

REQUIEM FOR A DANCER

Remembering Juan Carlos
Amy-Cordero through dance
and song

When the community loses an artist, it's first felt acutely in his mortal absence, and then in the slow, aching realization that he will never again be there to sing another song or paint another picture — or dance just one more dance.

Such is the mourning the Eugene Ballet Company has experienced since longtime company member Juan Carlos ("JC") Amy-Cordero committed suicide in June of 2013. And on Saturday, Feb. 28, the Eugene Ballet Company and the Eugene Concert Choir will team up to present a concert in Amy-Cordero's honor, as a tribute to the performer and the man.

The EBC's Choral Ballet will feature Rossini's *La Passeggiata*, del Encina's *Hoy Comamos y Bebamos*, Orff's *O Fortuna*, Debussy's *Dieu! Qui fait bon regarder*, a selection of humorous poems by Ogden Nash and Mahler's mournful *Ich bin der Welt adhanden gekommen* ("I am lost to the world"), which portrays a world-weary artist who considers abandoning his earthly travails for a quiet, ethereal realm.

The Choral Ballet will be performed in front of 140 choristers with piano accompaniment under the direction of ECC's artistic director Diane Retallack.

"It's going to be an interesting mix of music, from a piece of antiquity to these funny poems," says EBC artistic director Toni Pimble. "The enormous variety of music selected represents JC's personality. He was complex. He could be difficult, demanding, and he could be great fun. We've included the poetry of Ogden Nash because JC could be a little imp at times."

Pimble remembers Amy-Cordero's artistry: "He had an amazing ability to do multiple pirouettes. To do them in the studio is one thing, but it's a whole other thing onstage, and he could. He was also very flexible, which is unusual for a man. And he was a very good partner. He was a joy to watch."

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The second half of the program continues the theme of remembrance, as the Eugene Concert Choir shares Mozart's *Requiem*, the final masterpiece of the great composer who, like Amy-Cordero, died too young.

The *Requiem* will feature world-class soloists: soprano Caroline Worra, mezzo soprano Victoria Avetisyan, tenor Yeghishe Manucharyan and baritone Anton Belov, along with the 30-piece Oregon Mozart Players.

For the EBC company members and Amy-Cordero's family and friends, Pimble says she hopes that this creative project lifts their spirits. "Not bemoaning, but celebrating JC, and his life," she says. — Rachael Carnes

The Mozart Requiem and Choral Ballet performs at the Hult Center Saturday, Feb. 28, at 8 pm. Tickets are available by calling the box office at 682-5000 or by visiting hultcenter.org.

JUAN CARLOS AMY-CODERO



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