Off-the-cuff flourishes make “Alice” more than a nostalgic revisitation.

In one of the most brilliant scenes in Oregon Ballet Theatre’s Alice (in wonderland), Alice (Kane Chen) and the Mad Hatter (Ming-Shun Ku) duke it out with the Jabberwock. It’s not a surprise that our heroine triumph against the dragonlike brute. It is unexpected, however, when she collects their trophy by flexing her muscles and striking an Arnold Schwarzenegger-style pose.

Similarly off-the-cuff flourishes like this make Alice more than a nostalgic revisitation. OBT’s production marries Lewis Carroll’s psychedelic children’s story with Septime Webre’s choreography and Matthew Perri’s joyful music. Invented by James Krone’s theatrical set designs and a cost whose glee as dancers is matched by their charisma as actors, the performance makes Carroll’s quirkily and warming drama feel entirely new.

Alice (in wonderland) begins with Alice seated in a 1950s’ armchair and surrounded by towering white drapes. It’s a deceptively drab image that frames her as a young woman whose life is a blank slate ripe to be filled with adventure. A lovely Friend (Chelly) named Lewis Carroll (Simcoe) is more than happy to help, as is the White Rabbit (Chauncey Parsons). From here, Alice and her friends discover a world of fantastical creatures and bizarre twists. There are hedgehogs, flamingos and a sunglasses-wearing frog, but Alice savors the madness of its menagerie without losing its grasp on the individual eccentricities of its characters. The dancers clearly understand that a thousand beautiful pirouettes mean nothing if they aren’t fueled by personality. As the White Rabbit, Parsons nimbly hops across the stage with fussy precision that’s perfect for a harried mammal determined not to miss his “very important date.” Peter Franc’s looser, more playful movements as the Cheshire Cat perfectly fit the feline fellow’s impish spirit, and Emily Parker gives an eerily undulating performance as a Queen of Hearts (Martina Chavez).

There are also hedonistic, flamboyant and a touch wear-waving fun, but Alice savors the richness of its menagerie without losing its grasp on the individual eccentricities of its characters. The dancers clearly understand that a thousand beautiful pirouettes mean nothing if they aren’t fueled by personality. As the White Rabbit, Parsons nimbly hops across the stage with fussy precision that’s perfect for a harried mammal determined not to miss his “very important date.” Peter Franc’s looser, more playful movements as the Cheshire Cat perfectly fit the feline fellow’s impish spirit, and Emily Parker gives an eerily undulating performance as a Queen of Hearts (Martina Chavez).

Seemingly off-the-cuff flourishes like this make Alice more than a nostalgic revisitation. OBT’s production mixes Lewis Carroll’s psychedelic children’s story with Septime Perri’s choreography and Matthew Pierce’s giddy music. Invigorated by James Krone’s multicolored set designs and a cost whose glee as dancers is matched by their charisma as actors, the performance makes Carroll’s quirkily and warming drama feel entirely new.

In one of the most ebullient scenes in Alice (in wonderland), Alice (Kane Chen) and the Mad Hatter (Ming-Shun Ku) duke it out with the Jabberwocky. It’s not a surprise that our heroine triumph against the dragonlike brute. It is unexpected, however, when she collects their trophy by flexing her muscles and striking an Arnold Schwarzenegger-style pose.

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