

## Upstate NY Ballet's "Snow White" is an eye- and ear-pleasing production.

Posted by [Neil Novelli, Contributing Writer](#) November 22, 2008 9:10PM

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Upstate NY Ballet's colorful production of "Snow White" delighted its Saturday audience, ranging from tots to grandparents.

The choreography created by Kathleen Rathbun, artistic director and choreographer of Upstate NY Ballet, tells the story grippingly.

The professional guest artists do inspiring work. And so do the older members of the corps de ballet, most in their teens I'd guess, who are accomplished artists in their own right. Alongside them are youngsters who perform with discipline and poise.

In the opening scene, Snow White (Morgan McEwen) dances in the garden amid a bevy of other young women. Their movements are filled with grace, beauty and confidence. The Prince (Hyek Chen) does exuberant solo dancing, and he and Snow White set up the theme of romance that will be fulfilled after the wicked Queen (Maria Phegan) has been foiled.

Younger members of the company fill roles like Bunnies, Butterflies, Flower Buds and Baby Birds. Along with the Dwarfs they especially delighted younger members of the audience. The Vultures -- the Queen's cohorts -- are a wonderfully menacing bunch, with black feathers and huge beaks.

At intermission I asked a young member of the audience what she especially liked. Without hesitation she said, "The dancing and the music. And the costumes, too."

She captured the essence of this ballet -- relaxing spectacle that pleases eye and ear.

The music, adapted from various composers by Mike Konkel, offers plentiful changes in mood. And there are lots of colorful costumes (Victoria Lillich, Kristin Palazzoli), helping to give scenes freshness and energy.

Takao Komaru does excellent work as the Huntsman, conflicted about the Queen's orders to kill Snow White.

Rathbun's choreography is far from simplistic. For example, the Queen's solo, danced with nuanced power by Phegan, expresses a nameless sense of loss. What she really wants, of course, is to be young and beautiful again.

At the big closing celebration, everyone gets to dance for no specific reason. But that's what happy endings are about.

### THE DETAILS

"Snow White," ballet by Upstate NY Ballet.

Performance length: Two hours, including intermission.

Advisories: OK for the whole family.