



Twyla Tharp's *Known By Heart* ("Junk") Duet

Dear Educators,

Get ready for a springtime performance bursting with energy as Oregon Ballet Theatre presents *Duets* on April 27, 28, and 29 at the Newmark Theatre. The *Student Performance Series* matinee at 11:00 AM will showcase three works: Twyla Tharp's feisty brew of ballet, modern, and everyday movement, *Known By Heart* ("Junk") Duet; Trey McIntyre's silky synthesis of ballet and ballroom dance, *Like A Samba*; and the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre performing Lew Christensen's comic spoof, *Con Amore*. This Study Guide includes information about the choreographers, music, and movement style of the dances, an example and examination of a performance playbill, and topics for discussion. **A listing of essential vocabulary, in green** throughout the Study Guide, is included for use in thinking and writing about the performance. In this performance students will see dance as artful communication, of ideas, emotions, and even silly stories.

I hope this guide inspires conversation about the show—the pieces are so different, students will surely have a favorite.

See you at the theatre!

Kasandra Gruener, MA
Director of Education and Outreach

PROGRAM

Con Amore / The School of Oregon Ballet Theatre

Music: Overtures to *La Gazza Ladra*, *Il Signor Bruschino*, and *La Scala di Seta*

Composer: GIOACCHINO ROSSINI

Libretto: JAMES GRAHAM-LUJAN

Choreographer: LEW CHRISTENSEN

Staging: DAMARA BENNETT

Original Costume Design and Decor: JAMES BODRERO

Lighting Execution: MICHAEL MAZZOLA

School of Oregon Ballet Theatre Premiere: Annual School Performance 2004

Premiere: San Francisco Ballet, April 10, 1953, Veterans Auditorium, San Francisco

Known By Heart ("Junk") Duet / OBT

Music: Selections from *Junk Music*

Composer: DONALD KNAACK

Choreographer: TWYLA THARP

Staging: TOM GOLD

Costume Design: SANTO LOQUASTO

Original Lighting Design: JENNIFER TIPTON

Lighting Execution: MICHAEL MAZZOLA

OBT Premiere: April 22, 2010, Newmark Theatre, Portland

Premiere: June 23, 2001, Los Angeles Performing Arts Center

Performances of *Known By Heart* ("Junk") Duet are **sponsored** by Gretchen Alley & Dr. Seth Alley and Raymond Family Foundation

Like A Samba / OBT

Music: *Aruanda*, *Vivo Sonhando*, *Aqua De Beber*, *Frevo*, *Garota de Ipanema* from Jazz Masters 9; *Corcovado* from Compact Jazz

Composer: ANTONIO CARLOS JOBIM, NORMAN GIMBEL, GENE LEES, CARLOS LYRA, VINICUS DE MORALES, E. VANDRE

Singer: ASTRUD GILBERTO

Choreographer: TREY MCINTYRE

Staging: ALISON ROPER

Costume Design: JANET R. ELAM

Lighting Design and Execution: MICHAEL MAZZOLA

OBT Premiere: May 9, 1997, Newmark Theatre, Portland

...AND THE USHER SAID, "WOULD YOU LIKE A PROGRAM?"

At most performances, the audience is given a **playbill** as they enter the theatre. It is a **primary source material** for OB T productions, containing the "who," "what," "when," "where," and sometimes, "why" information about the show. While a playbill might include a fair amount of advertising, its main purpose is to help the audience read about what they are seeing and serve as an historical document for the company. The playbill for *Duets* is included so that teachers and students may explore it in advance of the show.

WHO AND WHAT:

The work of many people melds together to create the magic we see on stage. In fact, there are more people than can be listed in the playbill. The most important information in the playbill is: what is being performed, who created it, and who is performing it. Works are listed in performance order with the title of the piece at the top of each listing, followed by the primary creators of the work. The person who makes the dance is called the **choreographer**. This person, working with or without music, directs the dancers to create the movement patterns and spatial designs distinctive to the piece. When a work that was choreographed elsewhere is brought to a company, it needs to be taught to the new company by someone who really knows the dance. The choreographer can do the **staging**, but often, someone who first danced the piece teaches it, as in the case of OB T Principal Dancer, Alison Roper. *We are lucky to have the ballet staged by a person upon which the ballet was created.* If there is music for the dance, the **composer**, the person who creates the music, and the music titles are also listed. The music may be made especially for the dance or it may have been composed many years before, for a very different production, as is the case of *Con Amore*. **Designers**, such as for the lighting, costumes, décor, or set are also listed. Sometimes it is important to list the person who carries out the designer's ideas, as in the case of the **lighting execution** for *Known By Heart ("Junk") Duet*. The names of the dancers are also listed in the playbill.

WHEN AND WHERE:

Each playbill gives the date of the show. When a piece of choreography is performed for the first time, it is called a **premiere**. The playbill notes the theater, city and date. It also notes the first time that it was performed by the company you have come to see, as is the case with *Known By Heart ("Junk") Duet*. This could be compared to publishing and reprint information located on the inside cover of a book.

Con Amore was an immediate hit with both audiences and critics. "Lew Christensen is that rarity among choreographers," wrote Mary Clarke and Clement Crisp in *The Ballet Goer's Guide*. "The special delight of *Con Amore* is that it encapsulates the clichés of nineteenth-century **farce** without being a cliché itself. Its bubbly pace and bustling plot line are fun in themselves and fun as commentary on Rossini's three overtures. Christensen develops each story with just the right amount of snap, breaks it off with a blackout at just the crucial moment, and ties it all together with just the right degree of implausibility."

CON AMORE

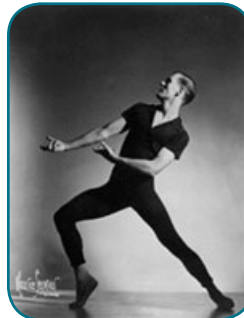
LEW CHRISTENSEN
Choreographer

Cobbett Steinberg, in his book *San Francisco Ballet: the First Fifty Years* described Lew Christensen's legacy: "As a performer, he was this century's first great

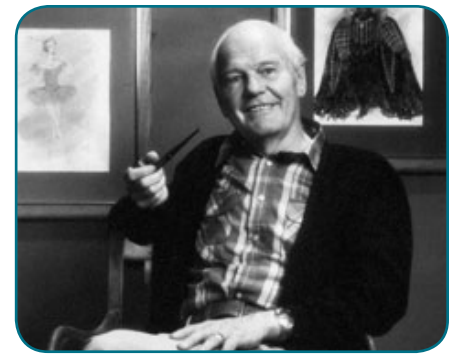
American-born **danseur**, graced with impressive technique, golden good looks, and an innocence of deportment that provocatively suggested untapped bounty. As a teacher, he produced, Balanchine said, some of the best male aspirants in the country. As an artistic director, he provided San Francisco Ballet with its first Balanchine ballets, its first television broadcasts, and its first national and international exposure.

As a choreographer, he created over 110 works, including ballets, opera divertissements, and dance sequences for musicals, revues, dramatic productions, and television aircasts. These diverse works have been presented by some twenty-two ballet companies both here and abroad.

Christensen's dance designs are traditionally acclaimed for their craft, musicality, wit, and utter lack of pretension. His choreography shrewdly yet effortlessly blends the Continental legacy with an innate Western liveliness, giving the academic idiom an intriguing American accent."



Lew Christensen as a dancer



Con Amore choreographer Lew Christensen

MORE ABOUT LEW CHRISTENSEN AT

www.obt.org/outreach_links/SPS_Left_Unsaid_curriculum.pdf

GIOACCHINO ANTONIO ROSSINI
Composer

Rossini composed many musical works, including 39 operas, in the early 1800s. Students who have never been to an opera may not realize that they have heard Rossini's music before... but most have, in cartoons or television shows. An excerpt from the **overture** to his opera *William Tell* found its way into the galloping theme song (Hi Yo Silver, Away!) for the old television show *The Lone Ranger*. Three beautiful overtures are woven together in *Con Amore*, each one energetic, expressive, and integral to the dance's story.



Gioacchino Antonio Rossini

CON AMORE SYNOPSIS:

In the first of three scenes, a young bandit disrupts a company of Amazons dressed in smart, military uniforms, undertaking drill practice under the command of their beautiful captain. The young women are attracted to the gaiety and charm of the handsome intruder who naively spurns their amorous advances. The wrath of woman scorned befalls the hapless thief as the Amazons raise their muskets--the scene abruptly ends.

In the second scene, a flirtatious girl, whose bossy boyfriend has just departed, visits with an entourage of admirers: a dapper, rich, man-about-town, a rascally boisterous sailor and a quivering shy young student. Her boyfriend unexpectedly returns as the scene ends.

In the final scene the previous amorous dilemmas are cleverly combined in brilliant, fast-paced action until the sudden appearance of Cupid, who lets fly her arrows with comically unexpected results.



OBT apprentices perform an excerpt of *Con Amore* as part of "Ballet Stage By Stage" in local schools.

Visit www.obt.org/outreach_stage-by-stage.html for information about bringing this program to your school.

KNOWN BY HEART ("JUNK") DUET

TWYLA THARP

Choreographer

The following biographical information is excerpted from Twyla Tharp's website:



Twyla Tharp

Since graduating from Barnard College in 1963, Ms. Tharp has choreographed more than one hundred thirty-five dances, five Hollywood movies, directed and choreographed four Broadway shows. She received one Tony Award, two Emmy Awards, nineteen honorary doctorates, the Vietnam Veterans of America President's Award, the 2004 National Medal of the Arts, the 2008 Jerome Robbins Prize, a 2008 Kennedy Center Honor. Her many grants include the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Fellowship. She is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and an Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

In 1965 Ms. Tharp founded her dance company, Twyla Tharp Dance. In addition to choreographing for her own company, she has created dances for The Joffrey Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, The Paris Opera Ballet, The Royal Ballet, New York City Ballet, The Boston Ballet, Hubbard Street Dance, The Martha Graham Dance Company, Miami City Ballet and Pacific Northwest Ballet.

In film Ms. Tharp has collaborated with director Milos Forman on HAIR in 1978, RAGTIME in 1980, and AMADEUS in 1984, with Taylor Hackford on WHITE NIGHTS in 1985 and with James Brooks on I'LL DO ANYTHING in 1994.

In 1992 Ms. Tharp wrote her autobiography PUSH COMES TO SHOVE. In 2003 she wrote, THE CREATIVE HABIT: Learn it and Use it for Life. In 2009 she wrote, THE COLLABORATIVE HABIT: Life Lessons for Working Together both of which were published by Simon and Schuster. Today Ms. Tharp continues to create.

"[Twyla Tharp] knows how to surprise and to reveal the unsuspected about virtuoso classical dancers."

- Anna Kisselgoff, *The New York Times*

DESCRIPTION

Students curiosity will be piqued from the first flashing movements, lights, and sounds of OBT's rendering of Twyla Tharp's *Known By Heart ("Junk") Duet*. The dance is witty and fast paced, skillfully jumping from elegant formality to rubbery playfulness, from folk dance steps to bouncing boxing postures, from ballet's turned out legs and pointed feet to inwardly rotated legs and quick foot flexions. The music by Don Knaack is a percussive mélange of sounds, which writer Tobi Tobias (*Dance Magazine* 11/2001) described as "gleefully raucous."

Percussionist Don Knaack uses all kinds of found objects - junk - to make his music. He builds big junk instruments in schools for students to play. Students can try to tap out rhythms on different objects found at school (with teacher permission, of course).

Visit Don Knaack's website at www.junkmusic.org to find out more.

The entire work is set on the form of a classical *pas de deux*—a slow duet for man and woman, male solo, female solo, and then a closing duet. OBT will be performing the opening, and closing duets for the Student Performance Series.

CLASS DISCUSSION

Things to look for when watching the dance and to discuss later:

- Is the first duet slow?
- Do you think there is a little story going on in the second duet? Hint—look for the "imaginary" door.

LIKE A SAMBA

TREY MCINTYRE
Choreographer

“Our goal is to use the inherent beauty of ballet vocabulary to create dances that authentically and clearly convey the emotion and grace of life’s journey, while meaningfully engaging audiences in the experience of art.”

- Trey McIntyre, Artistic Director

The following biographical notes are excerpted from The Trey McIntyre Project website: www.treymcintyre.com

Trey McIntyre is one of the most sought-after choreographers working today. Born in Wichita, KS, McIntyre studied at North Carolina School of the Arts and later with Houston Ballet Academy. McIntyre has created a canon of more than 80 works for companies such as Stuttgart Ballet, American Ballet Theatre, Hubbard Street Dance Chicago, New York City Ballet, Ballet de Santiago (Chile) and Trey McIntyre Project. Trey has served as Resident Choreographer for Oregon Ballet Theatre, Ballet Memphis, and The Washington Ballet. He has received many grants and awards, including two choreographic fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a Choo-San Goh Award for Choreography. In the summer of 2008, Trey McIntyre Project launched as a full-time company operating out of Boise, ID. In Year 1 as a full-time company, Trey McIntyre Project toured to more than 25 cities across the nation and the world.



Trey McIntyre

DESCRIPTION

The work is set to 7 pieces of samba and bossa nova music sung by Astrud Gilberto. Samba is **syncopated**, up-tempo, hip-swaying, music. Bossa nova, often described as jazz influenced samba, is smoothly syncopated, softer, and feels relaxed. McIntyre’s choreography, which bounces between gentle swaying and switchback footwork, brings the music’s rhythms and emotions to life. The newspaper *Charleston Post and Courier* wrote, “This carefree piece was happiness personified.”



Alison Roper and James Thompson in Trey McIntyre’s *Like a Samba*. Photo by J. David Straub.

The lighting is very important to this piece. It creates atmosphere for the piece. At times it defines the space, creating boxes of color that frame the dancers, or appears like car headlights or city lights in the distance. Throughout the dance, special lighting instruments called **follow spots** are used. These instruments often cast a circle shape on the stage. The size of the circle can change, as can the fuzziness or crispness of the edge. Students should watch for this.

“Mr. McIntyre is a whiz at getting dancers on, off, and across the stage in fluid, surprising ways, and ‘Like a Samba’ spools out like silk. Dressed in white summer casuals, the five insouciant performers look like ballroom dancers, though the odd but exquisite lifts and flow of the piece could be achieved only by a ballet choreographer.”

- *The New York Times*

CLASS DISCUSSION:

After the performance, ask students how the lighting helps/changes the dance.

An interesting aspect of the dance is the inclusion of singing. Often times, ballets do not include vocals. Each piece is sung in either English or Portuguese, the language of Brazil, where the samba and bossa nova sound was born. Midway through the ballet, during the fourth song, four dancers will dance together as two duets to music entitled *Corcovado*. One version of the lyrics is on the next page.

LISTEN TO MUSIC FOR LIKE A SAMBA

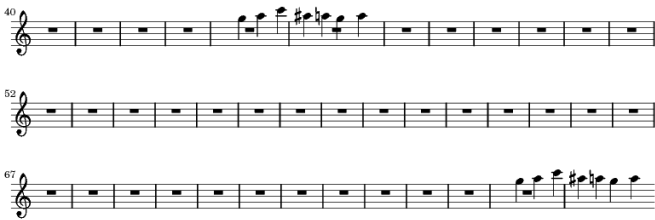
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1StgFKtXCc>

Ask students to think about making dances. Ask them to imagine the type of movements that they might create to the poetic lyrics. Younger students might think about how they would move their arms or whole body to words like “floating” and “quiet walks by quiet streams.” Older students might think about the intent of the poem and the general way they think the choreographer might interpret it—will it be fast vs. slow, aggressive vs. gentle, danced in bright lights or dim, etc? After the performance, ask students how the choreography matched their expectations.

Go to this website to see photos and a video excerpt of *Like a Samba*. http://treymcintyre.com/TMP/WhatWeDo_Repertory_Samba_Video01.html

Corcovado

Track 15



CORCOVADO

Quiet nights of quiet stars,
 Quiet chords from my guitar
 Floating on the silence that surrounds us
 Quiet thoughts and quiet dreams,
 Quiet walks by quiet streams
 And the window looking on the mountains and the sea,
 How lovely
 This is where I want to be,
 Here with you so close to me,
 Until the final flicker of life's ember
 I who was lost and lonely,
 Believing life was only
 A bitter tragic joke,
 Have found with you
 The meaning of existence, oh my love

Um cantinho, um violao,
 Este amor, uma cancao,
 Pra fazer feliz a quem se ama
 Muita calma pra pensar,
 E ter tempo pra sonhar
 Da janela, ve-se o Corcovado,
 O Redentor, que lindo
 Quero a vida sempre assim,
 Com voce perto de mim,
 Ate o apagar da velha chama
 E eu que era triste,
 Descrente desse mundo
 Ao encontrar voce eu conheci
 O que e a felicidade, meu amor



Singer, Astrud Gilberto

INFORMATION RESOURCES:

Ballet dictionary from American Ballet Theatre's website
<http://www.abt.org/education/dictionary/index.html>

OBT's educational resources web page containing past SPS study guides and links to more information
http://www.obt.org/outreach_resources.html

Read about Portland's dance history. Download articles at: http://www.obt.org/outreach_sps.html



VOCABULARY

- choreographer:** the person who creates the movements of a dance
- composer:** a person who creates music
- danseur:** male dancer
- designer:** a person who creates the design ideas, such as a costume designer who imagines and draws the costume designs
- farce:** in ballet, a dance that is comic with ridiculous situations and outlandish mix ups
- follow spot:** a moveable instrument with a strong beam of light used to focus attention on one or more performers
- lighting execution:** this refers to the person who makes the lighting designer's ideas come to life on stage
- overture:** an orchestral work that introduces an opera or ballet and includes themes from the larger work
- pas de deux:** a dance for two people, a duet
- playbill:** the printed program accompanying a performance
- premiere:** refers to the very first time that a dance is performed for the public
- primary source material:** a playbill is such a document for Oregon Ballet Theatre, bearing archival information about the performance and the dance company
- sponsor:** a person or persons who give funds to the organization, often in support of a specific ballet
- staging:** the process of teaching a dance and putting it on the stage for performance
- syncopate:** a rhythmic structure in music that shifts the emphasis onto the "weak" beat, or in a surprising manner

ARTS EDUCATION IS A HUMAN RIGHT

Article 27 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states:

Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

For full text go to <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

CONTENT STANDARDS

This *Student Performance Series* and Study Guide provide opportunity for engaging in Oregon Content Standards for the Arts, especially:

Historical and Cultural Perspective: Understand relationships of works of art to their social, historical, and cultural context, and the influence of arts on individuals, communities and cultures.

Aesthetics and Criticism: Respond to and analyze works of art, based on essential elements, organizational principles and aesthetic criteria.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT BALLET

Why do the guys wear tights?

Almost every activity requires a special uniform of some kind. Just as football players, wrestlers, and baseball players wear stretchy material to help them move with flexibility and speed, ballet dancers often wear stretchy tights so they are able to leap, kick, and stretch as they dance. Another reason tights are worn is so the audience can see the incredible leg muscles that allow them to jump so high.

How do the ballet dancers stand on their toes?

Female ballet dancers wear special shoes called "pointe shoes" to help them achieve dancing on the tips of their toes. Pointe shoes are hard at the ends, and are handmade with layers of satin, glue and leather. Dancers must take several years of ballet lessons before they are allowed to wear pointe shoes. With hard work and good training to develop strong ankles and feet, most young ballet students begin working *en pointe* at age 11 or 12.

This ballet has no plot! Or does it?

Some do, and some don't. Ballets with plots, like *The Nutcracker*, are called story ballets. There are also abstract ballets, with a focus on movement instead of a specific story. Abstract ballets are meant to evoke ideas or emotions, and the audience can interpret them many different ways.

How old are the dancers?

Oregon Ballet Theatre's professional company members range in age from 18 to 34, but most are in their early-to-mid-20s. A few of the apprentices, however, are still in high school. All of the dancers began studying ballet when they were children, as it takes many years of dedication to become a professional ballet dancer.

How often do they practice?

Ballet dancers take class every morning for 1.5 hours, and then they rehearse all day. They have Sundays and sometimes Saturdays off, and they have a lunch break. Dancing is their full-time job.

Where are the dancers from?

Oregon Ballet Theatre dancers come from all around the world: Japan, Russia, and different areas within the United States. There are dancers from Nebraska, California, Oklahoma, New York, and several who grew up right here in Portland.

APPLAUSE

DO clap after a really spectacular movement. Laugh if the situation onstage is funny. Applaud and say "Bravo!" at the end.

DON'T boo, whistle, hiss or make noise during the performance. It is distracting and disrespectful of the performers and to your neighbors in the audience.

FOOD

DO eat before you get to the theater if you think you might get hungry before the performance is over.

DON'T bring food or gum into the seating area. It makes noise, trash, and distractions.

TALKING

DO wait. Make a note on your program or a piece of paper if you want to remember something. Tell your friend at intermission or after the ballet is over.

DON'T whisper or discuss things with other people during the performance. Your friends may want to listen to the music or pay attention to the dancers' movement or the story.

DRESS & BACKPACKS

DO dress neatly as a sign of respect to the artists and the theater.

DON'T wear over-powering perfume, big hats, or jingly bracelets. Leave backpacks at school. If you must bring one, you'll be asked to leave it in the lobby.

CELL PHONES, CAMERAS, IPODS, MP3 PLAYERS, ETC.

DO relax when the lights in the house (seating area) get dark. Sit back and enjoy the live performance with your eyes, ears, and imagination.

DON'T bring electronic devices into the theater. The noise and clicking can be distracting to your neighbors, and camera flashes can be dangerous to the dancers.