

# Raq the Prairie 2026 – Program

## 1. Tina

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Tina, a member of Rayana’s Belly Dance Group from Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, brings grace and musicality to the stage with this elegant mejanca. Her performance highlights the expressive beauty of Oriental dance, creating a poised and captivating opening to the evening.

Song: **Mejanca (unknown name) by Matias Hazrum**

Choreographer: **Rayana**

## 2. Lotus Blossoms

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Kiara and Maeve of Moose Jaw return to the stage as Lotus Blossoms, performing their first independent duet. Daughters of longtime Lotus dancers, they have been immersed in the dance community from an early age and have spent the past several months developing this lively choreography under the guidance of Anne-Marie Ursan.

Song: **Simarik (Kiss Kiss) by Tarkan**

Choreographer: **Anne-Marie Ursan**

## 3. Raks Azhar

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Performers: Annissa Spechko, Chantal Day (soloist), Heather Yeske, Leah Freitag, Lisa Zurburg, Mea Cicansky

Raks Azhar Dance Troupe presents a spirited piece inspired by the melaya, a modesty wrap worn by Egyptian women from the 1930s to the 1960s and later popularized in theatrical dance by the famed Reda Troupe. Drawing on the playful storytelling of the song, the dancers bring to life the flirtation, charm, and baladi energy at the heart of this folkloric-inspired routine.

Song: **Bint el Hitta by Mercedes Nieto**

Choreographer: **Barbara Tomporowski**

## 4. Alysha & Pearl Duet

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Alysha and Pearl of Saskatoon’s Rayana Belly Dance Group perform a duet to the timeless classic “Alf Leila wa Leila.” With elegant movement and expressive musical interpretation, their choreography captures the romance, mystery, and storytelling spirit that make Oriental dance so enduring.

Song: **Alf Leila Wa Leila by Umm Kulthum**

Choreographer: **Rayana**



## 5. Oblique Belly Dance

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Performers: Sarah Ludlow, Zena Charowsky

Oblique Belly Dance, a Fat Chance Style troupe from Regina, has been performing together in various forms since 2016. This piece is set to a pair of traditional Jewish melodies from Spain dating back to approximately the 16th century, offering a rich historical thread woven into a dynamic and inventive group improvisation.

Song: **Sa'Dawi & Avrix Mi Galanica Compilation by Ensemble Accentus (trad)**

Choreographer: **Zena/improvisation**



## 6. Nadi Harira

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Performers: Deidre King, Elaine Rissling, Tammy Nelson

Nadi Harira is a local collective of dancers united by a shared love of this art form. Learned in a pop-up workshop with Aziza, this energetic choreography channels the infectious spirit of the music into a lively and crowd-pleasing performance.

Song: **Adl3y Ya Moza by Hassan Shakosh feat. Omar Kamal**

Choreographer: **Aziza**

## 7. Desert Bloom Dance Troupe

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Performers: Beve Gardner, Erika Jan Mrazek, Jolyn Bellinger, Roxanne Rogowski

Desert Bloom Dance Troupe enjoys exploring a wide range of dance styles and performance experiences. Tonight they present a traditional piece that celebrates the elegance, musicality, and enduring appeal of classic Oriental dance.

Song: **Alf Leyla Wa Leyla Edit by Cairo Orchestra**

Choreographer: **Jillina**

## 8. Rayana Bellydance Group

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Performers: Alysha Hales, Nataliia Gvozdyk, Pearl Ingram, Rayana, Tina Shang

Based in Saskatoon, Rayana Belly Dance Group performs a variety of Oriental styles that blend tradition with contemporary creativity. This tabla piece showcases the exhilarating power of drum-driven dance, transforming bold rhythms and sharp accents into vibrant, high-energy movement.

Song: **The Beginning by Artem Uzunov**

Choreographer: **Rayana**

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INTERMISSION - 15 min

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## 9. Br'Issah

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Performers: Anissa Spechko, Lisa Zurburg, Mea Cicansky

Br'Issah brings a passion for continued learning and theatrical performance to the stage in this advanced Aziza-style drum solo. Dynamic, dramatic, and full of rhythmic precision, "Drum Voyage" promises a bold and exciting performance.

Song: **Watchtower by Yassir Jamal**

Choreographer: **Aziza (of Montreal)**



## 10. Rayana Bellydance Group

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Rayana Belly Dance Group returns with a Modern Shaabi routine inspired by one of Egypt's most vibrant social dance styles. Full of personality, playful energy, and strong musical accents, this choreography captures the celebratory spirit of contemporary Shaabi.

Song: **Ya Gamalo (feat. Eslam Shindy) by Hassan Abouelrouss**

Choreographer: **Rayana**

## 11. Azura

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Azura, artistic director of Raks Azhar Dance Troupe and a dedicated student of renowned belly dance artists from around the world, offers this performance in memory of the legendary Egyptian dancer Soheir Zaki. Celebrated for her elegance, musicality, and lasting influence on Oriental dance, Zaki inspired generations of dancers, making this piece both a tribute and a celebration of her enduring legacy.

Song: **Leilet Hob by Raffi Avakian**

Choreographer: **Barbara Tomporowski**

## 12. Wild Spirit Fusionistas

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Performers: Amaryce Cousins, Darla Goettler, Donna Stercl, Nicole Neovard, Nikkie Lucas, Tonya Ward

Wild Spirit Fusionistas have been learning and performing together for up to 16 years, blending belly dance fusion with theatrical flair. Inspired by the interlocking motion of clockwork, this imaginative piece turns the mechanics of time into a visually striking dance of precision and connection.

Song: **Tick Tock Goes the Clock & Kitten Pig Compilation by Jo Blankenburg; Pentaphobe**

Choreographer: **Darla Goettler**

## 13. Lotus

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Performers: Amy Korbo, Cara McDavid, Valerie Brennan

Lotus, from Moose Jaw, has been dancing together in its current form since 2015. Performing in cabaret style, the group brings warmth and energy to this upbeat piece, adapted from a larger-group choreography to suit their trio while preserving its excitement and challenge.

Song: **Yalla a Beirut by Emad Sayyah**

Choreographer: **Fleur Estelle Dance Company with adaptations made by Lotus**

## 14. Moonflower Dance Troupe

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Performers: Beverly Gardner, Cathy Simpson, Roxanne Rogowski

Moonflower Dance Troupe takes the stage with a fast-paced routine full of flair, energy, and precision. Embracing the thrill of a challenge, these dancers deliver a performance that is as dynamic as it is entertaining.

Song: **Pyramid by Konstantinos Kotoulas**

Choreographer: **Fleur Estelle**



## 15. Rayana

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Rayana, an award-winning performer, instructor, and costume designer from Saskatoon, presents a lyrical fusion of two beloved musical worlds: Whitney Houston's "I Will Always Love You" and Umm Kulthum's "Enta Omri." Through expressive movement and emotional storytelling, this choreography explores love, memory, and the beauty of cultures meeting through music.

Song: **I Will Always Love You Enta Omri by Whitney Houston and Umm Kulthum**

Choreographer: **Rayana**

## 16. YaRayah

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Performers: Alisha Nugent, Betsy MacPherson, Kelly Liberet, Lacey Bennett, Marie Berwald, Sarah Ludlow

YaRayah is a Regina-based group of dancers who have been performing together for many years, with some members dancing for nearly fifteen. Inspired by powerful music and memorable troupe performances, they bring shared experience and group energy to this exciting piece.

Song: **Sting - Desert Rose AfroHouse DJ Mix 2026**

Choreographer: **Group effort**

Thank you to everyone that helped make the show a reality!  
RAMED Board (Annissa, Beve, Kelly, Lisa, Mea, Val, and Vic)  
All the volunteers and the performers!