

THE PORTLAND BALLET

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The Portland Ballet Features Works of Romance with a Touch of Drama for Its Annual Spring Concert at The Studio Theater April 30 – May 1, 2010

The Portland Ballet's Artistic Director Nancy Davis today announced the program for the company's annual Spring Concert which offers works of romance and drama. The performance will feature Balanchine's *Valse-Fantaisie* set to music by Mikhail Glinka and staged by former New York City Ballet principal dancer and choreographer John Clifford. The program also includes Anton Dolin's *Pas de Quatre*, Marius Petipa's *Black Swan Pas de Deux* as well as excerpts from *Le Corsaire* and a new work by The Portland Ballet's resident choreographer Alexandrous Ballard.

Valse-Fantaisie was originally presented as part of the ballet *Glinkiana*, a celebration of music by Russian born composer Mikhail Glinka. Mr. Clifford was in the original cast when the ballet premiered in 1967 at the New York State Theater. "It is an honor to have someone of John's prestige on our artistic staff," commented Ms. Davis following an intensive weekend of rehearsals during which the dancers studied a video of Mr. Clifford performing in *Valse-Fantaisie* with fellow principal artist Sara Leland. "It is such a tremendous experience to be rehearsing with someone on whom a ballet was set by Mr. Balanchine"

Among the 19th century works in the program, *Pas de Quatre* is of particular interest. Created in 1845 when ballerinas commanded rock star status, this plotless ballet originally choreographed by Jules Perrot to music by Cesare Pugni showcased four legendary ballerinas of its time: Marie Taglioni, Carlotta Grisi, Fanny Cerrito and Lucile Grahn. While the four ballerina solos are charged with technically challenging movements the style is purely romantic and deceptively simple. *Pas de Quatre* was later re-choreographed by Anton Dolin for Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo. Mr. Dolin ultimately would bring the work to The Los Angeles Ballet and cast Ms. Davis in the "Taglioni" role. Continuing a tradition that is now over 150 years in the making, Ms. Davis is staging the work for The Portland Ballet's performance after Mr. Dolin's choreography.

Adding drama to romance, Jason Davis, The Portland Ballet's Academy Principal, is staging Petipa's *Black Swan Pas de Deux* as well as excerpts from *Le Corsaire*. The program will close with a new classical work by The Portland Ballet's resident choreographer Alexandrous Ballard set to music by Robert Schumann.

The Spring Concert will be presented at The Portland Ballet's Studio Theater located at 6250 SW Capitol Highway in Hillsdale. Performances are Friday, 4/30 at 7:30 PM and Saturday, 5/1 at 2:30 and 7:30 PM. Tickets \$10.00 - \$20.00. To purchase tickets visit ThePortlandBallet.Org or call 503-452-8448.