
Stepping Out

Early Halloween treat from Lost Angels Ballet
by Shaun Hague
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Gabe Palmatier and Kara Fioretti

As Halloween draws near, many people will be getting into the spirit of things. If you're looking for something different and original, stop by the Hermosa Beach Playhouse to see the Lost Angels Ballet Co. Oct. 8 at 8 p.m. The cast will be performing two pieces, "Burn" and "Bathing For Beauty," as part of its Halloween ballet.



Gabe Palmatier and Kara Fioretti

The Lost Angels Ballet Co. is the brainchild of dancers/ choreographers Gabe Palmatier and Kara Fioretti. Together, the duo has put in countless hours to dance and has built a great reputation in the South Bay.

Palmatier, a Hermosa Beach resident, was a serious dancer at a young age and trained all over the United States. As she grew older, the stress began to overwhelm her and led to a 10-year hiatus from dancing all together. During that decade span, Palmatier found an eye for clothing design, a talent that would eventually come in handy for the ballet company. She would take up dancing again upon meeting Fioretti. Palmatier not only is a co-partner in the Lost Angels Ballet, but also teaches ballet at the School of Dance & Music facilities located in Hermosa and Redondo Beach. Fioretti is a classically trained dancer and was a dance major at UCLA. Choreography was a strong interest then and she knew that she wanted to own her own dance company someday. That dream grew closer when she met Palmatier years ago, while modeling for her clothing line.

Tickets are available at www.lostangelsballet.com or by calling (323) 378-5547.

The Beach Reporter recently spoke to the pair about their upcoming show.

The Beach Reporter: Can you tell us what each piece is about?

Fioretti: "Burn" takes a nod to the infamous Salem witch trials and takes ballet into an old-school way of thinking. We wanted to create a show within a show. The pilgrims watch a group of young dancers put on a play that is filled with African dance rhythms and rock music. Being different and not sticking with the strict ideas then, the girls are considered witches and brought to trial. "Bathing for Beauty" is about Elizabeth Bathory, a 1600s countess, who used to believe that she could live forever by bathing in virgin blood. She used to sew the young girls' mouths shut so they couldn't speak of what happened at her castle. Bathory supposedly killed thousands of virgins while trying to attain her youth. We had never heard about this story until we began asking people what the scariest story they had ever heard was. It really was the best story we heard and inspired us to write a ballet around the gruesome story.

How many dancers are in the cast?

Fioretti: We have 20 cast members who are all professionals and are classically trained dancers. The play also features two of Gabe's students from the School of Dance & Music.

How did you get the famous percussion group Street Drum Corps involved?

Fioretti: We wanted live drummers to play during the African dance section and they really wanted to do it. Gabe and I danced in some of their live shows in the past. Street Drum Corps wanted to participate in our last Halloween ballet, but they were on tour.

What makes your ballet company different from others?

Palmatier: We are a very original ballet/dance company that caters to the nondance crowd. Our pieces feature all kinds of contemporary music and there is something for everyone. We also blend modern and classical dance movements within the choreography. Kara and I also produce, choreograph, perform and design the clothes for all of our ballets.

Do you both enjoy working together?

Fioretti: We really work well together and wonderful things happen when we bounce ideas off of one another. It's a very supportive partnership.