



Education and Outreach Division's School Matinee Program

Swan Lake

STUDY GUIDE

For Teachers and Students

CONTENTS:

Page 2.....	About Nevada Ballet Theatre
Page 3.....	About Theater Etiquette
Page 4.....	About <i>Sleeping Beauty</i>
Page 5.....	About the Artists
Page 6.....	Discussion Topics and Activity Sheets
Page 10.....	Additional Resources

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 phone

About SWAN LAKE

Music: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Choreography: After Marius Petipa & Lev Ivanov, NBT's version is staged by Cynthia Gregory

The original production premiered at The Bolshoi Ballet in Moscow in 1877, to very critical reviews. Peter Tchaikovsky, a well-respected composer of the time, was invited to



create the musical score. This original version was choreographed by Julius Reisinger. Later in 1895, the great ballet choreographers and teachers, Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov, choreographed a revival for the Imperial Ballet at The Mariinsky Theatre. All modern day ballet companies base their productions off of the revival. This legendary collaboration

between Petipa and Tchaikovsky also produced *Sleeping Beauty* and *The Nutcracker*.



SYNOPSIS (The Story)



It is the Prince's 21st birthday and his mother, the queen, tells him he must choose a bride. Upset by this news, he sets off into the forest with some friends to hunt. During the hunt he becomes separated from his friends and lands upon a lake. He sees a swan and takes out his bow and arrow to shoot, but suddenly the swan turns into a beautiful girl. She begs the Prince not to shoot, and explains that she is Princess Odette and she and her friends were turned into swans by the evil magician Von Rothbart, and only true love will save her. The Prince promises to love her and marry her. Odette and her friends

dance until Von Rothbart draws them back into the lake as swans under his spell. The Queen arranges a ball so that the Prince can find his bride. He dances with many princesses but turns them all down. Then Von Rothbart shows up to the ball in a disguise with his daughter Odile. The Prince thinks Odile is Odette, and as they dance together he swears to her that he will love her forever. A vision of Odette appears and the Prince realizes that he has been tricked into breaking his promise to love Odette. Odette and her friends are sadly dancing by the lake knowing the spell cannot be broken, when the Prince arrives. He begs Odette for forgiveness, and she finally does forgive him. But Von Rothbart's spell cannot be broken, and he insists that the Prince marries Odile. The Prince is so upset by this that he chooses to die alongside Odette than marry Odile. The Prince and Odette throw themselves in the lake, and at that moment the spell is lifted by the power of their love for one another.

About THE ARTISTS

Choreographers

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.



Cynthia Gregory



Cynthia Gregory, whom Rudolf Nureyev called “America’s Prima Ballerina Assoluta,” is celebrated as one of the world’s greatest ballerinas with a performance career that spanned more than a quarter of a century.

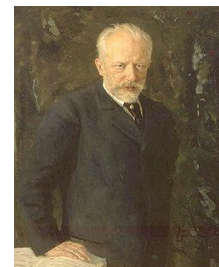
She joined American Ballet Theatre (ABT) in 1965 and in 1967, when ABT was on tour in San Francisco, Miss Gregory, not quite 21 years old, made an auspicious debut as Odette/Odile in the full-length *Swan Lake*. Her New York debut in that role a few months later marked her emergence as a major ballerina and since that time, she has been forever associated with this quintessential classic. Throughout her 26 years with ABT, Ms. Gregory danced in more than 80 works as well as many notable 20th century ballets by George Balanchine, Jerome Robbins, Antony Tudor,

Agnes DeMille and Glen Tetley. After retiring from ABT in 1991, she became the Chairman of the Board of Career Transition for Dancers, (now under the auspices of The Actors Fund), providing valuable services free of charge to dancers considering new careers. Ms. Gregory is the recipient of many awards, including the 1975 Dance Magazine Award, the 1978 Harkness Ballet Foundation Award and two annual awards from the Dance Educators of America. In 2014, she received the 63rd Annual Capezio Dance Award for her achievements within the American dance industry. Most recently, along with Michael Douglas, Gloria and Emilio Estefan and others, she was honored with the Medal of Honor by the Actors Fund, for her accomplishments in the performing arts. Ms. Gregory has authored two books, *Ballet Is the Best Exercise* and *Cynthia Gregory Dances Swan Lake*. She continues to stage ballets, coach and teach master classes throughout the country and internationally. This versatile artist is also devoted to the visual arts and expresses herself in pen-and-ink and watercolor drawings. When all is said and done, her favorite role is mother of her son, Lloyd Gregory Miller.

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 *Pathetique* 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 the Bolshoi Ballet, Begichev, commissioned the score of *Swan Lake* from Tchaikovsky in May 1875 for a rather modest fee of 800 rubles. There was not much of a collaborative process between him and the original choreographer, like there was for other ballets he had composed. Tchaikovsky drew on previous compositions for his *Swan Lake* score. By April 1876 the score was complete, and rehearsals began. Soon the original choreographer began taking out pieces that he deemed to be un-danceable. Tchaikovsky protested and his pieces were reinstated. The version that is most frequently performed today is an edited one and does not use all of the original score.

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 *Odile* has strong and fierce 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 *Swan Lake's* music before, if so where and what parts.

Set:

Pre-Performance Discussion:

In Act I the set and scenery looks like a lake in the forest. Ask your students to look for different details that help create the feeling the feeling of being by a lake in an enchanted forest.

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

Odette Odile 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	O
C	O	M	P	O	S	E	D	P	H	M	E	L	N	D
Z	J	U	E	I	N	L	A	R	J	U	N	G	R	I
W	U	S	W	O	B	K	N	O	C	T	T	W	Y	L
S	N	I	Q	P	V	K	C	L	R	S	A	E	K	E
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	O	K	H	R	E	A	G	G	K	R
E	T	L	L	D	L	J	I	T	R	N	H	Y	I	Y
R	G	O	E	E	K	U	N	E	D	N	J	O	A	E
F	B	T	A	G	T	N	E	D	X	M	K	L	H	R
V	T	P	Z	H	J	H	G	A	A	A	L	L	C	K
E	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	O
C	O	M	P	O	S	E	D	P	H	M	E	L	N	D
Z	J	U	E	I	N	L	A	R	J	U	N	G	R	I
W	U	S	W	O	B	K	N	O	C	T	T	W	Y	L
S	N	I	Q	P	V	K	C	L	R	S	A	E	K	E
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	O	K	H	R	E	A	G	G	K	R
E	T	L	L	D	L	J	I	T	R	N	H	Y	I	Y
R	G	O	E	E	K	U	N	E	D	N	J	O	A	E
F	B	T	A	G	T	N	E	D	X	M	K	L	H	R
V	T	P	Z	H	J	H	G	A	A	A	L	L	C	K
E	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 Swan Lake”
- *Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake*, by Pyotr Il'yich Tchaikovsky, London Philharmonic (Feb 18, 2011)