

# High-flying folk ballet hits its mark

*Cossack dance a powerful, beautiful thing to behold*

## REVIEW

**Clara's Dream: A Ukrainian Folk Ballet based on Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker**

**Companies:** Ukrainian Shumka Dancers, Virsky — The Ukrainian State Folk Company and the Kyiv Ballet

**When:** Friday and Saturday at 7:30 p.m.

**Where:** Jubilee Auditorium

SALENA  
KITTINGHAM  
*Edmonton Journal*

From their first slipping and sliding steps in the playful opening skating scene, to the warm and bubbly, jewel-toned party, and the high flying athletics of the Cossack dance, it was vividly clear Canada's

Ukrainian Skumka dancers and Virsky — Ukraine's State Folk Dance Company — were a great match to dance the Nutcracker.

So remarkably well did the dynamic Ukrainian folkloric dance style pair with Tchaikovsky's iconic ballet score, it was in fact the ballet that looked out of place on opening night.

While Kyiv Ballet principal Natalia Lazebnikova delivered a fine Clara, her fellow Kyiv ballet company dancers, Dmytro Kliavin and Oleksandr Shapoval, in the roles of Uncle Drosselmeier and the Prince, were nowhere near capable of dancing with the same technical prowess as the men of Shumka and Virsky.

Witnessing the infamous

Cossack dance as performed by the world's foremost Ukrainian dancers is a powerful and beautiful thing to behold.

In classical ballet versions, the second-act parade of international dances for dancing's sake tends to tire out the young ones, and lose the attention of those taking in a live dance performance for the first time.

But the Ukrainian dancers tackled the flamenco with a such a smouldering fire and the Chinese dance with such sprightly, acrobatic spunk, I'm willing to bet Clara's Dream will prove to be a perfect first Nutcracker for many Edmonton generations, entertaining no matter the heritage

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For a full review of Clara's Dream, go to [edmontonjournal.com/entertainment](http://edmontonjournal.com/entertainment) on Saturday.



Clara's Dream opened Friday night at the Jubilee Auditorium and continues on Saturday night.

SUPPLIED