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Incendio: October 22-23, 2011

Ballet Fantastique's new season kicks off October 22nd and 23rd with *Incendio*, titled after the Latin-jazz fusion guitar trio of the same name. Based in L.A., Incendio weaves Latin, Middle Eastern and flamenco influences into a brilliant display of virtuosity. The band tours extensively across the U.S., and has been to Oregon before, though never at the Hult Center.

In their first-ever collaboration with ballet, Incendio promises dramatic, richly textured live music to complement all-original Ballet Fantastique choreography by directors Donna and Hannah Bontrager.

"We put a lot of emphasis on rhythm and energy in our live show, and we know the dancers will key in on that. The hope for the band is that the dancers will become another instrument, another onstage collaborator and improviser, much as we expect to become an extension of the Ballet Fantastique company," says band member Jean-Pierre Durand in anticipation of the two-show season opener.

Incendio's music is rooted in myriad sources: Bass guitarist Liza Carbé's flamenco and classical guitar training as well as her Sicilian ancestry, Jean-Pierre Durand's Peruvian heritage, Jim Stubblefield's European travels and musical collaborations with Kuwaiti maestro Waleed Hamad, not to mention Durand's penchant for rock-style dramatics and Stubblefield's lightning-fingered jazz-fusion mastery.

"In the past, when dancers have danced to one or two of our pieces, whether they are belly dancers, flamenco dancers, salsa dancers, tango dancers, or street dancers, we have often seen such an exciting response. We think this more formal collaboration will be the explosive next step. There is so much improvisation and mixture of styles in our music. No one musical style captures it, and no one form of dance discipline covers what can be done to our music. In this respect, Ballet Fantastique is uniquely suited to the task," said Liza Carbé.

Ballet Fantastique will open the concert with an incredibly varied set of virtuosic favorites from its original repertoire.

"The first act is comprised of BFan's top audience favorites including 'Daphnis and Chloe,' 'Tango Forte,' and 'Orion'—pieces that our audience members keep asking us to perform again," said company dancer Leanne Mizzoni.

In Act II, Ballet Fantastique's critically-acclaimed company dancers will set the stage on fire with all-original choreography by Donna and Hannah Bontrager to Incendio pieces, including "Tango Para Abel,"

“Misterioso,” “Magie Noir,” and “Viheula,” to name just a few.

“The show is varied, but the common thread is this fiery virtuosity,” says co-producer and choreographer Donna Marisa Bontrager. “Our goal is always that our audience members are talking about the performance for days after, and this show will be no exception.”

“For the last 12 years, we’ve worked so hard to work in the new music business paradigm, building a national presence as an indie band,” says JP. “What spoke to us about Ballet Fantastique was not just their obvious dance expertise and commitment to excellence, but their independent streak. They are bold, they are open to a variety of approaches and dance disciplines, and understand the business behind their craft. That’s a rare combination, and it really resonated with us when we first talked about this collaboration.”

Note: Band members Jean-Pierre Durand and Liza Carbé will be available for additional comment. More information about Incendio is available on their website, www.incendiband.com.