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# Dublin Dance Festival 2015 – Take a walk on the wild side

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Tiger Tale by Barrowland Ballet  
Brian Hartley

## Tiger Tale by Barrowland Ballet

Rating: ★★★★★

Each year the Dublin Dance Festival throws an unexpected curveball. Lying innocently in the listings it comes out of left field and hits you square in the chest. Last year it was Fishamble's delightful *Swing*. This year it's the enthralling and enchanting *Tiger Tale*, by Glasgow based Barrowland Ballet, a modern fable for the twenty first century and a dance theatre tour de force.

In *Tiger Tale* a dysfunctional family have forgotten how to love and live. Dad has succumbed to the weight of a world without play while Mum is immersed in her obsessive need for cleanliness. Both are cocooned in a grey shell of routine and order, ignorant to the unhappiness of their fun loving daughter. Fleeting moments recall memories of the joy and love they shared, but even though they're conscious of all that's been forgotten, they're unable to find a way back. Until the tiger comes calling. Strutting, prowling, roaring, the wild and playful tiger leaves a mess in his wake, disturbs the organised order of things and cracks the cocoon wide open. What emerges is a joyful

celebration of life and love and all are invited to join in the celebration.

Though aimed at younger audiences, *Tiger Tale* never condescends. Nor does it lower its choreographic standards. Rather it contains some of the most complex, split second, choreography to be found anywhere. Synchronisation is exquisite throughout and dancers Jade Adamson, Kai-Wen Chuang and Vince Virr give an outstanding individual, as well as ensemble performance. Indeed every aspect of *Tiger Tale* is a masterclass in excellence. Co-creators Natasha Gilmore and Robert Alan Evans have crafted a powerfully moving production where not a word or movement is wasted. Composer Kim Moore's soundtrack, performed live, provides layers of richness and depth. The ingenious set and lighting design by Fred Pommerehn, as integral to the feel and success of this production as the performances themselves, ensured every detail was painstakingly and lovingly attended to, right down to the scented candles that fragranced the theatre.

In some respects it's a shame that *Tiger Tale* is categorized as a children or family event, potentially alienating a wider audience. *Tiger Tale* demands and deserves to be seen by anyone with a pulse, especially if they've forgotten they have one. Superlatives fail when describing the skill, craft and technique evident in this extraordinary production. But one word describes the experience. Joyous.

*Tiger Tale* by Barrowland Ballet at The Ark as part of [Dublin Dance Festival 2015](#)

For more information go to:

<http://www.dublindancefestival.ie/>



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