

# Take 'Fantastique' ballet trip, more with SEAc coast

The adventurous in Florence will want to journey to the Florence Events Center on Feb. 20 for Ballet Fantastique's *Dragon and the Night Queen: Celtic Stories*.

"Ballet Fantastique is fresh and bold. They take ballet out of the box, have a lot of fun, and build new audiences for dance in the process," says Karen Smales, SEAc coast board member and producer for this event. "They're based in the fiercest Russian traditions of classical dance, but are forging new stories, a new dance vocabulary, and a new brand of contemporary narrative dance theater."

"This will be one of the most exciting ballets we've ever brought to Florence," adds Smales. "Colorful, lively, and the costumes are absolutely fabulous. They have great taste in music and we are proud to present their 100-percent original work this season — especially with the live music."

The Eugene troupe has proven a Florence favorite and is sure to thrill again with a bold, defiant new telling of ancient Irish and Celtic legends — a vivid exploration of new borders, filled with elemental powers and riotous spirit.

The performance includes live music from Gerry Rempel Ensemble and internationally-renowned Irish musician Eliot Grasso; and a pre-concert talk at 6:15 p.m. given by Rempel and producers/choreographers Donna and Hannah Bontrager.

*Dragon and the Night Queen: Celtic Stories* takes the audience to ancient Ireland, a mesmerizing world haunted by elemental powers and dragons, gatekeepers to other worlds, and guardians of universal treasures. The Bontragers forge a new telling of ancient Irish legends with dynamic live music by and Grasso.

New choreography, drama, and live songcraft capture the rich myths of Morgan le Fay (sea goddess of the legends of Avalon), the Night Queen Rhiannon, the Morrigan, and the Dragon King. In this story, medieval faerieworlds collide through fantastical sets, costumes, and evocative, contemporary



COURTESY PHOTOS



**Ballet Fantastique is just one of several performances presented by SEAc coast at the Florence Events Center in 2016; (below) the music group Shuffle will perform April 7, allowing the audience to choose what it will play.**

ballet choreography.

"This performance will make for a great date night; but Donna and Hannah always make it tasteful and compelling theater for younger audiences," says Smales.

This electrifying show is the fourth in SEAc coast Entertainment Association's seven-concert season.

Upcoming performances include one of most popular and sought after big bands in the world, the Glenn Miller Orchestra, which returns to Florence on Friday, March 18. SEAc coast Entertainment opens the Florence Event Center's flat floor so you can enjoy big band music the way it was intended — with dancing and cabaret-style seating.

"You choose, we play," say the members of the world-class ensemble, Shuffle Concert.

From Baroque to classical and romantic; from jazz, to pop and Broadway, this group is so multitalented they let the audience select the pieces they will play.

You've never been to a concert like this. Every performance is a completely customized and memorable experience! Don't miss this rare Thursday night concert on April 7.

You'll be in luck on Friday, May 13, when The New Hot Club of America comes to "wow" Florence. This dazzling ensemble is comprised of some of today's top gypsy jazz artists in North America.

You'll want to tango in your seat as they recapture the sound, style, and spirit of the 1930s-era Hot Club of France.

Tickets, artist profiles, show times, video clips, and more information are available at [SEAc coastEA.org](http://SEAc coastEA.org). Tickets are \$30, or \$10 for those under 18.

Tickets can also be purchased at the Florence Events Center box office, 715 Quince St.; or by phone at 541-997-1994 or online at [www.eventcenter.org](http://www.eventcenter.org).