

# NEWSPAPER ARTICLE

## **Iconic holiday production set to premiere in Vacaville**

“The Nutcracker,” presented by Artistic Director Cassandra Kamakeeaina and the Vacaville Ballet Company, commences at 7 p.m, tonight at the Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre.

Tonight’s performance marks the first time the Royal School of Ballet will perform the classic full-length production. Variations of “Nutcracker” had been performed in year’s past; such as “Clara’s Gift,” which ran for 10 years, and “Nightmare Before Nutcracker,” which ran for the past two years.

“It’s fun (“Nightmare Before Nutcracker). It’s Tim Burton’s. But it’s not the same as the traditional Nutcracker and a lot of people felt the same way,” Kamakeeaina said.

This year, Kamakeeaina finally got the holiday production she truly wanted in “Nutcracker,” the timeless extravaganza synonymous with the holidays.

“We’re trying our best to do the traditional performance where you can take your kids,” Kamakeeaina said. “A lot of people that are coming went with their parents to see the Nutcracker. So we’re trying to bring that to Vacaville, so they don’t have to go all the way to San Francisco. They can bring future generations and expose them to Nutcracker.”

The production is the culmination of more than three months of work from Kamakeeaina’s cast and crew, which began in late August with auditions. Kamakeeaina, who took over as Artistic Director following college in Southern California, has a cast that ranges from children as young as four, to adults.

When first tasked with leading the classic, Kamakeeaina set her main objective on keeping her version consistent with the set standard so many are accustomed to seeing.

“We’re trying to make it traditional because people have expectations for “Nutcracker;” what they saw when they were eight or so. Same music, same roles, everyone, likes that kind of consistency. We’re trying to stick to that, so people aren’t disappointed,” she said.

With Christmas fast approaching, Kamakeeaina’s production is sure to get families enthralled in holiday spirit.

When asked why “The Nutcracker” remains such a staple of the holidays, Kamakeeaina remarked, “It’s tradition. And of course, the music.”

Friday’s opening night performance is preceded by a gala, which begins at 5:30 p.m. Prior to Saturday’s 1 p.m. matinee, there will be an 11 a.m. tea party. Tickets are available for purchase outside the box office of the Vacaville Performing Arts Theatre, 1010 Ulatis Drive, as well as online or via phone, visit [www.vpat.net](http://www.vpat.net) or calling 469-4013 during Box Office hours.

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