

THE
Academy
of Ballet Fantastique
EUGENE, OREGON

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR DONNA MARISA BONTRAGER
EXPERT MASTER TEACHER, VAGANOVA METHOD

*So...
You
Want*

TO BE A

*Ballet
Dancer?*

MAKE IT HAPPEN.

elite, olympic-style training
for young artists of dance

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EUGENE, OREGON

Ballet Fantastique was founded in 2000
by mother-daughter team Donna and
Hannah Bontrager.

Throughout the past decade, Ballet
Fantastique has grown to house both
its thriving Academy for young artists
of dance, and the Ballet Fantastique
Chamber Company, comprised of
seven professional dancers from across
the Northwest and the U.S., and
offering a full concert season at the Hult
Center for the Performing Arts—and
unmatched performance
opportunities and training for Ballet
Fantastique Academy students.

Limited class sizes and an uncompromising approach to building students' clear, confident technique and powerful artistry characterize what we do, and passion, commitment, and sincerity characterize how we do it.

WHO WE ARE:

Vision

DEAR DANCER,

We believe that building an artist is more important than dollars and cents.

At The Academy of Ballet Fantastique, relationships are the focus, every dancer means something to us, and the Vaganova Training Program is documented, centuries-proven, and not only driven by athleticism, but also compelled by artistry.

Our goal is that every young dancer finds a place where he or she is guided through personal goals and challenges in a motivated, inspiring atmosphere that is deeply committed to excellence.

We sincerely invite you to The Academy of Ballet Fantastique, and to reach your greatest potential in dance with us.

Welcome—we're so glad you're here!

Donna & Hannah Bontrager

DIRECTORS,
BALLET FANTASTIQUE



WHAT PEOPLE SAY: Applause



EXPERTS

“The Academy of Ballet Fantastique provides **highly individualized, sequential training**, allowing dancers at each level the opportunity to develop strong technique and a sense of artistry. Students and aspiring professionals excel through the Vaganova Method, learning and mastering technical elements step by step, building dancers’ success, confidence, and self-esteem.”

—*Thea Vandervoort, former professional dancer, retired National Program Director, Arts Bridge America, current Artistic Director of Motion Theatre Dance Company, Santa Barbara, CA, 2010*

“In addition to technique, **the dancers have something more.** It is a very good coordination with the expression, body, and musicality—in Russia we call it ‘the feel of the pose.’ Ballet Fantastique training is wonderful.”

—*Dina Fadayeve, Expert Master Teacher and Choreographer, Vaganova Method, Graduate of the Gitis Choreographic Institute, Moscow, Russia, 2010*

MEDIA

“Since October 2000, children and youth have enrolled in **small, focused ballet classes** at Ballet Fantastique, where they study the world-renowned Vaganova technique with trained professionals.”

—*Ariel Olsen, Eugene Weekly, 2005*

“The Bontrager women share a **longtime passion** for ballet, devoting time to teaching talented dancers at their academy and producing spectacular performances again and again.”

—*Linda Jean Sellers, Register Guard, 2009*



DANCERS

"In 2009, I moved to the Eugene area from Washington, D.C. to perform and teach with Ballet Fantastique. The company and academy are energetic, inspiring and knowledgeable! I value and respect the way Ballet Fantastique runs their academy. The training is excellent, the children have many performing opportunities, and since the classes are small, they have individual attention."

— *Leanne Mizzone, professional dancer and teacher, B.F.A., Dance (cum laude), The Hartt School, West Hartford, Connecticut, 2009*

"Ballet Fantastique helped me in so many ways! It gave me the skills that I needed to succeed in a professional career in dance, the knowledge needed to teach ballet, the confidence and performance quality demanded of dancers, and a place to call home. Donna's level of instruction is reputable and she really meets each individual student's personal needs for their goals with dance. I cannot thank Ballet Fantastique enough for all that they have given me—the experience and knowledge I gained through my involvement has been priceless."

— *Sara Parker, former student (now a ballet teacher and dancer in Salem, OR and graduate of the University of Oregon School of Music and Dance). 2009*

PARENTS

"I love the fact that you take so much time to work with each individual kid. We've seen so many dance academies that just don't or can't do that. You are always positive with each and every student. My son has been dancing with Ballet Fantastique since he was just starting elementary school, and his experience with Donna has increased his focus and confidence in performing. His experience with Ballet Fantastique will carry him a long way in all his life's challenges. I highly recommend this dance company to anyone, from child to striving professional."

— *Dr. Alice Moffitt, parent of Tom (age 15), 2010*



WHAT WE DO:

Curriculum Overview

“Talent is work.”

—Galina Ulanova, prima ballerina (1910–1998)



BALLET BRILLIANTE—ACCELERATED BEGINNING: INTRO TO CLASSICAL DANCE (AGE 8 & UP)

All children (be they future professional dancers, concert pianists, or soccer stars) benefit from this wonderful Dance 101 class, wherein they build grace, coordination, flexibility and strength, discipline, and confidence—as well as an appreciation for the sport and art form of ballet. Ballet Brilliance also provides a necessary foundation for students who will wish to continue serious ballet training.

BALLET ANDANTE—INT-BEG: VAGANOVA I (AGES 9 & UP, BY PLACEMENT AUDITION)

Students begin intensive study of the Vaganova Syllabus, learning artistry and musicality in tandem with technique. With close personal attention, they perfect each detail of correct placement and performance. Ballet Andante students graduate with the successful completion of their first Academy of Ballet Fantastique Level Examination, and are awarded a medal and certificate commemorating their hard work and significant accomplishment.

BALLET BRAVO—INT: VAGANOVA II

Dancers build strength, stamina, and increased complexity of coordination at a faster tempo, while maintaining the integrity of their alignment and placement. Ballet Bravo dancers are also introduced to the basic elements of *pas de deux*, or partnering. Extensive work on *demi-pointe* prepares students for adagio and pirouettes, young women for pointework, and strengthens boys for their increasingly difficult allegro steps.

BALLET CONCERTO—INT-ADV: VAGANOVA III-IV

Ballet Concerto includes very special and difficult new elements in the progressive development of the true classical dancer: center exercises on *demi-pointe*, movements *en tournant* (turning), tours *sur le cou-de-pied* (pirouettes), and beats. Dancers in Ballet Concerto regularly appear in performance with the Chamber Company, and graduate with the successful completion of the Vaganova III and Level IV Level Exams, whereby they demonstrate that they have reached the mid-point in their Vaganova training.

BALLET PAVLOVA—ADV: VAGANOVA V-VI

Ballet Pavlova includes rigorous technical training, pointe work, and studies in classical variations and choreographic composition. Classes are geared toward preparation for professional work, with an emphasis on dance as a performing art, mastery of the technique of beats, advanced tours, and the development of plasticity and suppleness. Upon graduation from Vaganova V and VI, students are considered eligible for Chamber Company positions.

Supplementary Courses

CURRICULUM ALSO INCLUDES: STRETCH/CONDITIONING, POINTE, VARIATIONS, MEN'S ALLEGRO, MODERN/CONTEMPORARY/COMPOSITION, PAS DE DEUX, AND TOPICAL SEMINARS (DANCE HISTORY, NUTRITION, KINESIOLOGY, ETC.)

Current Schedule of Classes/Summer Intensive Program
Schedule: www.balletfantastique.org



Vaganova Training Syllabus

The curriculum of the Academy of Ballet Fantastique follows the training and methods of the Vaganova Ballet Academy of St. Petersburg, Russia.

The Vaganova Syllabus is the most comprehensive and artistry-driven training approach for classical dance, a notated and progressive system that has produced many of the world's leading dancers, including Anna Pavlova, Natalia Makarova, Mikhail Baryshnikov, the legendary choreographer George Balanchine, and dancers in nearly all of the world's professional companies. Most professional companies take classes comparable to the material in a Vaganova level VI or VII (though there are eight levels in total).

Many dance schools do not follow a syllabus, and employ a training philosophy that assumes that if a beginning dancer is introduced to complicated steps (e.g., turns and jumps) and tries them for many years, he or she will eventually "get it right." In contrast, academies following the Vaganova Syllabus ensure that dancers are introduced to material *progressively*. Each new step relies on a solid foundation of preparatory work. Additionally, it prevents the development of bad habits that can lead to injuries. Just as one would do when learning to play a musical instrument or to drive a car, the Vaganova Method builds good habits and *great* dancers, with innate confidence, elegance, and artistry.



HOW WE DO IT:

Class Size Policy

Academy of Ballet Fantastique students benefit from extensive personal attention and class sizes limited to just nine students or fewer.

In addition to expert instructors and a rock-solid training approach, one of the most important and proven factors for a productive teacher-student environment is the size of the class. In order to provide the best learning environment possible, classes at The Academy of Ballet Fantastique never exceed 9 students.

Here are some of the many proven benefits every young dancer will profit from in our intimate class setting:

STUDENTS

- Receive more one-on-one interaction with their coaches
- Benefit from the close relationships they form with instructors and peers
- Learn to work as a member of a cohesive group, and develop leadership skills
- Are more likely to develop a positive self-image, participate enthusiastically, and be self-motivated

FACULTY

- Are able to move through material more quickly
- Have more awareness of the personal goals and challenges of each student, and have more classroom time to address these goals and challenges

CITED SOURCES

1. Hertling, Elizabeth, Courtney Leonard, Linda Lumsden, and Stuart Smith. "Class Size: Can School Districts Capitalize on the Benefits of Smaller Class Sizes?" Policy Report 1 (2000). Clearing House on Educational Management.
2. Picus, Lawrence O. "Class-Size Reduction: Effects and Relative Costs." Resource Allocation (2000). Clearinghouse on Educational Policy and Management.

THE
Academy
of Ballet Fantastique



EXPERT INSTRUCTORS • LIMITED CLASS SIZES
ROCK-SOLID TRAINING APPROACH: VAGANOVA SYLLABUS
UNMATCHED PERFORMANCE EXPERIENCES

Faculty

Ballet Fantastique's team of expert faculty members is respected, passionate, and proven.

The Academy of Ballet Fantastique's small team of highly-qualified faculty have backgrounds not only in professional performance and in the Vaganova method, but also in dance pedagogy—so they not only know how to dance, but are also experts in working with young dancers. All are university-trained, with a combined dozens of years of professional experience. They are deeply dedicated to each Ballet Fantastique student, and are also highly approachable as dancers and parents have questions or concerns throughout their training.

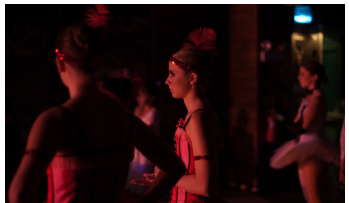
DONNA MARISA BONTRAGER, BA
HANNAH BONTRAGER-GWARTNEY, BA
LEANNE MIZZONI, BFA
KRISLYN WESSEL, BFA

Biographies for faculty and guest master teachers are available at www.balletfantastique.org.

Performance Opportunities

Ballet Fantastique student dancers excel in professional performance concerts with the Ballet Fantastique Chamber Company.

Young, well-trained students need to perform on a regular basis to develop confidence and finesse. Choreographers from Ballet Fantastique, Academy faculty, and invited guests coach Academy performers, who perform regularly with the company in real concerts, not “recitals.”



Advanced dancers often take class and rehearse with and alongside the company. Additionally, every student dancer age 14 and over receives solo performance coaching and opportunities to tour.



JOIN US: Admissions

The Academy of Ballet Fantastique seeks serious dancers who demonstrate great passion, along with focus and stamina. We will take the time to meet with you personally to assess your personal background and goals for dance, and to tailor the best training plan for you.

Schedule your dancer's personal interview at the Academy of Ballet Fantastique, or send a DVD audition. Details on auditioning by DVD and the audition form are available at www.balletfantastique.org (audition fee: \$14).

WE LOOK FOR

- Quality of previous ballet training
- A high level of talent—defined by physical ability, movement quality, musical sense, strong commitment, and a high level of dedication to artistry
- Physical attributes—such as structure, proportion, flexibility, body line, turn out, extension, and coordination

Scholarships

The Academy of Ballet Fantastique has the unique distinction of offering full scholarships to talented young dancers in need.

Scholarships are awarded on the basis of merit and need. Information and details on applying are available at www.balletfantastique.org.

STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization committed to cultural diversity, the Academy of Ballet Fantastique does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national/ethnic origin.

Photos: Ballet Fantastique student dancers in performance at Oregon Shakespeare Festival and with Eugene Symphony.



Recommended for You:

Notes:

We're committed to
supporting you in
reaching your goals
in dance.



What's next?

- **Call:** 541-342-4611
- **Email:** info@balletfantastique.org
- **Or visit:** Ballet Fantastique
City Center for Dance • 960
Oak St. • Downtown Eugene

We'll schedule your personal
registration interview and
audition class.

We can't wait to meet you!

BALLET *fantastique*

CHAMBER COMPANY & ACADEMY

Return service requested

60 E. 10th Ave. • [Downtown Eugene](#), OR 97401
(541) 342 - 4611 • info@balletfantastique.org
www.balletfantastique.org



dance instruction!

