

OREGON BALLET THEATRE'S STUDENT PERFORMANCE SERIES 2019-2020

The Sleeping Beauty

February 21, 2020 Show starts at 12:00 Doors open at 11:15

Keller Auditorium 222 SW Clay St. Portland, OR 97201



THE SLEEPING BEAUTY

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ROAR(S) Celebrating 30 Years

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Dear Educators,

This February, Oregon Ballet Theatre will awaken you from winter's chilly blanket with a heartwarming classic, *The Sleeping Beauty*, choreographed in 2010 by Christopher Stowell, to music by Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky. The full-length version of the story-ballet *The Sleeping Beauty* takes nearly





3 hours to perform. The Student Performance Series will last one hour and feature Acts I and III. A storyteller will be included to complete the tale. The story's timeless theme of good over evil is brilliantly crafted in choreography drawn from Marius Petipa's original 1890 production and infused with fresh new choreography showcasing the skills and nuances of today's dancers. The ballet is enriched with lavish costumes and décor based on the opulence of European aristocratic courts from a bygone era. The music, composed specifically for the ballet by Tchaikovsky, is one of ballet's greatest scores. Mr. Stowell, who is one of OBT's former artistic directors, states, "If anyone can conjure up a better sound-scape for a fairytale, I want to hear it." This SPS Study Guide aims to help educators maximize students' enjoyment and understanding of the performance by encouraging thinking about the ballet before and after seeing it. The Study Guide includes internet links, handouts, and activities— an orange dot (•) points out enrichment questions or activities.

So now, one hundred and thirty years after Russian audiences watched the first Princess Aurora prick her finger and gracefully fall into a century-long sleep, I invite you and your students to join artistic tradition with current education and enjoy the enchantment of Oregon Ballet Theatre's *The Sleeping Beauty*.

See you soon in the theater!

Kasandro Smoa

Kasandra Gruener, MA Director of Education Outreach



Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 27 (1) 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.

The arts are where learning starts, from a child's first exploration of meaning on a page by finger painting to an adult's use of the arts to develop, understand and communicate new ideas." ~ Oregon Department of Education



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.

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SYNOPSIS: THE FULL STORY

Prologue: The Christening

King Florestan's court gathers for the christening of his daughter, Princess Aurora. As fairy godmothers present gifts which fortell Aurora's elegant attributes, the festivities are interrupted by the arrival of the evil fairy Carabosse, irate that she was not invited. She bears no gift, she informs the

Queen, but a curse. On Aurora's sixteenth birthday, she will pierce her finger on a spindle and die. The benevolent Lilac Fairy intervenes with her gift—a reprieve from death. Aurora will not die, but will sleep for 100 years, to be awakened by a Prince's kiss.

Act I: The Spell At Princess Aurora's 16th birthday celebration, she accepts a rose from four princes who seek her hand in marriage. A mysterious guest arrives and gives Aurora a bouquet. The guest is Carabosse, who has hidden a spindle among the blossoms. The unsuspecting Aurora pierces her finger and seems to die. As the court is thrown into chaos, the Lilac Fairy fulfills her promise of reprieve. She weaves a spell of sleep over Aurora and everyone at court, and enfolds the palace in a forest of lilacs and vines.

Act II: The vision

A century later, Prince Florimund and his retinue are hunting, but the Prince is distracted, dreaming of ideal love. The Lilac Fairy appears and shows him a vision of Princess Aurora, the woman of his dreams. The Prince begs to find this beauty, and the Lilac Fairy takes him to the palace where



Former OBT principal dancers Alison Roper (far left) and Yuka lino and Chauncey Parsons (center).

Aurora lies sleeping. Florimund tries in vain to rouse her, until it occurs to him to awaken Aurora with a kiss. The spell is broken.

Act III: Aurora's Wedding

Fairy tale characters like Bluebird, Puss in Boots, and the White Cat join the court to celebrate the wedding of Princess Aurora and Prince Florimund with dancing. All rejoice that good has prevailed over evil. The marriage of Aurora and Florimund restores the kingdom to balance and hope for a bright future.

Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert

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THE CHOREOGRAPHY: A FRESH TAKE ON THE ORIGINAL

Marius Petipa was the original choreographer for *The Sleeping Beauty*. He was the Ballet Master of the Czar's Imperial Theatres in Russia. Dance Critic Arlene Croce reflected that the ballet was "a masterpiece of world theatre." OBT Dance Historian Linda Besant points out that each choreographer must "decide how faithful to remain to Petipa's definitive original." In an interview



with Besant, Stowell stated, "I've actually changed my mind over time about how reverent to be. As I was getting steeped in the tradition, I thought you should never change anything. Now, I think everything is possible, because the ballet needs to live on." Besant believes that Petipa would have agreed wholeheartedly with Stowell's approach since Petipa stated, "The talented balletmaster,

reviving earlier ballets, will create dances in accordance with his own fantasy, his talent and the tastes of the public of his own time, and not come to expend his time and effort copying what was done by others."

W Learn more about the history of the original ballet

The Sleeping Beauty holds a special place in ballet companies around the world, including The Royal Ballet in London, England. It was the ballet with which

It was the ballet with which the company reopened the Royal Opera House in 1946 after World War II, becoming the first production at its new home in Covent Garden. Visit the **Noval Opera House** website to view multiple videos about the ballet.



Ballet vs. Disney

For many, the Sleeping Beauty story is best known by Walt Disney's interpretation in the treasured 1959 animated film. OBT's ballet and the Disney film have several similarities as well as differences, such as: both use the Tchaikovsky musical score, but in the film, words were added to some of the

Christopher Stowell

Photo by Joni Kabana melodies; the evil fairy towell is named Carabosse after the old French tale,

not Maleficent as in the film; and the ballet version does not have a dragon. In the ballet, the Lilac Fairy

Marius Petipa choreographed *The Sleeping Beauty* when he was 70 years old! is the good fairy who adjusts the curse, replacing Disney's Flora, Fauna and Merryweather; and Aurora pricks her finger on a spindle in the ballet instead of on a spinning wheel. Watch carefully for that moment at the end of Act I!

• Students might watch the Disney movie or other Sleeping Beauty films

before the OBT performance, leading to discussions later of the treatments of the story.

Marius Petipa

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THE MIME OF BALLET

Full-length ballets like *The Sleeping Beauty* tell a story with stylized and expressive movements ballet steps, with face and arm gestures—that interplay with original music composed to match the mood and actions of the story. Costumes and scenery add to the telling. We say "telling," but fulllength ballets don't have any talking in them. Ballet dancers don't use their voices to tell the story, they use their bodies, often times employing a special

When Nashville Ballet performed a version of *The Sleeping Beauty*, they created a **CD 2 minute** video which translates the mime of Carabosse's wicked curse on Aurora. type of movement language created in early European theaters called mime.

Mime is but one way that people can use the body to express their thoughts without using the voice. In the United

States, many people learn American Sign Language in order to communicate with folks who are deaf or have a hearing impairment. There have been many forms of sign language throughout history and it is estimated that there are up to 300 forms of sign languages around the world today.

Watch the phrase, "She was beautiful and he fell in love with her at first sight" expressed in ASL.



Oregon Ballet Theatre's Former Principal Dancer Gavin Larsen (with raised spindle!) and former company artist Javier Ubell (foreground) in Christopher Stowell's *The Sleeping Beauty*.

• On the next page, there is a photo montage of the mime of the fairy's curse. Look at the photos and recreate the movement as a series of poses. Several students could choose a pose and line up in invited? What are the emotions that come up in that situation? Carabosse acted out of revenge when she cast her spell. What can we do when we feel the urge for revenge arising?

the correct order or individuals could string the poses together as if casting the curse just like Carabosse.

 Think about the gestures that we do in our day to day lives that communicate ideas and words without voice.
How many gestures can you think of?

• Carabosse was not invited to Aurora's christening party. Discuss the questions: Have you ever wanted to go to a party and not been

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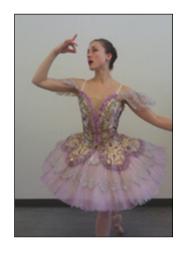
Former OBT Principal Dancer, Gavin Larsen, as **CARABOSSE**



"Aurora will grow,"

"prick her finger"

(evil laugh)



"These are my words."



"Aurora will not"



"die″

8





"She will prick her finger" "and only sleep."

Kasandra Gruener, MA Ed. Director of Education Outreach

Former OBT Soloist, Candace Bouchard, as the **LILAC FAIRY**

"and die"

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BALLET VOCABULARY

Arabesque is a pose that balances on one leg with the other leg extended straight to the rear. Below, we see dancers from OBT's 2010 performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*. They are being fairy tale characters who come to the party in Act III. Bluebird, who is posed below in *arabesque* while his partner Princess Florine kneels, executes very challenging steps that are meant to look like he is teaching Princess Florine how to fly.



Photos by Blaine Truitt Covert Principal dancer Ansa Deguchi and former company artist Lucas Threefoot as Bluebird and Princess Florine.



Photos by Blaine Truitt Covert Former principal dancers Yuka lino (in *arabesque*) and Ronnie Underwood, above.



It is fun to compare then-andnow photos of the same characters in a ballet. Blue Bird and Princess Florine are always

danced by strong dancers! Enrico Cecchetti, a famous dancer and ballet teacher, (seen in this photo with Varvara Nikitina) may have created some of the choreography that still exists for the Bluebird. The ballet includes several dance segments danced solely by two people. These dance segments are called *pas de deux*, which means a "dance for two".

• Go to last page of the Study Guide to print a copy of the line drawing for students to color.



Attitude is also a balancing pose, but the lifted leg is bent at an angle. At left, we see New York City Ballet dancer Teresa Reichlen standing in attitude while dancing the role of Aurora.

• Dance Spirit, a magazine for students of all types of dance, wrote an article about the accomplishments of 14 year old Madison Brown. Check out her vibrant *attitude,* left.

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Kasandra Gruener, MA Ed. Director of Education Outreach

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A FAIRYTALE IN MUSIC

Peter Illych Tchaikovsky composed over 3 hours of music for *The Sleeping Beauty*. As was standard procedure at that time, the choreographer, Petipa, supplied Tchaikovsky with detailed instructions for the score. For example, at the point in Act I where Princess Aurora pricks her finger, Petipa requested:

KEY

Counting in 3/4-groups of 3 quarter notes to each measure—a waltz is counted 1-2-3.1-2-3.. Bars—another word for a measure; each group of 3 beats equals one bar in ¾ time **4/4**—4 quarter notes to the bar. Two bars would be counted 1-2-3-4, 1-2-3-4.... largo—done slowly waltz—counting in ¾ time

"a gay and very songful motive. When counting in 3/4 begins, Aurora seizes the spindle, which she waves like a scepter—32 bars. Suddenly (a pause) pain! Blood! 8 bars of 4/4, largo."

Tchaikovsky immediately warmed to the assignment, saying:

"The subject is so poetic, so grateful for music, that I have worked on it with delight, and written it with the warmth and enthusiasm upon which the worth of a composition so much depends."



Ansa Deguchi, Brennan Boyer, Kathi Martuza and Anne Mueller in OBT's The Sleeping Beauty.

His music sometimes overran Petipa's instructions for the "Garland Waltz," where Petipa requested 16 bars of introduction and 150 bars of waltz, Tchaikovsky wrote 36 bars of introduction and 261 for waltzing.

Dancers count number patterns in their mind the whole time they are dancing. This allows them to stay together and dance with the music. (The key

at left will help to understand Petipa's request, and also to do the math activity below.)

Most choreographers eliminate some parts of the score, shortening it for the tastes of today's audiences. Mr. Stowell worked with OBT's Music Director Niel DePonte to reduce the score in a way that eliminates repetition yet intensifies the overall impact.

• Do the math! The Key at left will help.

How many total counts is 8 bars of 4/4 music? (answer 8 x 4 = 32)

How about 150 bars of waltz music? (answer 150 x 3 = 450)

How many total counts is 261 bars of waltz? (261 x 3 = 783)

• Modern day animated films of fairy stories include music in them. In fact most films and video games have music in them. Why? Does music help convey the story or affect the mood or does it interfere? How is music used in a ballet?

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SCENERY AND COSTUMES: THE OPULENCE OF A BYGONE ERA

The scenery and crates of costumes for OBT's production are borrowed from Ballet West in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Sleeping *Beauty* uses a lot of costumes-24 crates full! There are so many costumes that OBT needs to store them all over



their studio and office building as they are being fitted to the dancers! At the theater, the dancers who do several different roles in the ballet will need to speedily change their costumes, including the dance shoes they are wearing. Dancers almost need to choreograph how they change their clothes, trying to figure out the quickest way to do it. They



cannot be late to go onstage, or go onstage with misplaced costumes! Sometimes they need to change so fast there is no time to go to their dressing room. Instead they change in a quick-change booth backstage. They wear undergarments to

help them feel comfortable while changing as other dancers zip by for their time on stage.

The role of Princess Aurora has been danced by

many prestigious ballerinas. The first person to dance the role was named Carlotta Brianza in 1890. We can't tell the color of her costume from the old photo, below. The famous ballerina Anna Pavlova fell in love with ballet at a young age. Although her family was poor, her mother took her to see an exotic production of The Sleeping Beauty when she was 8 years old. Pavlova



ultimately danced the role in a luxurious costume by the artist Leon Bakst for her own 50 minute version in 1916. When Oregon Ballet Theater first performed The Sleeping Beauty in 2010 Alison

Roper danced the role of Princess Aurora in a beautiful white and gold tutu.

At left is the tutu for Princess Aurora. Below is Alison Roper in the role of Aurora, with Lucas Threefoot.



On the left is Carlotta Brianza as Aurora in 1890. On the right is Anna Pavlova as Aurora circa 1916.



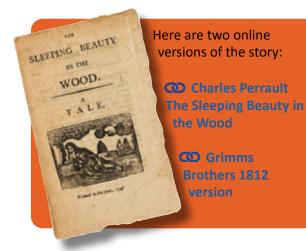
Photo by Blaine Truitt Covert

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A STORY OFTEN TOLD

The Sleeping Beauty ballet is based on a tale that has been told in varied ways for over 300 years. In 1697 Charles Perrault published a little book in French entitled, *Histoires ou contes du temps passé, avec des moralités: Contes de ma mère l'Oye* (Stories or Tales from Times Past, with Morals; Tales of Mother Goose) It included the story, *La Belle au Bois Dormant* (The Sleeping Beauty in the Wood.) In 1812, Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm, both scholars in linguistics, folklore, and medieval studies published a book of folktales called *Kinderund Hausmärchen* (Children and Household Tales) which included *The Little Brier Rose*. Both stories can be found today.



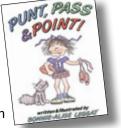
Read aloud **(C)** the lyrical poem *"The Sleeping Beauty,"* written by Lord Alfred Tennyson in 1830.



Sleeping Beauty, painted by Henry Meynell Rheam

Current literature for children and young adults still makes reference to this ancient story. The reference can be straight forward, such as the book written and illustrated by third grader

Bonnie Alise Leggat, *Punt, Pass, Point!*, about a little girl who loves to play football but ends up dancing in a production of *The Sleeping Beauty*. Or the reference can be complex and thought



provoking such as in the 1992 award winning, young adult book by Jane Yolen entitled *Briar Rose*, which explores the Holocaust through subtle connections to the Grimm Brothers' Germanic fairytale of the same name. *The Sleeping Beauty* remains thing to discover, to think and wonder about—whether it be about the meaning of the story or the beauty of its portrayal.

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AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

• **Reflection Activity – A B A Compositional form** Tell students that they are going to remember the ballet with their bodies—no words—and eventually share with the class. Divide the students into groups of 5 or 6 individuals.

Part A: Ask students to think about what they saw on their field trip to the ballet. Ask them to think about one pose that they remembered seeing. Each student will create their own pose. On the clap of teacher's hand – everyone makes their pose and freezes it. Ask them to arrange themselves into a pleasing composition or choose one person in each group to be the "choreographer." That person will now arrange everyone's pose into an interesting composition.

Part B: Have students think up a traveling movement from the ballet, this time it can actually move around the group (not a pose). On the clap, everyone does it. On the next clap they all stop. (Due to laughter, sometimes it is easier to use a drum or a bell or woodblocks to be the signal.)

Part A: Repeat of the original "A" so, at the end, each person must return to the opening shape.

Quickly have each group take turns performing their ABA *Sleeping Beauty* "dance" for the class. Be sure to set it up by reminding students about what it means to be a respectful audience. Students might discuss what they saw in each other's dances. • Think about the story. Imagine if it were to occur in another time or place, with different characters. For example, how would the story go if it occurred during the Civil War, or in weightless outer space, or if the players were all banana slugs in the forest! (Don't hesitate to send OBT a copy of the story!)

• Write a poem about *The Sleeping Beauty*.

• Most people today buy their clothing readymade at a store instead of first knitting or

weaving the cloth from yarn that they have spun by hand. The ancient craft of spinning yarn from wool fleece using a drop spindle took artisans, usually women, hours and hours to accomplish. Learn how by viewing a tutorial by weaver Christine MacLeod, @ "How To Spin Yarn Using A Drop Spindle"

If you fancy making a DIY spindle, check out
this project using a dowel, eye hook, rubber grommet, and 2 old CDs!



"In Other News" of 1890...

The Sleeping Beauty was first performed in St. Petersburg in January of 1890. Around the time period that the fairytale ballet was being created





in Russia, Vincent Van Gogh had just painted Starry Night (left) and the Eiffel Tower (below left) was designed and built in France. In the United States, rubber gloves were used for the first time in a surgery in Maryland, Idaho and Wyoming were admitted as the 43rd and 44th states, The **US Congress created** Yosemite National Park (below), Wounded Knee Massacre occurred in South Dakota, and the first gasolinepowered car made its debut in Springfield, Massachusetts.



Kasandra Gruener, MA Ed. Director of Education Outreach

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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.

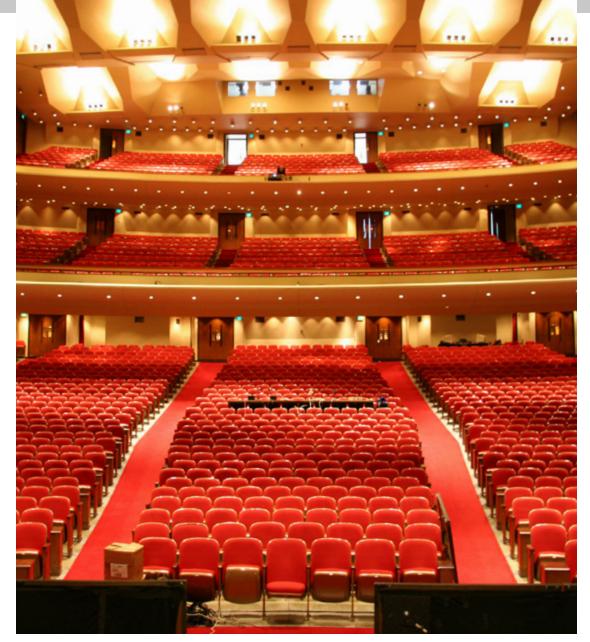
CELL PHONES, CAMERAS, IPODS, MP3 PLAYERS, ETC.

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.

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WHAT TO KNOW ON THE DAY OF THE SHOW

The Keller Auditorium is located at: 222 SW Clay St, Portland, OR 97201

The doors to the Keller Auditorium will open 45 minutes before the show begins. Please plan to arrive early so that you can settle in — we have a full house! 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 printed tickets for this show—the usher has your registration information. You will be directed, in an email a few days before the show, to enter through door A, B, or C. Please tell the door usher your group's school name so that you can hear which aisle you will be seated in. Home school groups should also know the organizer's name as well. An 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.

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