

The SPIN

WHO'S WHO AND WHAT'S
WHAT IN DANCE THIS MONTH
BY RACHAEL CARNES

EUGENE BALLET
COMPANY'S
GISELLE

PHOTO BY JEREMY BRONSON

Ah, October: Corn mazes, jack-o-lanterns, kids in costumes and ... undead ballet!

Eugene Ballet Company revives its masterful *Giselle* at 7:30 pm Oct. 28 and 2 pm Oct. 30 at the Hult Center.

"The ballet was first staged for EBC in the fall of 1988 by **Louis Godfrey** and **Denise Shultz**, based on the revival staged by **Marius Petipa** for the Imperial Ballet in St. Petersburg [The Kirov]," says EBC artistic director Toni Pimble.

If you thought *The Blair Witch Project* was scary, try this gothic tale on for size: "*Giselle* is the haunting story of an innocent peasant girl duped by a callous nobleman, Albrecht. Forced to face the truth by the lovesick Hilarion, Giselle dies of a broken heart, becomes a ghostly apparition and joins the vengeful Wilis," Pimble says.

Wilis, as in "that gives me the Wilis [willies]." [Shudder.] The ghostly Wilis have become part of our lexicon for shivers and frights. And EBC's *Giselle* affords audiences the opportunity to see a classical ballet by one of the progenitors of the form, largely unchanged since it premiered in Paris nearly two centuries ago.

But this is no dusty museum piece. Sometimes referred to as "pure ballet," *Giselle* emphasizes the movements and dramatic power of the corps, which

assumes a menacing aura in *Giselle*. The legend of the Wilis predates the ballet, and can be found woven into stories throughout Eastern folklore. And Harry Potter fans might note the Wilis' similarity to the Veela in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*, not that I've read it multiple times or anything.

Pimble's understanding of the ballet's historical significance, and her eye for making the classics relevant and modern, is sure to be appreciated. And late-breaking news: Drogo the Irish wolfhound returns for this production.

Ballet Fantastique also gets in the spirit of Halloween with its masquerade ball and gala 6 pm Oct. 28 at the Downtown Athletic Club. A benefit for BFan's outreach performance scholarship fund, the event features jazz-electro-swing band **High Step Society**, a seated dinner by Chef Alex Lowe, wines from William Rose/Oregon Wine LAB, a magical genie who will listen to your wishes and exclusive sneak previews of this season's ballet premieres, including *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and *Aladdin*, with an afterparty for those who dare. Tickets at balletfantastique.org.

And **Rockin' Road to Dublin** step-hops into town at 8 pm Oct. 22 at the Hult. From their press release: "A

breathtaking display of classic Irish tunes, jigs and reels accented by rock riffs, contemporary costumes and a dynamic light show."

In arts development news, we hear that **Integrated Arts**, the non-profit organization co-founded by Brad Garner, John Park, Jeremy Schropp and Jon Bellona (aka **Harmonic Laboratory**), was just awarded a Creative Heights project grant by the Oregon Community Foundation. "Our project is titled '**Tesla: Light, Sound, Color**,' and will explore the life, philosophy and work of Nikola Tesla," Garner says. "The performance will merge live dance and orchestra with digital art and sound. We haven't nailed down premiere dates, but we are aiming for fall 2017 in one of the Hult theaters with tours to Portland and Bend to follow."

DanceAbility International recently performed **Alito Alessi** and **Frances Bronet's** piece *Don't Leave Me* at the National Building Museum in Washington D.C., a culmination of successful funding from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Oregon Arts Commission, the Oregon Community Foundation and the Ford Family Foundation.

And in studio news, the **Oregon Ballet Academy** is looking for dancers to join their Youth Ballroom Team.

Got a scoop on the local dance scene? Email Rachael Carnes at eugeneweeklydance@gmail.com

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