

Yalenka Ukrainian Dancers

Yalenka Ukrainian Dancers Society was established in 1975 by a group of dedicated parents. They were the teachers, seamstresses, managers and fundraisers. Classes were held in the basement of St. Vladimir's Ukrainian Orthodox Church. That early spirit of Yalenka thrives today, 33 years later. Our students now enjoy the specialized studios of the School of Alberta Ballet and benefit from the teaching and guidance of professional instructors. Our parents continue to serve as volunteer members of the Board of Directors.

Throughout its history, Yalenka's Ukrainian and non-Ukrainian students, from ages three to adult, have stepped and jumped their way to the rhythm and lyrics of age-old traditional and modern Ukrainian music. Our students have learned the basic steps of Ukrainian dance from each of the distinct regions of the Ukraine - Poltava, Hutzul, Bukovynia, Volyn, Polissia and Transcarpathia. Through time, with the efforts of fundraising and sewing contributions of talented parents, Yalenka has built a large inventory of costumes representing each of these unique regions. As the years have progressed, in addition to traditional Ukrainian dances, Yalenka's instructors have designed and choreographed age-old children's classic fairy tales with a Ukrainian flavour.

The goal of Yalenka Ukrainian Dance School continues to be **“To teach Ukrainian dance skills in an environment that promotes commitment, self-confidence and the enjoyment of the Ukrainian Heritage”**.

For more information, please visit Yalenka's website at www.yalenka.com/history.htm.

2008-09 Calendar

28 August – board meeting

4 September – registration night, group dance class

25 September – registration cut off date

29/30 September – casino

2 October – parent viewing night

9 October – board meeting

4/6 November – parent viewing night

9 November – workshop 12-2 pm

13 November – board meeting

16 November – workshop 12-2 pm

2/4 December – parent viewing night Dress rehearsal

11 December – board meeting

19 December – Christmas concert; University theatre

Have a wonderful Christmas!

6/8 January – classes resume from Christmas break

7 January – Ukrainian Christmas

14 January – Ukrainian New Years

15 January – board meeting

24 January – Malanka in Strathmore

5 February – picture night for all dancers

12 February – board meeting

2/5 March – parent viewing night

12 March – board meeting

15 March – workshop

27-29 March – SAUDF in Strathmore

2 April – parent viewing night

8 April – Easter break, no dancing

End of April – Final concert, details TBA

1-3 May – Tryzub festival

23 May – costume return

There **will** be practice during teachers' convention

Please watch whiteboard, emails, and newsletters for event details and bingo dates.



Yalenka Board Positions

- Chairperson
- act as a representative for the organization
 - oversee and organise everyday operations of the school
 - call and chair board meetings; book facility for same
 - support other board members in their roles
 - hire instructors and ensure instructor contracts are complete
 - act as a mediator, as required
 - arrange instruction facility rental and rental contracts

- Vice Chair
- prepare registration packages for distribution
 - collect completed registration packages
 - distribute information to appropriate board members
 - prepare class lists with guidance from instructors
 - chair meetings in the event the chair is not available

- Secretary
- record minutes during board meetings
 - compile and distribute minutes from board meetings

- Treasurer
- has care and custody of all funds and securities
 - maintain 2 bank accounts: operating and casino accounts
 - deposit and write cheques for signature by qualified signing authority
 - prepare and maintain adequate accounting records
 - update the other board members at each meeting on the current finances of the school
 - prepare annual budget with input from other board members
 - arrange for audit or review of previous year's for the year ending 31 May if deemed necessary
 - present previous years financial statements at the Annual General Meeting as well as a projection to the current year end
 - prepares and submits casino reports to Alberta Gaming Commission

- Costumes
- ensure costumes are complete and cleaned for distribution to dancers' as directed by instructor
 - distribute costumes to class reps
 - instruct class reps on proper costume distribution procedures
 - inspect costumes for damage and arrange repair if necessary
 - arrange for cleaning of costumes, if required
 - coordinate costume work bees as required
 - collect costumes at year end
 - organise and package costumes for storage

Newsletter/Web page

- to take relative information from each board member and compile a monthly newsletter that informs all members of upcoming events and information.
- gather pertinent information from other Yalenka members for inclusion in the newsletter
- compile and publish pertinent information from board meetings
- submit newsletter to chairperson for review prior to publication
- email newsletter to all members
- post newsletter on website
- update website with all relative information as well as upkeep of website
- help with posters/promotional information as required

Publicity

- publicize concerts and events to general public through media releases and to the Ukrainian community through church bulletins, Ukrainian websites and other Ukrainian newsletters
- collaborate with media for special appearances
- photography when required
- write/edit speeches for key members, emcee for special events as required
- outside advertising for membership drives
- preparation of pamphlets and other image-creating materials

Special events

- organise and book facilities for Christmas concert, photo night and year end concert

Volunteer Coordinator - coordinate volunteers for special events as required

- record volunteer hours and report same to treasurer
- co-ordinate class parent volunteers

Gaming Chair

- attend casino and bingo meetings representing Yalenka
- report granted casino and bingo dates to board and Yalenka families via newsletter
- organise volunteers for casino and bingo dates

Festival Co-ordinator – communicate with instructors and parents for 2 dance festivals, SAUDF and Tryzub, including solos, duets, and group dances.

- submit registration forms and fees Festivals
- organise solo & duet practices and facilities

The role of the board, as a whole, is to make decisions regarding the day to day operations of the club, keeping in mind the philosophy of the school. Board members are volunteer parents and dancers.

Classroom Etiquette

Your instructors have requested the following rules of classroom etiquette be followed while in class.

- use the washroom before class
- line up outside classroom; let previous class out first
- at the start of class, quietly sit on floor in front of stereo and wait for instructor to complete attendance
- library manners please
- no talking during class
- no running, screaming, tag, wrestling, or uncontrolled behaviour
- bring water bottle to every class; water breaks are given
- bring your smile
- clean up after yourself

Dress Code

Girls - bodysuit, tights and skirt

- red slippers with elastic across ankle; double check with instructor for proper positioning
- hair up off of face and neck; no loose ponytails-ballet buns or French braids pinned up
- no jewellery or watches

Boys - black sweat or jazz pants; no tearaways/noisy pants. Avoid pants that are too long or have snaps/zippers as they are no good for tricks.

- plain t-shirt, any color; no logos/writing/pictures
- black slippers with elastic across ankle; double check with instructor for proper positioning
- hair off face; wear bandana or sweat band if needed
- no jewellery or watches

Instructor Expectations

Dancers – arrive, ready to dance, 5 minutes before class starts

- follow classroom etiquette rules
- practice at home between classes
- know your dance steps
- talk to your instructor if you don't understand what they are asking

Parents – bring your dancer 5 minutes before class starts, prepared to dance

- ensure your child has used the washroom before class
- provide water bottle for your dancer
- remind your dancer of classroom etiquette prior to class
- read the white board in lobby every dance night
- note and record any important information and/or dates

- be ready for Parent Viewing night, first Thursday of each month, to enter the classroom for the last 10 minutes of class; straggling or missing parents cause stress for the children.
- ask questions if you need clarification
- support your child's efforts; be on time and prepared for all events
- encourage your child to practice at home
- volunteer in the club
- enjoy the performances; tell your dancers how well they are doing
- we are guests at the ballet school, please help us ensure that we are welcome back by keeping the waiting area and washrooms clean and relatively quiet

Rehearsal Schedule

Iskra	5:00-5:45 pm	Olena
Meteliky	5:45-6:30 pm	Olena
Malenki Zirky	6:30-7:30 pm	Jordan & Andrea
Promin	6:45-7:45 pm	Olena & Sarah
Kvitka	7:15-8:45 pm	Natasha
Sonechko (Tues)	7:15-8:15 pm	Natasha
Veselka (Thur)	7:45-9:45 pm	Natasha, Jordan, Andrea
(Tues)	8:15-9:45 pm	Serguei
Radist	8:15-9:45 pm	Natasha
Enhancement (Tues)	7:15-8:15 pm	Serguei

Parent viewing will be the last 10 minutes of class on the first Thursday of each month. If you cannot attend please advise your dancer so they are not upset that you are not there. This time also provides an opportunity for the instructors to pass on information to you.

Additional and dress rehearsals will be scheduled in order to prepare for performances; information outlining details will be forwarded to you as they come available.

If your child will not be attending class, please advise Kim via phone or email by 4:00pm on class day. If your dancer arrives late, please ensure that he/she enters class quickly and quietly, therefore causing minimal disruption to the class.

Festivals

Yalenka dancers participate in two festivals annually, allowing us to showcase their dancing abilities. Southern Alberta Ukrainian Dance Festival (SAUDF) and the Tryzub Dance Festival will be held in the spring. As many of our students participate in these festivals, please watch for more information in upcoming newsletters.

Fee Schedule

Iskra	\$215.00/year
Meteliky	\$215.00/year
Malenki Zirky	\$265.00/year
Promin	\$265.00/year
Kvitka	\$265.00/year
Sonechko	\$265.00/year

Veselka	\$375.00/year
Radist	\$355.00/year
Enhancement	\$250.00/year

All fees include one class and individual photo. There is a 10% discount for families registered in 3 or more dance classes.

There is a \$30 costume rental fee/dancer due at registration.

A costume deposit cheque of \$100.00/dancer will be collected and held until costume return at year end.

A volunteer deposit cheque of \$150/family will be collected and held until year end; this will be cashed if 5 volunteer hours have not been completed.

Fundraising

Yalenka's major fundraising events are bingos and a casino. Gaming provides us with a large sum of money, allowing us to:

- 1) hire professional instructors and pay competitive wages
- 2) rent studio space with ballet bares and sprung floors
- 3) order specialized costumes from Ukraine or hire professionals to sew regional costumes
- 4) subsidize dancers for competitions
- 5) offer travel opportunities to the dancers

As a result of gaming funds, our fees have not increased and we are able to offer affordable dancing to families.

Costume Care

Costumes are a very important and expensive part of dancing and Yalenka is proud to be able to offer complete costuming for our dancers. In return, it is very important that the costumes be care for in a specific manner. Please follow the instructions provided:

- DO NOT eat, drink, or smoke in or near costumes; water only if required
- DO NOT put costumes on the floor
- always transport costumes in garment bag
- always hang up costume with not in use
- always hang costume immediately after use
- DO NOT hang costume on metal hanger
- if a costume requires laundering, contact a costume coordinator and follow their instructions. When in doubt, do nothing.
- ensure your costume is in good repair. Mend any loose buttons, pompoms, snaps, trim etc. Repair any holes. If you are unsure or unable to do so then please contact a costume coordinator ASAP so that we can put your child on stage looking their best.
- costume instructions will be given with costume; including instruction for hair and makeup.

Volunteer Expectations

Each family is expected to volunteer a minimum of 5 hours/year. There are many opportunities to volunteer throughout the year.

Each class requires a class representative that will assist in distribution of costumes as well as act as a liaison between the instructor and the parents; this can be done while your child is in class. We also require parent monitors to ensure the waiting area is clean and being used in an appropriate manner. Yalenka hosts an annual Christmas concert and participates in Malanka (Ukrainian New Years) in Strathmore. Photo day, costume workshops, costume return and our final concert are other opportunities to volunteer in addition to the casino. Yalenka is operated by volunteers so that our families have the opportunity to learn and perform this amazing dance form, it is imperative that we all do our share to ensure our continued success.

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Instructor Profiles

Natasha Olshevska

Natasha moved to Canada following an illustrious career in dance in Ukraine. She studied dance with the Dnipro Ukrainian Dance Ensemble for 16 years, performing at the opening ceremonies of the 1980 Moscow Olympics as well as in numerous countries throughout the world. She also danced with a Ukrainian ballet school for 3 years where she was awarded a “first category ballerina” degree. Natasha taught dance in Ukraine for 6 years. She currently dances with Suzirya Ukrainian Dance Theatre. Natasha continues to dedicate herself to Yalenka’s dancers; her passion and love of dance are legendary.

Olena Juzkiw

Olena has over 20 years of training in Ukrainian, ballet, jazz, and modern dance. She has danced with both Arkan Dance Company in Toronto and the Tryzub Ukrainian Dance Ensemble of Calgary. She has over 10 years of instructional experience including 8 years with Yalenka. Olena has trained in Ukraine, as well as, is accredited to teach tier 1 of the Syllabus of Ukrainian Dance developed by the Shumka Dance Syllabus Academy. When not teaching at Yalenka, Olena works as a Community Projects Coordinator for the Calgary Board of Education.

Jordan Trechka

Jordan joined the Yalenka family 1 ½ years ago. He comes to us with over a decade of dance experience, beginning with Ukrainian folk, as well as ballet, jazz, lyrical, hip hop, tap, contemporary, African and improvisational. His formal dance training includes Troyanda Ukrainian Dancers, Dance Images, VanDance, U of C, Suzirya Ukrainian Dance Theatre and Velocity Motion Werks. Jordan recently graduated from the U of C with a BA in dance and is returning to the Masters of Teaching program this fall. He began his journey in fine arts playing the violin and progressed to acting in junior high. His dance performances have afforded him many opportunities for travel as well as performing for Her Majesty, the Queen. Jordan is an active member of Calgary’s local circus school, Velocity Motions Werks, and has been training aerial silk and Cord Elisse for over a year.

When asked why he dances he responded “I dance to live and live to dance. Dance is something that all humans have in common, because dance deals with the human body as our instrument, just as a Jazz musician may have her saxophone, or a rock star his guitar. We take our instrument with us everywhere we go. By practicing to use my instrument, finding myself at the barre, I improve my skills, and learn how to use my body to best convey my emotions and feelings. Dance is something that I will always have; no one can ever take it away from me.” Jordan teaches because he loves the energy the students bring to the class. The classroom allows Jordan to take the information, passion and respect he feels for dance and to share it with others.

“Dance can teach the body control. Self control is something that can be applied everywhere in life. This control can be viewed as physical control of the body, such as better balance and coordination, or mental control, as there is an etiquette that is learned in the sacred space of the studio. Proper etiquette is an asset in life, especially in a social setting, which we as humans know all too well! There is a social aspect in dance that can teach many lessons easily applied to all of life. I am where I am because of my dance.” Jordan’s dance dream is to be able to perform for people and share his passion with the world.

Andrea Timmons

Andrea has been with the Yalenka family for 12 years as a dancer and 4 years as an instructor. She has 14 years of dance experience including Ukrainian, Modern dance and ballet. She has danced with Yalenka Ukrainian Dancers and Suzirya Ukrainian Dance Theatre. Andrea was very active in the drama department of her high school, both acting and directing, and is currently an art student at ACAD with aspirations of attaining a degree in Fine Arts.

Andrea dances for her Grandmother and to learn about and embrace her heritage. She teaches to share her love of Ukrainian dance with others and to learn more about herself, and her abilities, as a dancer.

“Dance teaches us to express ourselves, to learn balance, discipline, commitment and an understanding of our bodies. Dance is a very personal expression of one self and can be an escape from the stresses in life. I love it and it’s a huge part of my life.” Andrea feels she is living her dance dream “to travel and dance around the world.”

Serguei Makarov

Yalenka is privileged to have Serguei Makarov as one of our instructors. Formerly of Kyiv, Ukraine, he is currently the Artistic director of Suzirya Ukrainian Dance Theatre of Calgary. Mr. Makarov graduated from the prestigious Kharkiv Ballet School of Ukraine in 1970 and began a 17 year career as a male soloist with Virsky, the Ukrainian State Dance Company. For the past 15 years, he has been actively sought after worldwide for his choreographic genius, rigorous and precise dance instruction and as an artistic director.

Mr. Makarov is one of the world’s leading exponents in Ukrainian folk-ballet and Vaganova ballet instruction. He has held Master classes in Vaganova ballet for renowned schools throughout the world and has conducted advanced Ukrainian folk-ballet classes with some of the world’s finest Ukrainian dance companies.

Sarah Andrechuk

Sarah has danced with Yalenka since she was a young child. In the summer of 2008 she was one of several senior dancers who travelled to Ukraine where they attended workshops, performed and learned more about Ukrainian culture and heritage.

Sarah loves to dance and we look forward to her sharing her tremendous enthusiasm and energy with the younger dancers while mentoring under our very talented instructors.

Ukraine Dance Regions & Costumes

Pryvit

Pryvit is a Ukrainian welcome dance. Many regions can be represented in this dance. Dancers offer bread, salt and wheat to their guests, which represent a wish of prosperity and health.

Poltava

Representing the culture and traditions of the Ukrainian Kozaks, Poltava and other lands in central and eastern Ukraine surrounding the Dnipro River, these are the dances most commonly associated with Ukrainian dance.

The Poltava culture developed under many influences, the greatest being from the semi-military society of the Kozaks. Their love of social dances spawned the Hopak and Kozachok.

The men’s costumes for these dances are styled after the Kozak dress, with boots, a comfortable, embroidered shirt, a sash (poyas) tied around the waist, and loose, billowy riding pants (sharyvary); common accessories include overcoats, hats, and swords. The women’s costume

consists of a blouse with red and black embroidery, a full or straight skirt worn in many colors with the most common being a straight skirt (plakhta) made of colourful, geometric woven fabric; long vests with matching aprons are sometimes worn, red leather boots or shoes, red beaded necklace and a headpiece of flowers and ribbons. All of these pieces vary from village to village and even family to family.

The style of these dances is acrobatic and physically demanding for the men, while the women display grace and beauty while dancing in technically demanding unison. This style of Ukrainian dance is easily recognizable and the costume of this area has been deemed the national costume of Ukraine.

Hutsul'shchyna

This region is located high in the Carpathian Mountains and the people had to be adaptable due to the severe climate and limited living space. This is represented in the costumes with the narrower skirts and pants and the rich colors and details used.

All dancers wear leather moccasins (postoly) and highly decorated vests known as keptari. The men's pants are straight legged and the women's skirt consists of front and back panels, tied at the waist. Hutzul costumes incorporate orange, brown, green, and yellow embroidery.

Hutzul dances are lively and energetic, characterized by quick stamping and intricate footwork, combined with swift vertical movements. This dance has become the second most recognizable style of Ukrainian dance.

Transcarpathian

Also known as Zakarpattia, this consists of a large area of both foothills and fertile plains. These regional dances are known for their large sweeping movements and colourful costumes.

Costumes from this region have similarities to Polish folk dress with a lot of lace and floral detail. Women's skirts are full and swish with movement; a traditional embroidered blouse is worn with a short, dark, decorated vest. The man wears narrow white pants with the traditional white shirt. A dark embroidered vest is also worn by the man. Decorated hats are common accessories for all dancers.

The moderately paced dances are characterized by the males clapping and slapping their boots and bodies. It is rhythmical and bouncy with distinct twisting motions.

Bukovynian

This area is located in the transitional highland between Ukraine and Romania.

Costuming for this region is very narrow with coins often being a part of the costume as they represent a Ukrainian superstition that coins ward off evil spirits. The men are dressed in white with a decorated vest, belt and hat for accessories. The women wear a traditional white blouse with darker embroidery. The dark skirt is sometimes open at the front revealing an embroidered slip. The women's headpieces are very distinct, consisting of tall wheat stalks, ostrich feathers or other unique protuberances. Much of the decoration on these costumes share attributes with Byzantine ornamentation.

The dances from this region are lively, energetic and characterized by high stepping, intricate foot stamping combinations.

Volyn

Volyn lies in north-western Ukraine. This region is rich in tradition and culture.

The costumes and dances from this region have been influenced by Poland's extended rule over the area. Men wear long, swirling jackets and the women have skirts that swirl when turning. The costumes are bright and vibrant.

Dances from this area are couple oriented and polka-like. Dance steps are characterized by energetic jumping, high legs, lively arms and twirling steps. Generally the choreography is light and fun.

Polissia

This area of the Ukraine is below sea level and therefore has very marshy soil. Residents of this region are cattle farmers and fishermen.

The costumes incorporate white, red, and beige as the main colors and the girls often wear aprons. This fast paced, bouncy dance incorporates high leg movements with repetitive tapping and stamping.

Gypsies

This represents the cultures and traditions of the Ukrainian Tsyhany. The Roma people living in the Carpathian Mountains have developed their own dialect, customs and traditional dances limited to their own villages. In these dances you will see the men clapping and slapping their boots or chest.

*www.wikipedia.org

Board Contact Information

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