

— NEWS PHOTO IAN SORESEN

Dancers of the Classic St. Petersburg Ballet perform at the Esplanade on Tuesday night. The ballet consisted of three acts and featured classically trained Russian dancers.



# Hatters get rare treat with performance by St. Petersburg Ballet

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For the Medicine Hat News

Last night an appreciative sold-out audience at the Esplanade watched in awe and amazement as the classically trained dancers of the St. Petersburg Ballet, through skill and strength transported us back in time.

From our humble theatre to the splendor of St. Petersburg and the majesty that is Russia these Russian born and trained troupe of dancers offered the audience a rare glimpse of just how powerful and potent ballet can be.

With muted lighting the only nod to set design, Act I gave a sampling of classics of the ballet world, including the Pas de Trois from Phakhita, the White Swan Adagio from Swan Lake and the most spectacular performance of all from featured soloist Svetlana Alexeeva, The Dying Swan from Carnival of the Animals. For one ethereal moment in time reality was suspended the illusory power of fantasy was invoked and the stage was filled with the raw sadness and beauty of a majestic swan.

Act II progressed to bring us from appetizer to feast as a new ballet performed in classic tradition the Diamond Ballet was executed. The costumes, adorned with sparkling diamonds, were outshone by the presence of the entire ensemble on stage at one time. Physical prowess and grace by both the men and the women were exemplified in the complicated choreography, and while the women of this ensemble seemed to steal the show from their male counterparts, it cannot be said the talent of the males of this troupe was in any way less vital.

Arthur Vofolomeev performed a Russian Cossack dance in a bold and vivid costume that exploded onto the stage, as did he, with formidable jumps and spins, showing that the ethnic and classical roots of this troupe are where they are strongest.

In the classical pieces they were born to do, the more modern arrangements they were naturals at, or the ethnic character dances that exemplified all that is Russian Ballet, the ensemble of the St. Petersburg Ballet was a delicacy the likes of which Hatters have never before had the privilege to see.