

# DEVANT SIDE OF THE MOON

*Ballerinas and brewers take on Pink Floyd*

**B**eer and ballet. The combination is so Eugene it's a wonder this isn't already a decades-long tradition. It certainly isn't any more unusual than watching cyclists smoke cigarettes as they lumber down Willamette Street, for example, so an event which brings both of these things together should be something that will please and amuse many.

As part of the Hult Center's 30th birthday celebration, the Eugene Ballet Company (EBC) will be joining forces with Oakshire Brewing and local band the Floydian Slips to perform Toni Pimble's ballet, *Dark Side of the Moon*, Oct. 13 and 14. The Pink Floyd album-based ballet, which first premiered in Eugene in 2010, was well-received by audiences then, and there have been numerous requests for an encore performance in the two-plus years that have passed. Pimble has been humbled by the outpouring of support and remains in awe because of this.

"I cannot remember having such consistent requests to repeat a ballet, especially only two years after its premiere," she says.

The performance of this ballet has such a level of excitement attached to it that the night can only prove epic for those in the audience.

Add to this the fact that local band the Floydian Slips will play the entire legendary Pink Floyd album as the



PHOTO BY CLIFF COLES

members of the EBC interpret the album's themes of conflict, greed, mental illness and the passage of time, and there is further cause for excitement. It is a bit like mixing traditional musical with rock music a la the long-standing Broadway hit *Rent* — at first glance you think it can't possibly work, but then you recognize this combination as being the absurd stroke of genius that it is, and you marvel that it took this long for someone to think of the idea.

Many of the dancers who will be performing this time around are new to the production, with the exception of Juan Carlos Amy-Cordero, who returns for another performance and will be the featured dancer for "Breathe" and "Time." "Us & Them" will be interpreted by Yoshie Oshima, Takeru Anzai, Mark Tucker and Heather Wallace. Suzanne Haag will be featured in "Great Gig in the Sky," "Brain Damage" and "On the Run," and this last track will also include performances by Anzai, Aoi Anraku and Betty Kondo (who will also be the principal dancer in "Money").

And of course, for some, there is the most exciting element of the performance to consider: the alcohol. Oakshire Brewing will be premiering an all-new brew, Pearl Red, as part of the opening night festivities, so attendees will have the chance to get their drink on, their rock on and their culture on, all in one fell swoop. You can't do that every night, that's for sure.

But there's more. Two additional ballets will also be performed that evening: *Light Rain* and *Channel Surfing*. *Light Rain*, which was choreographed by the late Gerald Arpino of the Joffrey Ballet Company until his death in 2008, will be set by Maia Wilkins, a former ballerina with the Joffrey Ballet Company. The ballet will be accompanied by the original East/West fusion-style score by Douglas Adamz and Russ Gauthier. Arpino envisioned this ballet as a love letter to talented young male and female performers.

"It is my gift to these talented youngsters who are the artists of the '80s," he once said. "I am inspired by their modes, their rituals, their passions."

It is worth noting that the EBC is one of the few dance companies in America that has permission to perform *Light Rain*, which remains one of the Joffrey Ballet Company's signature and most requested works.

And finally, *Channel Surfing* — a humorous piece that will also be choreographed by Pimble — will be performed by the male dancers in the EBC. The dancers will showcase their athleticism in a series of sports vignettes, and in addition, a Don Quixote *pas de deux* will be performed by the ballet's principal dancers, Amy-Cordero and Oshima.

This eclectic combination of elements promises to make for one heck of an entertaining evening for all who attend. Are you in? — Brian Palmer

*Dark Side of the Moon* performed by the Eugene Ballet Company and accompanied by Floydian Slips, 7:30pm Tuesday, Oct. 13th, Hult Center, \$22-\$48.



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