly plan and an evil spell: all the ingredients of a perfect Halloween story. The Eugene Ballet Company's *Sleeping Beauty*, however, also involves a princess, fairies and true love — and a large orchestra made up of UO students.

Sleeping Beauty may not be the first story that comes to your mind when you think of Halloween, but maybe it should. The Ballet uses more than 100 costumes and portrays fairy tale characters galore as they bring Tchaikovsky's music to life. And that's not limited to those onstage: "There is no rule that says [people] can't come to the ballet in costume," says principal dancer Jennifer Martin. "They can be in costume just like we are."

Sleeping Beauty is one of the oldest and most cherished classical ballets. "In a sense, all of us dancers have been preparing for ballets like this from the moment we first stepped into a ballet studio," says dancer Ben Goodman.

Unlike other ballets, and perhaps unlike life, no betrayal mars *Sleeping Beauty*. "Everything you do is motivated by love," says principal dancer Leoannis Pupo Guillen. *Sleeping Beauty* "is your quintessential fairy

tale because it has a happy ending," Martin says.

The show may be based on a fairy tale, but preparations are long and arduous, according to dancer Heather Wallace. "Each time you learn a new ballet, you basically discover a weakness in yourself, and strengths too, but you really have to improve," she says. In a ballet as technically demanding as *Sleeping Beauty*, Wallace says, everything has to be perfect.

For Martin the process is similar to architecture. "You start with your design, your basic plan, then you start the construction of it," she says. "When you find your foundation that works, then you start adding the emotional aspect to it and playing with the musicality of it."

The dancers are not the only ones who have to put in the time for a perfect show. The company is collaborating with the UO Symphony Orchestra, a student group. UO clarinet prof Wayne Bennett, the conductor of the orchestra, requested a DVD of the company's 2003 performance of *Sleeping Beauty* so the musicians would know what was going on above their heads. Ballet Artistic Director Toni Pimble appreciated his attention to the collaboration. "This kind

Eugene Ballet's *Sleeping Beauty*
7:30 pm Saturday, Oct. 31
2 pm Sunday, Nov. 1
Hult Center
www.hultcenter.org or 682-5000
\$22-\$48



Gillmer Duran, Yun-Kyung Kim and Vanessa Laws in *Sleeping Beauty*

CLIFF COLES

of forethought and care for the whole artistic project is wonderful," Pimble says.

For the dancers, live music is a gift. Working with recorded music, "It's easy to forget about the effort that went into creating it and the expression of the individuals behind it," Ben Goodman says.

"Live music with live performance — that together is just a beautiful combination to experience as an audience, but also as a dancer, it's very inspiring," Pupo Guillen says. "It's just that magic."

For members of the orchestra and some of the dancers alike, *Sleeping Beauty* is a

new experience. This will be the first time for Pupo Guillen, who says he's honored to perform it with the Ballet. Of course, it's a classic piece, so although this is the first time Wallace has performed *Sleeping Beauty*, she is no stranger to it. "I used to dance around to the music when I was little," she says.

Sleeping Beauty is "a gift that we can give [the audience] that's going to last beyond just one night," Martin says.

Pupo Guillen adds, "If this is their first time to the ballet, I'm sure it will not be their last one; that, I can guarantee." **EW**

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