

Ballet Tucson Opens For 24th Season

Written by Written by Amy Strand

Watching a beautiful ballet can be much like watching a fantasy land: soft, sparkly costumes and striking music all paired with precise and perfect movements. Luckily for Southern Arizonans, Tucson has one of the best and most respected ballet companies around. It's officially time to take your seats in the theater, because the Ballet Tucson opens their 2009-2010 season this Saturday with a performance of Esmeralda, Giselle—Act II & Masquerade, along with an opening season gala dance lovers won't want to miss.



Clearly, Halloween isn't just for ghosts and goblins and all things frightening. This Halloween (yes, that is this Saturday), the Ballet Tucson will be opening their 2009-2010 season with a performance of Esmeralda, Giselle—Act II & Masquerade. The performance will take place on Oct. 31 at 8 p.m. as well as on Nov. 1 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. at the Stevie Eller Dance Theater, located on the University of Arizona campus.

Inspired by Victor Hugo's novel, Notre Dame de Paris, and choreographed by former Ballet Tucson Resident Choreographer Mark Schneider, Esmeralda portrays the age old story of Quasimodo, the hunchback who falls in love with Esmeralda, a beautiful gypsy. Giselle, Act II which will be the middle performance, tells a glorious love story that goes beyond the grave. And finally, as a collaboration between Founding Artistic Director Mary Beth Cabana and Assistant Artistic Director Chieko Imada, Masquerade brings a bit of Halloween spirit to the theater with a combination of both traditional and contemporary styles.

In addition to the performance, Ballet Tucson will also host an Opening Night Gala to ring in the 24th season. Taking place on the 31st prior to the evening's performance (so you can make a night out of it and attend the gala, then be ushered into the theater for the opening night performance), the gala will include a pre-performance wine and buffet reception, silent auction, live musical entertainment, post-performance Champagne and dessert reception and the opportunity to meet the guest stars and company artists. The gala will take place at 6:30 p.m. and tickets for the event will cost \$75 per person. All proceeds will benefit the Ballet Tucson.



If you already have scary, spooky plans the weekend of Halloween, don't fret because Ballet Tucson will be holding many more performances within the next few months. Here are the highlights:

The Nutcracker (with the Ballet Tucson Orchestra)

December 24, 26 and 27 at the Tucson Music Hall

General admission, \$27-\$55

Dance & Dessert

March 12, 13 and 14 at the Stevie Eller Dance Theater

General admission, \$25

A Midsummer Night's Dream

May 22 and 23 at the Tucson Music Hall

General admission, \$27-\$37

For more information on the Ballet Tucson or any of the 2009-2010 season performances, call 520.903.1445 or visit www.ballettucson.org.