

OREGON BALLET THEATRE'S STUDENT PERFORMANCE SERIES 2016-2017

TERRA

April 19, 2017

Show starts at 11:30
Doors open at 11:00

April 20, 2017

Show starts at Noon
Doors open at 11:30

Kasandra Gruener, MA Ed
Director of Education Outreach

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	3
What to know on the day of the show.....	4
<i>Jardí Tancat</i> by Nacho Duato.....	5
Quick Facts.....	6
Topics for Discussion.....	7
What can you see in one minute?.....	8
Stage Design.....	9
Catalonia, Spain.....	10
<i>Terra</i> by Helen Pickett.....	11
Composer.....	12
Costume & Scenic Designer.....	13
Frequently Asked Questions.....	14

THANK YOU TO OUR FOUNDATION AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS!

Oregon Ballet Theatre's Education Outreach programming is supported in part by grants from the Oregon Arts Commission and the National Endowment for the Arts, Regional Art & Culture Council, including support from the City of Portland, Multnomah County and the Arts Education & Access Fund, and Work for Art, including contributions from more than 75 companies and 2,000 employees.



Clark Foundation
 The Hearst Foundations
 Juan Young Trust
 Northwest Natural
 OnPoint Community
 Credit Union

PGE Foundation
 Starseed Foundation
 Wells Fargo
 Wintz Family Foundation

Welcome to Oregon Ballet Theatre's Spring 2017 Student Performance Series *TERRA: of the earth*

Two works, *Jardí Tancat* (1983), created by Spanish choreographer Nacho Duato, and *Terra* (2017), created by American choreographer Helen Pickett, will be shown in their entirety, complete with costumes, make-up, lighting, and stage design, just as the general public sees them. We believe that people of all ages, especially students, deserve to encounter dance in its original and fleeting manifestation. When visiting a museum or gallery, we see visual art suspended on the wall in front of us just as the artist intended it—not a photocopy or digital image, but the real paint and canvas thing. At the upcoming performance the audience will experience the, “Don’t blink, you’ll miss it!” elusiveness of live performance. Dance replayed on a screen may certainly be enjoyed, but being in close proximity to dancers in the immediate act of making art has the power to delight our kinesthetic self—breathing with the dancers’ pulse, feeling the vibration of drums in our stomachs, startling in our seats when a dancer emerges from the dark into the light, or becoming quietly drawn in when collectively joining other audience members in direct focus of what is happening on stage.

The Study Guide provides informational resources to help the audience prepare for the performance. Both works explore our connection to the earth. *Jardí Tancat* portrays the struggle of people who depend on fortuitous environmental cycles for existence such as water to grow life sustaining crops in wind parched soil. Because *Jardí Tancat* has

been executed by many companies since its creation in 1983 it is well represented on the internet. In particular we consider two links— a short video of OBT Artistic Director, Kevin Irving, speaking about the ballet and a video excerpt selected to familiarize viewers with movement motifs in the ballet. *Terra*, on the other hand, is a world premiere, choreographed with OBT dancers here and now, so the Study Guide will give brief information of its making—saving more information for the day of the show. Inventing a ballet from start to finish is a collaborative process between the choreographer, dancers, and production staff. It involves many phases, such as: imagining, planning, questioning, improving, editing, reordering, revising, testing, finalizing, and executing—a very flexible and flowing process—one that easily relates to the developing skills of student creativity and aligns with classroom discussions of the phases of the creative process. We are all looking forward to experiencing the completed version of *Terra*!

The Study Guide also gives important information to know regarding parking and seating at the theater. Don’t hesitate to contact me if there are any questions. We have full houses, so if you have changes in registered attendance, please contact me, we want everyone to have a seat! Thanks to all who have made their payments!

See you soon in the theater!
Kasandra Gruener



Photo by Joni Kabana

Would you like to further expand your students’ experience with dance? OBT teaching artists go out to local schools and dance with students, linking dance with other academic topics -- like science, math, language arts, or life skills! We bring the “A” to “STEM!” YAY STEAM! We have several types of Dance Residency programs that explore ballet along with other genres of dance – even hip-hop! Dance is something everyone can do.

WHAT TO KNOW ON THE DAY OF THE SHOW!!

The Newmark Theater is located at:

1111 SW Broadway,
Portland, OR 97205



The doors to the Newmark Theater will open one half hour before the show begins. Please plan to arrive early so that you can settle in. The dancers may still be warming up onstage—a real treat to see.

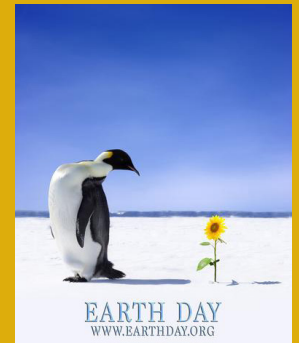
If traveling on a school bus, please follow directions for parking from the parking attendants. If driving a personal vehicle, give time to find parking. There is a lot going on downtown at this time. Public transportation is close by.

There are no tickets to this show—the usher has your registration information. Upon entering the building, please tell the main lobby usher your group's school name so that you can hear which level you will be seated in. Homeschools should also know the organizers name as well. When you arrive at the Aisle Door into the house, the usher will direct you to your seat. Please leave backpacks behind—if you must bring them the ushers will ask that they be left in the lobby of your seating level. You will be asked to secure your seat before visiting restrooms.

EARTH DAY APRIL 22, 2017!

Terra is the Latin name for “earth”. This April 22, a few days after the **Student Performance Series**, will be **Earth Day 2017** initiating a perfect opportunity for discussions about how artists explore and express their perceptions and concerns about human impact on—and interaction with—the planet. Events such as Earth Day bring people together and heighten awareness and action for important causes. Earth Day 2017's campaign is “Environmental & Climate Literacy.” More than 1 billion people now participate in Earth Day activities each year, making it the largest civic observance in the world.

earthday.org 



JARDÍ TANCAT

Choreography: Nacho Duato

Staging: Kevin Irving & Lisa Kipp

Music: Maria del Mar Bonet ("Cançó de Collir Olives," "Cançó d'Esterrossar," "Fora d'es Sembrat," "Tonada de Treure Aigo," "Cançó de Na Ruixa Mantells")

Set Design: Nacho Duato

Costume Design: Nacho Duato

Lighting Designer: Nicolás Fischtel

Organization and Production: Carlos Iturriz c/o Mediart Producciones SL (Spain)

World Premiere: December 19, 1983; Nederlands Dans Theater; International Choreographic Workshop; Cologne, Germany

OBT Premiere: April 13, 2017; Newmark Theatre; Portland, Oregon

© NACHO DUATO, all rights reserved

Created for NDT2 in 1983 for a choreographic competition in Cologne Germany, *Jardí Tancat* was Nacho Duato's first ballet. The unique movement, music, and subject matter garnered him first prize at the competition and immediate fame and recognition as a major new voice in the dance world. As with so much of his work, Duato's inspiration for the work came from the nature and people of the Mediterranean region. Duato has asserted (in a 1994 interview with Dance Magazine): "[I must create] pieces that involve a Mediterranean way of seeing life and movement. ...I was born in Valencia, and so many cultures came or went through there and left an influence—Greek, Tunisian, West African, Jewish...it's very earthy."

Jardí Tancat (Catalan for "Closed Garden") is based on Catalan folk tunes collected and sung by Maria del Mar Bonet. With a sweet, yet passionate, melancholy, these folksongs and their dance portrayal tell the story of the people who work the barren land, praying to God for the rain that does not come and enduring with great spirit in the face of hardship:

*Water, we have asked for water
And You, Oh Lord, You gave us wind
And You turn Your back on us
As though You will not listen to us*

Nacho Duato is a dancer who became a choreographer. This picture was taken 8 years after he created *Jardí Tancat*.

Nacho Duato, 1991 CND
madridteatro.eu



Nacho Duato is still contributing to the art of dance. Here is creating his version of *Sleeping Beauty* in Russia at the Mikhailovsky Ballet.
dancemagazine.com

Learn more about Nacho Duato, his many ballets, and Spain's culture at these interactive websites:
spainisculture.com

QUICK FACTS ABOUT NACHO DUATO



- Born in Valencia, Spain, Jan 8, 1957
- Started professional ballet training in London at 18 years of age
- *Jardí Tancat* won first prize at the International Choreographic Workshop, Cologne, Germany
- He has been a choreographer for over 30 years
- His choreography has been performed all over the world

JARDÍ TANCAT & KEVIN IRVING



Kevin Irving | Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert

OBT Artistic Director Kevin Irving first encountered *Jardí Tancat* when Mr. Duato staged the ballet on the Canadian dance company, *Les Grands Ballets Canadiens*. Mr. Irving “immediately fell in love” with *Jardí Tancat* and Nacho Duato’s aesthetic. Later, from 1994 to 2002, Mr. Irving served as ballet master and associate director for Spain’s *Compania Nacional de Danza* (National Dance Company) where Mr. Duato was Artistic Director.

A repetiteur is a person entrusted by a

choreographer to set his or her dance works on other companies. Mr. Irving is a repetiteur for Nacho Duato works. In the following video interview, Mr. Irving discusses *Jardí Tancat* during a time when he set the work on Miami City Ballet.

<https://youtu.be/3NV6GtR3-N0>

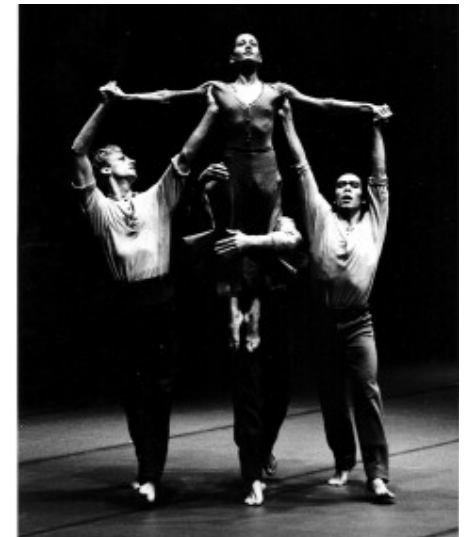
Topics for discussion after viewing the youtube video, as well as before or after the performance.

What is the relationship of the music to the ballet? Mr. Irving states that Mr. Duato’s choreography is “an expression of his relationship to and his reaction to the music.” He also said that, “the words don’t really have much to do with the story,” it is more the emotion in the singer’s voice that matters.

How does the music make you feel or want to move? Does it matter that the words are in Catalan—a language that most Americans may not understand? How does it feel to not know what the singer is saying? Watch for and describe the emotion portrayed by the dancers.

Listen to the Catalan folk songs sung by Maria del Mar Bonet. This youtube video includes still photos of the dancers in *Jardí Tancat*:

<https://youtu.be/229vhQfI5og>



Kevin Irving, far left, in Nacho Duato’s *Jardí Tancat* (Les Grands Ballets Canadiens)
Photo: Michael Slobodian

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

AFTER VIEWING THE YOUTUBE VIDEOS, AS WELL AS BEFORE OR AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

What is the relationship of the music to the ballet?

Mr. Irving states that Mr. Duato's choreography is "an expression of his relationship to and his reaction to the music." He also said that, "the words don't really have much to do with the story," it is more the emotion in the singer's voice that matters.



How does the music make you feel or want to move?

Does it matter that the words are in Catalan—a language that most Americans may not understand? How does it feel to not know what the singer is saying? Watch for and describe the emotion portrayed by the dancers.

Listen

Catalonian folksongs sung by Maria del Mar Bonet. This youtube video includes still photos of the dancers in Jardí Tancat: <https://youtu.be/229vhQfI5og>

Dictionary of ballet vocabulary: <http://www.abt.org/education/dictionary/>



Watch 60 seconds of an excerpt from *Jardi Tancat*. [6:00 to 7:30]

<https://youtu.be/JWmYsLdHZI0?t=390>

WHAT CAN YOU SEE IN ONE MINUTE?!

By viewing a one minute excerpt of the ballet, we can see movement motifs that express emotions and actions of the Catalan people as they live in the dry conditions of their Mediterranean region. Becoming familiar with the movement motifs is one way to get more engaged with the ballet, especially if seeing dance is a new idea.



Brian Simcoe and Emily Parker | Photo by Yi Yin



Emily Parker and Kelsie Nobriga | Photo by Yi Yin

1. Watch the excerpt in silence without telling the students what to look for.
2. Ask them to think about what they saw and then describe and list on the whiteboard what movements they caught that “said” something to them—movements that were descriptive.
3. Some possible actions they might notice: people looking tired, holding their hands up to the sky in a cupped shape checking for water, making seed rows, dropping line of seeds or planting in rows, hoeing and hacking the hard earth, scooping up or patting down the soil, repeating the process again and again, and etc.
4. Students may not be able to see very much with just one viewing, so show it several times, adding new discoveries to the list. If it is very hard for students to see the abstract movements, choose one idea, like holding your cupped hand up to check for rain, watch the video and have children raise their hands when they see that movement.



JARDÍ TANCAT: STAGE DESIGN



Pacific Northwest Ballet dancers Carrie Imler, rear, and Mara Vinson perform *Jardí Tancat*



Floor design by Bill Anderson

Women wear long full dresses and men wear pants and shirts in earth tones. The dancers are barefoot.

Stage and lighting designers are tasked with using their imaginations to create a stage space that enhances the theme of the ballet. *Jardí Tancat* means “closed garden.” To support that idea, the ballet has a specially designed floor that can only be used for this one ballet—it is a brown floor that has been painted black around the edges, giving the effect of a closed in space. The stage will also have several poles placed around the edges, perhaps representing fences or elements of the earth that encircle the garden. The stage crew must roll the floor away or cover it up when another ballet is performed before or after it. That is a lot of extra work!



Ballet Hispanico in Nacho Duato's *Jardí Tancat*. Photo by Paula Lobo, Courtesy Michelle Tabnick



picturethispost.com

CATALONIA, SPAIN

Catalonia is in the northeastern corner of Spain at the border of France, seen here in beige. It has a Mediterranean climate with hot, dry summers and mild, relatively rainy winters.



Areas used for agriculture are surrounded by stone constructions, some reaching back to antiquity. They were formed as people removed the stones from the fields to facilitate ploughing and cultivation. Students might consider and compare the geography of our region to that of Spain.



catpaisatge.net



britannica.com

HOW DO THEY DO THIS?

This is a picture of a *castell*, or traditional Catalan human tower, being assembled at a festival in Tarragona, Catalonia, Spain.

Like ballet, these men practice the skill and strategy for executing this traditional feat, passing it on to the next generation.

TERRA

Choreography: Helen Pickett

Staging: Helen Pickett & Jeffrey Stanton

Music: Composed by Jeff Beal for Oregon Ballet Theatre

Costume Design: Emma Kingsbury

Lighting Design: Michael Mazzola

World Premiere: April 13, 2017; Oregon Ballet Theatre;
Newmark Theatre; Portland, Oregon



Helen Pickett | helenpickett.com

Terra explores how the earth gave meaning and identity to humanity. I started to investigate earth dance ceremonies and this gave rise to the rituals of life that transpire between human beings. As the work evolved I was inspired by the writings of Joseph Campbell on myth and lore, on archetypes of heroes and heroines. "We have not even to risk the adventure alone," he writes, "for the heroes of all time have gone before us."* Transformation through ritual hopefully brings us closer to our communities and ourselves. We find the journey, not the goal, gives us meaning. In *Terra* there is sensuality, strength, memory, disruption, order, intimacy, power, vulnerability. In *Terra* the quest is for unity, inclusion rather than exclusion. "...What we're seeking is an experience of being alive, so that our life experiences on the purely physical plane will have resonances within our innermost being and reality, so that we actually feel the rapture of being alive." *

I came to Jeff (Beal) with all these ideas and in particular my research of the human rituals of nature, of the earth. We worked on percussion as the initial driving force and then to counterpoint the power of the drums, I thought to go to the ethereal realm. This was expressed in the ritual of echo, how we mimic to evolve, which he manifested by creating a beautifully haunting theme. Our further work caused Jeff to respond with a musical composition that included sensual guitar, searing strings, lyrical piano, and funky, wonderful "daily life-sounds" He created a score of life cycle.

* *Power of Myth*, by Joseph Campbell



"Helen's brilliance lies in the way she abstracts ideas into movement, drawing on a multitude of influences to create works that are thrilling to behold."

Kevin Irving, OBT Artistic Director



Choreographer Helen Pickett | Blaine Truitt Covert



OBT dancers Avery Reiners and Emily Parker | Blaine Truitt Covert


JEFF BEAL



Composer Jeff Beal | Photo courtesy of jeffbeal.com

The music for *Terra* is an original composition by composer Jeff Beal. Jeff Beal is an American composer of music for film, media, and the concert hall. With musical beginnings as a jazz trumpeter and recording artist, his works are infused with an understanding of rhythm and spontaneity. Steven Schneider for the New York Times wrote of “the richness of Beal’s musical thinking...his compositions often capture the liveliness and unpredictability of the best improvisation.” Mr. Beal has several CDs and is the composer of the theme music to the Netflix drama “House of Cards”

Mr. Beal is also a mentor for emerging musicians. He now mentors and encourages young composers as a participant in the Sundance Film Composer seminars and as a guest lecturer at conservatories.

Listen to his music and learn more about the composer at his website:
jeffbeal.com 

2015 Creative Arts Emmy Awards

Jeff Beal, winner of the award for outstanding music composition in a series (original dramatic score) for “House of Cards,” poses in the press room during the 2015 Creative Arts Emmy Awards at Microsoft Theater on September 12, 2015 in Los Angeles, California.



Jeff Beal | Photo by Jason Kempin/Getty Images North America

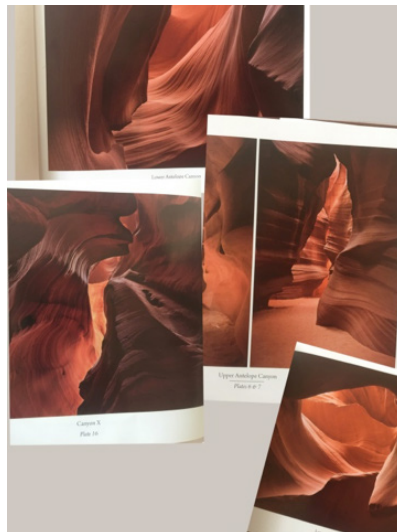
COSTUME & SCENIC DESIGNER



Emma Kingsbury

Emma Kingsbury is an international costume and scenic designer who trained at Australia's National Institute of Dramatic Art (NIDA). She has worked for several companies including Atlanta Ballet, Smuin Ballet, Pinchgut Opera, Sydney Chamber Opera, Sydney Theatre Company, Belvoir St Theatre, Australian Dance Artists as well as designing extensively for film and television. Her credits include scenic design for Atlanta Ballet's *Camino Real* (2015) and Smuin Ballet's *Oasis* (2016), scenic and costume design for Pinchgut Opera's *Der Rauchfangkehrer* and Sydney Chamber Opera's *Ich Habe Genug*. Other major works include conceptualizing and designing *Andy X: The Movie*, directed by Jim

Sharman and *Atomic: The Musical* for both the Sydney and New York productions. Kingsbury designed the multi-award winning show *The Baulkham Hills African Ladies Troupe* currently touring the United Kingdom. Kingsbury's film credits include *The Wolverine* (2012), *Gods of Egypt* (2016), and *Truth* (2015). She was Assistant Designer for Dreamworks/Global Creatures Arena Spectacular *How To Train Your Dragon* and Assistant Costume Designer to Ngila Dickson on NBC/Universal's *Childhood's End*. Most recently, Kingsbury has worked on Jane Campion's mini-series *Top of the Lake: China Girl* and as Production Designer for *Let's Talk About* and Legendary Pictures *Pacific Rim: Uprising* shooting in China and Australia.



Elements of inspiration for the costumes from Emma's notebook.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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 Romeo & Juliet, 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 use cell phones and other electronic devices in the theater. The noise and clicking can be distracting to your neighbors, and camera flashes can be dangerous to the dancers.