



Education and Outreach Division's School Matinee Program

Sleeping Beauty

(Aurora's Wedding)

STUDY GUIDE

For Teachers and Students

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About NEVADA BALLET THEATRE

The idea to create a professional ballet and dance company based in Las Vegas was the vision of former dancers and co-founders Vassili Sulich and Nancy Houssels. Though Las Vegas was a city with a widespread community of artists, Sulich and Houssels took note that its performers longed to return to their classical “roots,” where they could dance an eclectic and changing repertoire. In September of 1972, Sulich and his dancers performed their first repertory show in the Judy Bayley Theatre at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. The response from the community was overwhelming and so with the vision, support and financial backing of Houssels, a volunteer board was established with each of its members giving one thousand dollars to start the state’s first professional ballet company. Nevada Dance Theatre was born.

In 1996, the organization received a major grant from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation, and with a donation of land from The Howard Hughes Corporation, plans for a world-class home for the troupe began. Now, indisputably one of the finest dance facilities in the nation, the company’s Summerlin based studio is home to a full-time professional company of dancers and almost 500 students. In 1997, Nevada Dance Theatre was renamed Nevada Ballet Theatre to more accurately reflect the company’s classical repertoire at the time.

Quality Dance Training and Education and Outreach

In 1979, the company established an affiliated Academy in order to provide a premiere dance education to young people in Southern Nevada and groom the next generation of dance enthusiasts. The Academy is now regarded as one of the top ballet and dance training centers in the city and offers a variety of classes for children through adult. In 1980, the company expanded its offerings even further by seeking to expose the art form of dance to students in underserved populations within Clark County. Today, *Future Dance* and its initiatives provide scholarship opportunities to over 400 students a year and the program successfully reaches over 20,000 students annually. Now in its 24th Season, it is one of the longest running Education and Outreach programs in the state.

Dynamic Repertoire, Unique Collaborations and Dance Education

Over the last several decades, Nevada Ballet Theatre has grown into one of the city’s most beloved community treasures and one of the state’s largest and oldest performing arts organizations. Currently under the direction of Executive Director & CEO Beth Barbre and Artistic Director James Canfield, a versatile company of professional dancers along with a solid focus on dance education continues to take shape.

With a firm adherence to the classical vocabulary, the company has expanded its repertoire over the last several years to include works by George Balanchine and Twyla Tharp and increased its national visibility by presenting cutting-edge contemporary works by choreographers such as Val Caniparoli, Thaddeus Davis, Matthew Neenan and its own James Canfield. From performing at The Kennedy Center as part of its “Arts Across America” Festival, to its annual *A Choreographers’ Showcase*, a one-of-a-kind collaboration with the world-renowned *Cirque du Soleil*, NBT remains focused on educating audiences through premiere collaborations and exposure to internationally-recognized guest artists, broadening the local community’s ties to the national arts scene.

Resident Ballet Company of The Smith Center for the Performing Arts

NBT’s long-awaited residency at The Smith Center for the Performing Arts became a reality on May 5, 2012 - a celebration of its official debut on the Reynolds Hall stage as well as the company’s 40th anniversary.

In December 2012, Nevada Ballet Theatre presented a brand-new and original production of *The Nutcracker*, complete with new sets, costumes and full orchestra. The first production of its kind built for the Reynolds Hall stage, this highly-anticipated production marked Artistic Director James Canfield’s first full-length ballet for the company as well as for Las Vegas audiences.

Celebrating the past with an eye on the future, the company continues to take bold steps forward as it celebrates its 45th season of bringing outstanding classical and contemporary works to the Las Vegas community.

About THEATER ETIQUETTE

- The matinee performance begins promptly at 11 a.m. and lasts approximately 1 hour
- Let your students know in advance what type of conduct is expected of them. This is a LIVE performance. Unlike television and movies, the performers are physically on stage and performing for your enjoyment, any noise may distract them. The performance will be exciting, but let your students know that they will be required to sit quietly in their seats for a reasonably long time
- School clothes are appropriate attire; however, some students may choose to “dress up”
- Please plan to arrive at the theater at least 30 minutes before the performance, as latecomers may not be seated once the performance has begun
- No food, drink, chewing gum, skateboards, cameras, cell phones or recording equipment are allowed inside the theater. If you plan to bring any of these items, please have your students leave them on the bus until after the performance has ended. There will be no provisions for storing these items at the theater
- It is important to have your students visit the restrooms before the performance begins. It is inappropriate to visit the restrooms during a live performance. At all times, an adult must accompany students to the restroom. Ushers will direct you to the restrooms
- We recommend that you provide your students with some guidelines of things to look and listen for during the performance
- **Students should be encouraged to:**
 - Watch the dancers
 - Listen to the music
 - Look at the costumes and lighting designs
 - Laugh when they see the dancers do something funny
 - Clap to show the dancers that they are enjoying the performance when the dancing has finished. It is also customary to applaud again when the dancers take a bow
- **Students should NOT:**
 - Talk or make noise because they might miss something important
 - Chew gum because it is disruptive to others and makes a mess at the theater
 - Leave their seats before the lights go on because this is very disruptive to their neighbors
 - Bring iPods or video games to the theater because this is disruptive to the dancers and other members of the audience
 - Put their feet on the back of the chairs
 - Text or talk on cell phones

About **SLEEPING BEAUTY**

Music: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky
Choreography: After Marius Petipa



The original cast in 1890

Theatre in St. Petersburg Russia in 1890, and became one of the most famous ballets.

The great ballet choreographer and teacher, Marius Petipa, first staged this ballet in 1890. Peter Tchaikovsky, a well-respected composer of the time, was invited to create the musical score. This legendary collaboration produced *Swan Lake*. Petipa gave very detailed instructions of the kind of music he wanted to convey certain actions and moods in the story. In 1888, Tchaikovsky quickly began composing the score. *Sleeping Beauty* premiered at the Maryinsky



Act III in 1890

SYNOPSIS (Aurora's Wedding)

The royal wedding is underway. Fairytale characters are in attendance, including Puss and Boots and the White Cat, Princess Florine and the Bluebird, and Little Red Riding Hood and the Wolf. Aurora and her prince perform a grand Pas de Deux, and the entire ensemble dances. The prince and princess are married, with the Lilac Fairy blessing the union.



Photo from Ballet West

About THE ARTISTS

Choreographer

Victor Marius Alphonse Petipa (1818 – 1910)

Petipa was a French and Russian ballet dancer, teacher, and choreographer. He is considered one of the most influential ballet masters and ballet choreographers who ever lived. Petipa was born in France on March 11th 1818. His mother was an actress and drama teacher and his father was a ballet master and teacher. Petipa is most noted for his long career as the Ballet Master of the St. Petersburg Imperial Theatres from 1871-1903. He created over fifty different ballets including *Sleeping Beauty*, *Don Quixote*, and *Raymonda*. Most of these ballets have survived with choreography that is either inspired by the original or slightly adapted for today. He was married to a ballerina and they had six children together. Petipa lived to be ninety-two years old.



Composer

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893)

In 1892 when Tchaikovsky composed his third and last ballet, *The Nutcracker*, he was already famous. He had finished six symphonies, piano and violin concertos, *The 1812 Overture*, tone poems, *Romeo and Juliet* and *Francesca da Rimini*. Only the *Pathétique* Symphony remained to be written. Two of his operas, *Eugene Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades* had been huge public successes. And, his first two ballets, *Swan Lake* and *Sleeping Beauty*, captivated audiences in Moscow and St. Petersburg.



The Director of Imperial Theaters approached Tchaikovsky in March 1888 and asked him to compose a score that would go with the story of Brother Grimm's version of *The Sleeping Beauty*. He was very happy to do so and felt very inspired by the story. He spent some time creating sketches and in March of 1889 he quickly began the orchestration. The choreographer Marius Petipa gave him a detailed list of musical requirements.

Tchaikovsky produced three acts of brilliantly orchestrated music. The ballet's focus is on the two conflicting forces of good, being the Lilac Fairy, and evil, being Carabosse. Each of these characters has music that represents them and is thread throughout the entire ballet. Act III is very different musically from the first two acts and places its focus on the different characters that come to the wedding as well as the court dances and wedding festivities.

DISCUSSION TOPICS AND ACTIVITY SHEETS

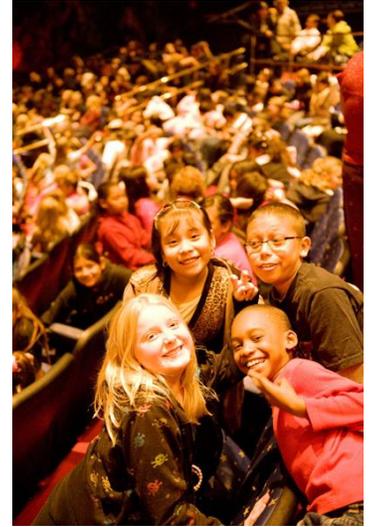
Movement:

Pre-Performance Discussions:

Ask your students how different emotions make them move. Have them get up and show you how you move when you are sad, excited, or upset! Each ballet has different movements to show an emotion. For example *Little Red Ridding Hood* has soft and timid movements, ask the students what emotion they think that would be.

Post-Performance Discussion:

Ask questions about each scene and how the movements made them feel, and have them act out those emotions. Ask how the movements were different in each scene and how they were the same, do they think the movements were effective at getting across what the choreographers wanted the audience to feel.



Costumes:

Pre-Performance Discussion:

Costumes help the audience to feel the emotions and characteristics of each ballet. Based on what the students know about the ballet now what do they think the costumes will look like?

Post-Performance Discussion:

Did the costumes help your students feel the mood of the ballet? Do your students think the costumes are the right design? If not have them draw what they think the dancers should have worn and why their design would help the audience to better understand the ballet. Have the students tell you what colors they would use and what fabrics or materials.

Music:

Pre-Performance Discussion:

Talk with your students about how music is the only thing that you hear during a ballet. Ballets are not like the movies, and plays, the dancers do not speak. They show their emotion through movement and pantomime. If you have access to the music you can even play parts of it to the students. Also play different types of music like classical or even hip-hop and ask them how it makes them feel and then have them act out that emotion with the music!

Post-Performance Discussion:

Did your students like the music, what was their favorite part? Do they think it helped to show the emotions that the choreographer wanted the audience to feel? Ask your students if they have ever heard *Sleeping Beauty's* music before, if so where and what parts.

Set:

Pre-Performance Discussion:

In Act III the set and scenery looks like the inside of a gorgeous palace set for a royal wedding. Ask your students to look for different details that help create the feeling that we are inside a royal palace.

Post-Performance Discussion:

Have your students tell you how it made them feel. Did they like the lighting and the scenery? How would they design the lighting and the sets? What colors would they use for lighting? Do they think the set helped to show the emotions of the ballet to the audience?

More Post-Performance Questions:

If your students were the choreographers, how would they create the ballet? Have them go through every aspect of creating a ballet; would they keep some things the same?

Overall did they enjoy the ballet, what were their favorite parts?



WORDSEARCH

Test your word-search skills by finding the 10 ballet words

Aurora Lilac Fairy emotions choreograph music
composed Ballet costumes Tchaikovsky dance

Q	M	J	E	M	O	T	I	O	N	S	U	B	H	W
A	M	I	R	U	M	O	T	V	D	E	G	A	S	L
C	O	M	P	O	S	E	D	P	H	M	E	L	N	I
Z	J	U	E	I	N	L	A	R	J	U	N	G	R	L
W	U	S	W	O	B	K	N	O	C	T	T	W	Y	A
S	N	I	Q	P	V	K	C	L	R	S	A	E	K	C
X	H	C	W	A	C	M	E	E	R	O	S	R	S	F
B	Y	K	S	S	X	I	K	E	E	C	D	T	V	A
C	A	I	X	D	Z	C	C	W	S	C	F	Y	O	I
D	T	L	Q	F	A	K	H	R	E	A	G	G	K	R
E	T	L	L	R	L	J	I	T	R	N	H	Y	I	Y
R	G	O	O	E	K	U	N	E	D	N	J	O	A	E
F	B	R	A	G	T	N	E	D	X	M	K	L	H	R
V	U	P	Z	H	J	H	G	A	A	A	L	L	C	K
A	C	H	O	R	E	O	G	R	A	P	H	E	T	Y

ANSWER KEY

WORDSEARCH

Q	M	J	E	M	O	T	I	O	N	S	U	B	H	W
A	M	I	R	U	M	O	T	V	D	E	G	A	S	L
C	O	M	P	O	S	E	D	P	H	M	E	L	N	I
Z	J	U	E	I	N	L	A	R	J	U	N	G	R	L
W	U	S	W	O	B	K	N	O	C	T	T	W	Y	A
S	N	I	Q	P	V	K	C	L	R	S	A	E	K	C
X	H	C	W	A	C	M	E	E	R	O	S	R	S	F
B	Y	K	S	S	X	I	K	E	E	C	D	T	V	A
C	A	I	X	D	Z	C	C	W	S	C	F	Y	O	I
D	T	L	Q	F	A	K	H	R	E	A	G	G	K	R
E	T	L	L	R	L	J	I	T	R	N	H	Y	I	Y
R	G	O	O	E	K	U	N	E	D	N	J	O	A	E
F	B	R	A	G	T	N	E	D	X	M	K	L	H	R
V	U	P	Z	H	J	H	G	A	A	A	L	L	C	K
A	C	H	O	R	E	O	G	R	A	P	H	E	T	Y

Additional Resources

Resource Credits

- Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_Ilyich_Tchaikovsky)

Further Study

- You Tube: “Peter Tchaikovsky’s Sleeping Beauty”
- *Tchaikovsky: Sleeping Beauty*, by Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, Andre Previn and London Symphony Orchestra (Jan 26, 2010)