

Film Review: Everything is Beautiful at the Ballet in ‘Leap!’

Submitted by [PatrickMcD](#) [1] on August 25, 2017 - 1:56pm

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CHICAGO – One of the rites of passage for most girls in the U.S.(and elsewhere, I presume) is ballet lessons. Usually it lasts for a very short time, but some girls-to-women keep pursuing it, and may even become prima ballerinas. A new animated film named “Leap!” is dedicated to that spirit.



Rating: **3.5/5.0**

The headline is a lyric quote from “A Chorus Line” and their magnificent song “At the Ballet,” about the longing and destiny of dance. There is a bit of that in “Leap!,” but mostly it deals with the usual plucky-orphan-sticking-it-to-the-man and becoming a ballerina against all odds. And since it works at a kid’s level, the story is nothing to write home about. But the choreography is the thing in this one, as the animators used the exquisite movements of ballerinas and reproduced them in cartoon characters. For every little girl who has taken the dance stage, or the little girl inside the woman, “Leap!” delivers that particular feeling.

Orphans Félicie (voice of Elle Fanning) and Victor (Nat Wolff) have plans to escape their institute and move to 1880s Paris, not letting being the age of 13 or so stop them. They escape the clutches of groundskeeper Luteau (Mel Brooks) and make it to the City of Lights. While Victor finds work as an office boy for Gustave Eiffel (of the Tower fame), through a series of events Félicie ends up at dance school at the Paris Opera Ballet.

Those series of events include meeting washerwoman Odette (Carly Rae Jepsen) who used to be a ballerina and now will train her, and having Félicie use a false name of Camille to get into an audition for the Nutcracker. The real Camille (Maddie Ziegler) is spoiled rich girl who Odette works for, pushed by her stage mother Regine (Kate McKinnon). As the audition process heats up, the teacher Mérante (Terrence Scammell) and a the handsome Russian dancer prove distracting for Félicie, who may get caught in her lie.

“Leap!” opens everywhere on August 25th, in 3D and regular screenings. See local listings for 3D theaters and show times. Featuring the voices of Elle Fanning, Nat Wolff, Carly Rae Jepsen, Mel Brooks, Kate McKinnon, Terrence Scammell and Maddie Ziegler. Written by Éric Summer, Carol Noble and Laurent Zeitoun. Directed by Éric Summer and Éric Warin. Rated “PG”



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Wings of Destiny: Félicie (voice of Elle Fanning) and Victor (Nat Wolff) in ‘Leap!’

Photo credit: The Weinstein Company



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