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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

BALLET FANTASTIQUE BRINGS PROFESSIONAL BALLET TO ROSEBURG

On Friday, May 4, 2007 at 7p.m., Umpqua Modern Dance Project (UMDP) will hold its annual dance performance, the Umpqua Modern Dance Festival, at Roseburg High School's Rose Theatre in Roseburg, Oregon. UMDP has invited five Ballet Fantastique dancers to perform new repertoire. Ballet Fantastique is a nonprofit chamber ballet company and academy in Eugene, Oregon.

According to UMDP artistic director Valeria Ball, UMDP is a "nonprofit organization created to enhance the artistic and cultural climate of rural Oregon." By holding its festival for the general public, Ballet Fantastique and other performing community dance groups hope to "support high-caliber arts in communities like Roseburg," says Ballet Fantastique Executive Director Hannah Bontrager.

Ball says, "We are very excited about bringing Ballet Fantastique to our rural community. This is going to be a great chance for our local dancers to appreciate professional ballet. I have worked with Hannah before and I was very pleased with the experience." She continues, "We hope to provide another great experience to our community and to Ballet Fantastique dancers."

After two months of rehearsal, Ballet Fantastique's young professional dancers are prepared for what Ashley Bontrager calls "a great performance experience."

Melanie Iverson-Kauffman, a Ballet Fantastique soloist, says, "It's wonderful to support UMDP's efforts by bringing our work to an area without a professional ballet company. Their vision is important and valuable to the cultural climate of the Northwest."

Ballet Fantastique's featured pieces will be choreographed by Bontrager with contributions from dancers from Ballet Fantastique's Professional Dancer Development Program.

In addition to providing an outlet for their talent, this program gives young dancers the opportunity to create and perform professional choreography. Programs such as this help maintain the arts in our community.

Ballet Fantastique apprentice Shellsea Bowen says, "You really feel like you're giving a

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gift when you're going into a rural community where that art form isn't widely offered.”

One part of this “gift” is a piece composed by classical era Italian composer Luigi Boccherini. Ballet Fantastique has transformed this classical music into a contemporary pointe piece. The dancers will perform a 6-minute preview of their 9-minute final piece.

The second half of the performance is their solo series, “Spanish Inspiration,” which includes excerpts from *Don Quixote*. The music of composer Leon Minkus, which was first presented in 1869, will accompany the dancers when presenting the choreography as performed by Kirov Ballet Company.

Eighteen-year-old dancer Julia Hakes says, “As a dancer, it will be exciting and rewarding to visit theaters outside Eugene. Many chamber ballet companies like ours don't tour, so it's great to have this experience.”

For more information about this unique experience or purchasing the \$8 tickets for the Umpqua Modern Dance Festival, please visit <<http://www.umpdp.net>>.

Please contact Hannah Bontrager at (541) 206-8977 or [hbbontrager@balletfantastique.org](mailto:hbbontrager@balletfantastique.org) for details about Ballet Fantastique and its upcoming events.