

Dear Educators,

The following Study Guide is intended to assist teachers in preparing students for Oregon Ballet Theatre's upcoming Student Performance Series entitled **Effects of Light and Color – *Petal***. These last performances of the 2013 - 2014 season will be performed at the Newmark Theatre in downtown Portland on April 23 and 24 at noon. Doors open at 11:30. Students will see Oregon Ballet Theatre company dancers perform two ballets in full—*Petal* and *Valse Fantaisie*, and one excerpt—*The Lost Dance*. *Petal* and *The Lost Dance* will be performed by the company dancers of Oregon Ballet Theatre. The female roles in *Valse Fantaisie* will be performed by apprentices and advanced dancers from the School of Oregon Ballet Theatre while the single male role will be performed by an OBT company dancer. Along with descriptions of the ballets and of theatrical lighting, the Study Guide gives information about the choreographers and composers, including pictures and colorful artistic renditions of them. Teachers are encouraged to extend learning by looking at the use of light and color in our community.



Photo by Joni Kabana

Since this performance is really looking at light and color, I encourage everyone to come to the show dressed in bright colorful clothing!




After the performance, each attending group will be provided a questionnaire to fill out—it will also be available online! Such feedback helps Oregon Ballet Theatre provide the highest quality educational experience for our community.

I look forward to seeing you at the theatre!

Kasandra Gruener, MA
Director of Education Outreach

P.S. Next year (2014-15) is Oregon Ballet Theatre's 25th year! And we are celebrating with great dance works for students, including OBT's very first *Cinderella* in the winter! Don't miss it!

KEY TO USING THE STUDY GUIDE

-  = Academic connections or discussion points
-  = Activities designed to get students up and moving
-  = hyperlink to more information

PETAL

CHOREOGRAPHY: HELEN PICKETT
STAGED BY: HELEN PICKETT & JEFFREY STANTON
MUSIC: End Title from *Little Children*, *Elizabeth Chooses a Career* and *Death of the Twins* / Finale from *Les Enfants Terribles*
COMPOSERS: PHILIP GLASS & THOMAS MONTGOMERY NEWMAN
Les Enfants Terribles by Philip Glass © 1996 Dunvagen Music Publishers Inc. Used by Permission. © 2006 New Line Music Corp. (BMI)/ Administered by Songs Of Universal, Inc. Courtesy of New Line Productions, Inc. All Rights Reserved/ Used by Permission.
COSTUME DESIGN: NETE JOSEPH
COSTUMES CONSTRUCTED BY: OBT COSTUME SHOP
LIGHTING DESIGN: TODD ELMER
LIGHTING EXECUTION BY: MICHAEL MAZZOLA
WORLD PREMIERE: February 1, 2008, Aspen Santa Fe Ballet, The Lensic Theater, Santa Fe, New Mexico
OBT PREMIERE: April 17, 2014, Newmark Theatre, Portland, Oregon

Petal was made possible by a Fellowship Initiative Grant to Boston Ballet by The New York Choreographic Institute, an affiliate of New York City Ballet.



Christian Squires and Erica Chipp (center) with Jane Rehm, Jonathan Dummer and Joshua Reynolds in *Petal* by Helen Pickett. © Keith Sutter.

Descriptive writing about *Petal* in a newspaper review:

Helen Pickett's visually silken and color-drenched dance “Petal” sat at the center of the program as vivid as a giant dahlia....There is a lush joy to her designs that...allow the dancers to bask in the heat and brilliance of a style that is quietly emotive, one that dares to engage the drama of bodies on stage in relationship to one another. – Ann Murphy, *San Jose Mercury*, 05/13/2013

KASANDRA GRUENER, MA / DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION OUTREACH

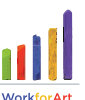
KEVIN IRVING / ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

OBT'S EDUCATION OUTREACH PROGRAMMING IS SUPPORTED BY

WILLIAM H. & MARY L. BAUMAN FOUNDATION
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THE CLARK FOUNDATION
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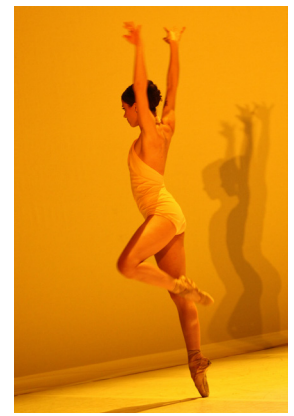




Smuin Ballet's Jane Rehm and Jonathan Dummar in Helen Pickett's *Petal*.
Photo: Keith Sutter, Smuin Ballet



Smuin Ballet dancer Susan Roemer in Helen Pickett's *Petal*. Photo credit: Keith Sutter Photo: Keith Sutter



Nadia Mara in Helen Pickett's *Petal*. Photo by Charlie McCullers
Courtesy of Atlanta Ballet.

PETAL Continued

Petal is fast paced, owing to movement patterns that seem to propel the dancers through space with surprising body shifts and bright energy. The vibrant colors of spring—humming pinks, vibrant oranges and canary yellows—are seen in the costumes and the lighting. The music is drawn from film scores: piano music from the film *Little Children* by award winning film composer Thomas Newman (*American Beauty*, *Shawshank Redemption*, *Skyfall*) and two piano arrangements from Phillip Glass' operatic treatment of Jean Cocteau's film *Les Enfants Terribles*.

Petal's choreographer, Helen Pickett, was born in San Diego, California, trained at San Francisco Ballet and honed her early professional career with William Forsythe's Ballet Frankfurt in Germany. She is also an actress and teacher and holds an MFA in Dance. Her choreographic career began in 2005 with her first commissioned work for Boston Ballet. Although ballet has a high ratio of female dancers to male dancers, the reverse is true of choreographers—males dominate the field.



Discuss with students why more men than women might become choreographers?



Philip Glass - by Paul-G. Benkelberg



Thomas Newman



Listen to a section of the music used in *Petal*:



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aD7I8L1JqSQ>

READ WHAT THE CHOREOGRAPHER HAS TO SAY ABOUT HER PROCESS:

I go into every new place or new situation with wonderful expectation. I know that I will meet people who are ready to give their all, and this bountiful energy fuels the process. I expect every dancer to be responsible for their work and open and ready to accept the new. I like to be surprised, so I do not go in wanting a certain "thing." I enjoy intelligent dancers with strong, focused intention. I enjoy dancers who are curious about the boundless knowledge of their bodies. If curiosity courses through a dancer, there are no limits. The process is collaborative, and I nurture this and expect it. When dancers feel empowered and take responsibility for their art, incredible growth happens and artists are born. The immediate energy of curiosity, clarity of vision, intention and spontaneity heightens rehearsal work and produces performances that cannot be forgotten. Artists with these qualities take the audience on a visual, aural, proprioceptive journey. By investigating themselves and sharing this knowledge, they can break the fourth wall to let the audience dance. Our art, after all, is about sharing experiences and inviting people to feel the thrill of movement. Choice is at the heart of this clarity—choice is at the heart of great artists. *Petal's* bright, immediate visual and aural beginning focuses the audience's senses. The energy and commitment from the dancers invite the audience to partake in the journey. I have been investigating the sensual aspects—visual, aural, proprioceptive—of performance for years now. I believe if we can include the audience on our journey, not just our story, but our physical journey, we can touch them deeply. I wanted to make a piece based on the connection between the senses and human relationships.



Helen Pickett

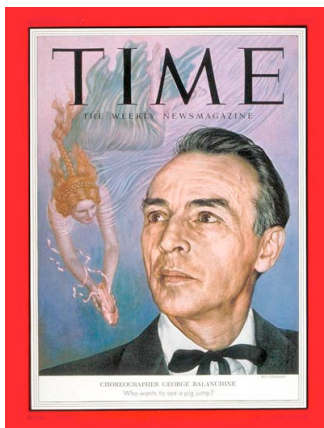
VALE FANTAISIE

CHOREOGRAPHY: GEORGE BALANCHINE
 STAGED BY: ZIPPORA KARZ
 MUSIC: *Waltz-Fantasia in B minor*
 COMPOSER: MIKHAIL GLINKA
 COSTUME DESIGN: LARAE THEIGE HASCALL
 COSTUME CONSTRUCTED BY: PACIFIC NORTHWEST BALLET
 LIGHTING DESIGN: MICHAEL MAZZOLA
 WORLD PREMIERE: November 23, 1967, New York City Ballet, New York State Theater, New York, New York
 SOBT PREMIERE: April 11, 2008, The School of Oregon Ballet Theatre, Newmark Theatre, Portland, Oregon

Rights Info © The George Balanchine Trust. The performance of *Valse Fantaisie*, a Balanchine® Ballet, is presented by arrangement with The George Balanchine Trust and has been produced in accordance with the Balanchine Style® and Balanchine Technique® Service standards established and provided by the Trust.

Attended by the male dancer, the ballerinas move together in a whirl of perpetual motion. The 1967 rendering of *Valse Fantaisie* was originally presented as the second section of *Glinkiana*, which was choreographed to four different compositions by Glinka. The music, roughly contemporaneous with the waltzes of Frederic Chopin, is fast and light, although it was popularly called “the melancholy waltz.”

The man we know as the father of American ballet, George Balanchine, was born on January 22, 1904 in St. Petersburg, Russia. He was named Georgi Melitonovich Balanchivadze. In 1924 Balanchivadze joined a touring troupe called the Principal Dancers of the Soviet State Ballet. While performing in Germany, the troupe decided not to return to the Soviet Union. After an engagement in London, he traveled to Paris to audition for Serge Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes. Diaghilev hired him and changed his name to George Balanchine.



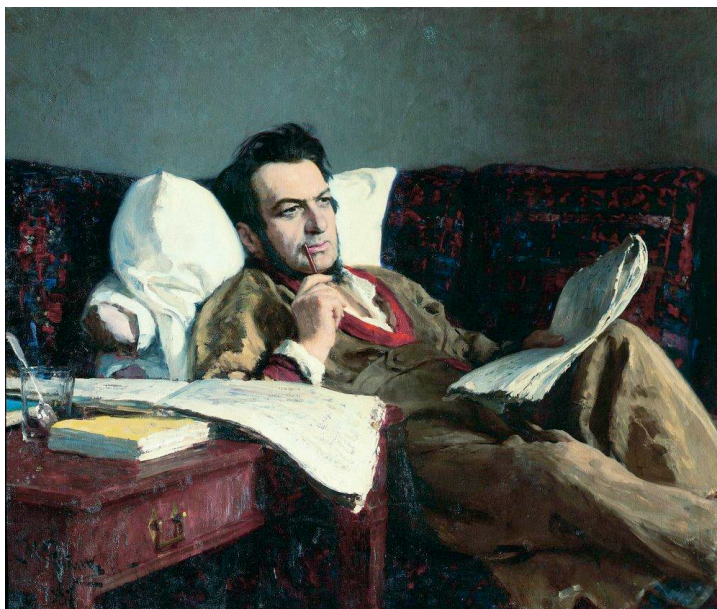
George Balanchine



Students could discuss why people shorten, alter or completely change their names when they move from one country to another or for other reasons, like actors or musicians who take on a “stage name”? Some students may have first-hand experience with this topic.



Paul Kolnik/New York City Ballet/School of American Ballet: From left, Lily Balogh, Peter Walker, Emily Kikta and Katherine Cowgill in a workshop performance of Balanchine’s “Valse Fantaisie,” at the Peter Jay Sharp Theater.



Portrait of Mikhail Glinka, by artist Ilya Repin, 1887.

MIKHAIL GLINKA (1804–1857), Russia’s first national composer, has been called the Mozart of his country. He is best known for his operas *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Ludmila*. As a student at the Mariinsky Theatre, Balanchine danced in the latter; in 1969, he directed and choreographed the opera for the State Opera of Hamburg.

Repertory notes provided courtesy of and adapted from New York City Ballet Online Repertory Index.

Go to iTunes to purchase “Waltz-Fantasia in B minor” by Mikhail Glinka or listen to the music on youtube:



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



Matjash Mrozewski's *The Lost Dance*. Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert.

THE LOST DANCE

CHOREOGRAPHY: MATJASH MROZEWSKI
 STAGED BY: LISA KIPP
 MUSIC: *The Lost Dance*
 COMPOSER: OWEN BELTON
 COSTUME DESIGN: ADAM ARNOLD
 Costumes Constructed By ADAM ARNOLD and THE OBT
 COSTUME SHOP
 LIGHTING DESIGN: MICHAEL MAZZOLA
 WORLD PREMIERE: April 19, 2012, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Newmark Theatre, Portland, Oregon

Canadian choreographer Matjash Mrozewski commissions new music for his ballets at a level that is unusual these days; the score for his world premiere *The Lost Dance* was created by electronic composer Owen Belton. This is their fifth collaboration. Mrozewski felt like creating something that had flavors from the last few decades, but didn't want to create "a rock ballet." He and Belton went for a vintage feel, with an occasional '60s/'70s, soulful vibe. "Owen started throwing things at me," says Mrozewski. "One of the first images the music evoked was of a haunted dance floor somewhere. Owen used a lot of percussion but also tons of eerie atmosphere and non-instrumental sounds, which are evocative, surprising and sometimes humorous. I really had this image of ghosts on the one hand, and groovy social dance on the other. This allowed me to get into a kind of movement vocabulary and zone." These ideas also inspired local designer Adam Arnold, who created the costumes for *The Lost Dance*.

Mrozewski is committed to working through challenges in each new ballet. With *The Lost Dance*, former OBT Artistic Director Christopher Stowell asked him not to make duets and partnering central to the work. "Usually, when I start a work, I start with the duets," says Mrozewski. "Here in Portland, I choreographed for a week and no one touched each other. I was really uncomfortable at first, but I got over it. I got to know the dancers in a different way, by working with them as individuals." Mrozewski also thought of the whole body as made up of a separate top and bottom half. He said, "I created the arm movements first and then added the legs. For the dancers, it was brain-busting; for me, it was an exciting challenge because it's not how I've ever worked. We've ended up with some really complex co-ordinations that flow, punctuated by idiosyncratic gestures."



Matjash Mrozewski in rehearsal for *The Lost Dance*. Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert.



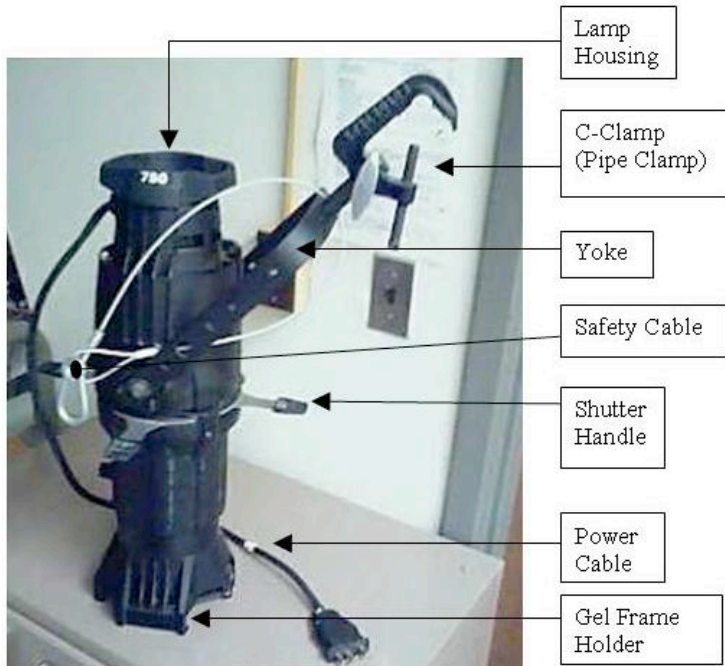
Before seeing *The Lost Dance*, students should look for "gestures" that they and their friends make. Gestures are movements that people do unconsciously, like pulling on their ear, checking their watch, or twirling their hair. Gestures can also be movements that symbolize an action or a feeling, like thumbs up for feeling good about something or thumbs up for hitchhiking. In *The Lost Dance* the dancers play with the timing and order of strings of gestures.



Students might try to think up 5-10 gestures, put them in an order and try to do them one after the other at a medium speed and then try to do the same pattern very slow and then very fast. Have fun!



Javier Ubell and Makino Hayashi in Matjash Mrozewski's *The Lost Dance*. Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert.




A Source Four ERS with major parts labeled.

LIGHTING A BALLET

In the theatre we use lighting instruments that direct light beams onto the stage to imitate the way the sun or manmade lighting illuminates our world. The light can vary in its intensity-- from blindingly bright to barely dim to no light at all, which we call "black out." Light can appear colored and shaped. And light can move around the stage.

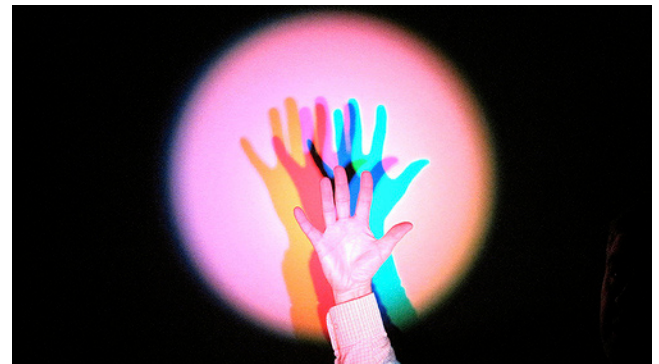
COLORED LIGHT


In both *Petal* and *The Lost Dance*, you will see several examples of light that is colored and shaped. When light travels through a colorful medium it will project various colors. The color inserts are called **gels** and look like sheets of colored plastic. Some are made of glass and are called **dichroic filters**. Gels must withstand high heat. The color of light can be divided into two groups—warm colors and cool colors. It is believed that color can affect the way we feel.


 Ask students how certain colors make them feel. Are they happy, sad, bouncy or dull colors? Do they have a favorite color? Are there "boy" colors and "girl" colors? Is color used to influence us to feel certain ways or even to buy certain things? Poll the class, making a chart of colors and the feelings that they might be associated with.

SHAPED LIGHT

How do we shape light? We don't wad it up and mold it like clay! In order to see light, it needs to shine on something like a screen or a dancer or even dust in the air. Sometimes we blow fog or smoke onto the stage so that the droplets of water reflect the light. In order to see distinct shapes or patterns of light the light must travel through a design cut into a plate of glass or metal that is mounted inside the lighting instrument. This plate is called a **gobo**. The name gobo is short for "Go Between Object" or possibly "Graphic Object Before Optic". Because the gobo is placed within the instrument it must also withstand high heat. When light emitted from the lighting instrument's lamp shines through the plate all the solid portions stop the light and the holes let the light shine through. We see this in nature when we see shafts of light streaming through holes in the clouds on a rainy day. If the pattern to shape the light is placed farther from the instrument, it is called a *cucoloris*, or "**cookie**" for short. Cookies don't need to withstand high temperatures. Tree twigs glued to a plastic panel could be held in front of a lighting instrument to appear like the patterns of light on the ground as we walk under trees on a moonlit night.



 Students could use their hands to create shadow puppets on the wall by placing their dancing hands in front of one or more sources of light that are shining toward a blank wall.

 Notice the differences in light's color in nature: Is morning light, afternoon light and the light just before the sun sets all the same color? Does the light in one of Oregon's dense old growth forests feel the same as at a foggy Oregon beach or on the snowy slope of Mount Hood? Older students could research the properties of light.

THE USE OF COLOR IN THE THREE BALLETS:



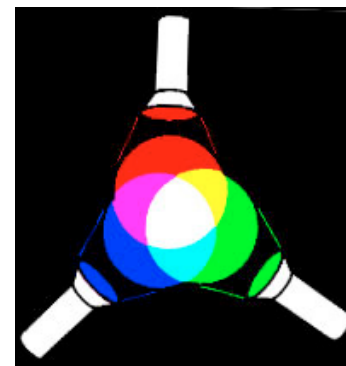
Petal is set in a white box-like area created by different types of material—the rear wall is plastic sheeting, the sides are of muslin fabric and the floor is white removable dance flooring. These surfaces provide a blank canvas upon which to project colored light. *Petal* begins in a bright yellow, and evolves into oranges, reds and pinks—reflective of the choreographer's initial inspiration—gerbera daisies.



At one point in the ballet a design of light is cast onto the back wall. After the performance ask students what the design made them think of.



The stage for *Valse Fantaisie* is set with black drapes all around. The materials on the sides are called **legs** and the one at the back of the stage is called a **scrim** and it is made of light weight gauze. The dancers are lit in a way that is flattering to the color of the costumes and the dancers' skin tone. Even though the light looks "white" or like regular daylight, there are actually colored gels in the light instruments. Because the eye reacts only to the red, green and blue portion of the visible spectrum, these colors are called the "primary hues of light." Their color cannot be created by the blending together of any other colors, however, their interaction forms the basis for all other color. When all three primaries mix together equally they make white light. Blending light is very different than mixing paint.



See the illustration to the right and learn more from



www.StageSpot.com



How are primary colors like primary numbers?



A large and powerful lighting instrument called a **follow spot** will be used in *Valse Fantaisie*. A specially trained member of the crew runs the instrument, moving the beam of light in concert with the dancer



as he or she travels around the stage. The **follow spot operator** employs a lot of concentration, practically learning the dance in order to get it right, to not lose the dancer from the light. We will look at the workings of that instrument during the show. Prior to the performance, younger students might practice "following" a fellow student with a flashlight as they dance in front of the class. Older students might read up on the optics of a spotlight and if they are lucky enough to have a theatre in their school, take a visit to check out a spotlight.

The Lost Dance uses color but also relies on shadow and movement of light to set its mood. The size of the stage seems to change due to the amount of light and the part of the stage that is being lit. Compared to *Petal*, and *Valse Fantaisie*, *The Lost Dance* is darker.

Although the audience cannot see the lighting instruments when they are in use—that is the magic of theatrical lighting—we can notice the use of gobos, especially projecting patterns on to the floor. The light also changes in relation to the music and the speed of the dancers' movements.



Ask students to notice the design of light on the floor and ask what the designs make them think of. Ask also if they noticed the movement of the light and if it made them feel surprised or energetic.

GET TO KNOW PORTLAND AND IT'S USE OF COLORED LIGHT!

In 1987, the Morrison Bridge became the first bridge illuminated by the **Willamette Light Brigade**. In 2007, the original 16 colored floodlamps illuminating the concrete piers were replaced by energy-efficient and computer-controlled LEDs. Different colors may be selected for each of eight zones of the piers. Static and animated patterns may be requested for a fee which ranges from \$100 per night to \$1200 per month. The Morrison Bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places in November 2012.





Click here to read more about the Willamette Light Brigade, learn about the history of Portland's bridge lighting, and recent efforts to provide colorful beauty that is energy efficient.

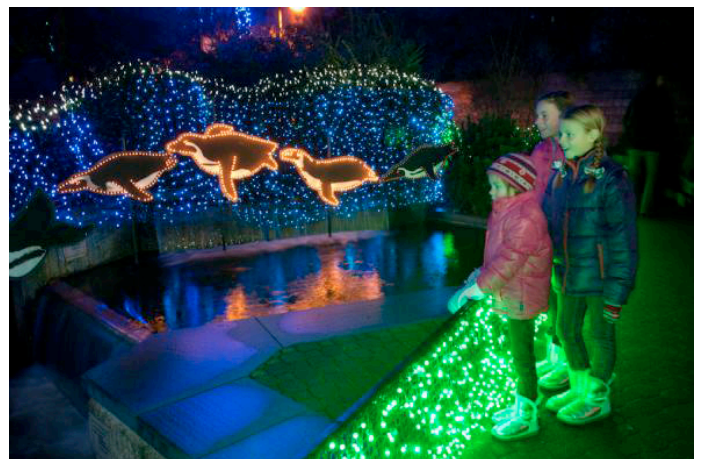
 <http://www.lightthebridges.org/bridges/morrison/>

Where else in Portland can we see the use of colorful lighting at night? Some examples:

- The Rockwood MAX station has a sculpture that uses different colored lights
- At Christmas, some buildings in downtown display colorful lights through the windows causing the building to look like it has a ribbon around it.

 Check out these Portland street light sculptures:
<http://www.theatlanticcities.com/arts-and-lifestyle/2013/07/closer-look-portlands-hulking-carnivorous-street-lights/6087/>

 Ask students why Portland's city leaders would decide to install lighting fixtures that look like carnivorous plants instead of the usual lamps mounted on poles?



CONTENT STANDARDS

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

Create, Present and Perform: Apply ideas, techniques and processes in the arts.

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.

Common Core State Standards: Attending the SPS gives students practice in building literacy across subject matter as suggested in the CCSS. Students notice key ideas central to the work, elements of the craft and structure of the work observed, and make connections or integrate this work (dance) with other curriculum.

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* or *Swan Lake* 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 39, but most are in their early-to-mid-20s. 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, China, and different areas within the United States. There are dancers from California, Washington, New Jersey, Wisconsin, Massachusetts, New York, and several who grew up right here in Oregon.

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 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.

PLEASE DIRECT ANY QUESTIONS TO:

Kasandra Gruener, MA, Director of Education Outreach
phone: 503.227.0977 x212 / email: outreach@obt.org / www.obt.org/outreach_youth.html