Study Guide for Teachers and Students

Kent Stowell's
Swan Lake

Made possible by the E.L. Wiegand Foundation
The February 8, 2018 student matinee of Swan Lake will feature excerpts from the ballet, open set changes, live orchestra, and introductions by PNB artistic staff. The performance will begin at 11:00 am and will last one hour with no intermission.

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Attending a Ballet Performance

**Going a ballet performance is similar to going to a movie:**
- The lights will dim before the performance begins, and the theater will remain dark during the ballet.
- Audience members are expected to sit quietly in their seats.
- Photography and video recording are strictly prohibited. In addition to being distracting to the dancers and other audience members, Swan Lake is copyrighted material.
- Cell phones and electronics should be turned off when you enter the theater.
- There is no intermission. Please use the restroom prior to the performance.

**However, unlike the movies:**
- There is no talking in ballet. The story is told through movement, music, costumes, and sets.
- Ballet is performed live. There are no second takes and dancers can react to the audience!
- Let the dancers know you appreciate their hard work! Clap when you enjoy something, laugh if something is funny, and give a standing ovation at the end if it was amazing.
- McCaw Hall is a big theater—nearly 3,000 seats!
- At the end of the performance, the dancers take a bow. This is a curtain call.
- Some people make their visit to the ballet a dress-up occasion; others dress casually. Wear something you are comfortable in.

**Most Importantly:**
- Enjoy the movement, music, sets, costumes—and HAVE FUN!
About Pacific Northwest Ballet

Founded in 1972 and currently led by Artistic Director Peter Boal, Pacific Northwest Ballet (PNB) is one of the largest and most highly-regarded ballet companies in the United States. PNB is also home to one of the United States’ top ballet training schools—Pacific Northwest Ballet School.

PNB dancers are full-time professional dancers. The Company is comprised of 49 dancers—22 men and 27 women. The Company dances over 100 performances each year at McCaw Hall in Seattle and on tour. The PNB Orchestra, consisting of 64 professional musicians, accompanies these performances. PNB dances many types of ballets, including story ballets like Swan Lake, as well as dances that are shorter, don’t have stories, or are performed barefoot.

Founded in 1974, Pacific Northwest Ballet School, under the direction of Francia Russell since 1977 and now under Mr. Boal’s direction, is nationally recognized as setting the standard for elite ballet training and offers a complete professional curriculum to nearly 1,000 students.

PNB’s Community Education Department provides dance education in the greater Seattle area and reaches 20,000 adults and children each year through student matinees, in-school residencies, professional development for teachers, and other community-based programs.
A Dancer’s Day

The dancers at Pacific Northwest Ballet are professionals. This means dancing is their full-time job. Their work is to dance, rehearse, and perform ballets. No day is ever the same, but most days follow a similar routine. For more about PNB dancers, visit: http://www.youtube.com/user/pacificnwballet

Dancers make a serious commitment at a young age. Most dancers train at least 10 years before becoming a professional; careers typically last less than 20 years.

8:30 - 9:00am: Arrive
Dancers arrive early in order to change into ballet clothes, stretch, and prepare for a full day of dancing.

9:15 - 10:45am: Class
The Company starts each day with a ballet class. Class starts with warm-up exercises at the barre, followed by longer combinations that move around the room.

11:05am - 2:00pm: Rehearsal
2:00 - 3:05pm: Break
3:05 - 6:00pm: Rehearsal
During rehearsal, dancers learn what will be performed on stage. Rehearsals are usually for smaller groups.

7:30pm: Performance
On performance days, dancers start their day later. Once they arrive at the theater, they prepare by putting on costumes and makeup, and warming up.
Swan Lake is considered by many to be the greatest classical ballet of all time. With its fantastical plot filled with sorcery, romance, and betrayal, Swan Lake offers ballerinas the ultimate challenge of a dual role—dancing Odette and Odile in a single performance. Tchaikovsky composed the score for Moscow’s Bolshoi Ballet in 1877, but it was not until choreographers Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov’s St. Petersburg production of 1895—after Tchaikovsky’s death—that Swan Lake took the form we know today. The ballet has since inspired countless choreographers, who, in their own productions, seek to extend the ideas and meanings suggested in the work of its creators.

This production of Kent Stowell’s Swan Lake premiered in 1981 at PNB. New scenic design by Ming Cho Lee and costume design by Paul Tazewell, occurred in 2003 to open PNB’s inaugural season in Marion Oliver McCaw Hall.
The story of Swan Lake

**Sections noted in red will be performed at the student matinee on February 8, 2018. Subject to change.**

ACT I

It is Prince Siegfried’s twenty-first birthday, which he is celebrating in the palace gardens with his friends and couples from the court. When his mother, the Queen, arrives, she presents him with a crossbow for hunting, and she reminds him that the time has come for him to marry. She has planned a grand ball for the next evening, where Siegfried must choose a bride from among the visiting princesses. Although Siegfried knows he cannot argue with his mother, he is depressed by her demand. To lift his spirits, he sets off into the forest on a hunting expedition with his friends.

ACT II

Deep in the forest, beside a lake, Siegfried watches a flock of swans dropping down to the water. He is astonished that they seem to take on human form. When he speaks to their leader, she tells him she is Odette, queen of a group of maidens who have been bewitched by the sorcerer, von Rothbart. By day, Odette and her companions are doomed to live as swans; only at night are they allowed to take human form. Siegfried and Odette fall deeply in love, and he learns that von Rothbart’s spell can only be broken by a man who will be faithful to Odette forever. The pair dance a tender pas de deux (dance for two) as they pledge their undying love. As dawn appears over the lake, Odette, once more a swan, glides gracefully away, as Siegfried remembers his vow.
ACT III

At the Grand Ball, Siegfried is thinking of Odette and is uninterested in the lovely princesses that his mother presents to him. Suddenly, two uninvited guests appear—von Rothbart and his daughter, Odile, who bears a striking resemblance to Odette. Although Siegfried recognizes the evil sorcerer, he convinces himself that Odile is indeed his beloved Swan Queen, Odette. After visitors perform, Siegfried and Odile dance a dazzling pas de deux in which she puts him completely under a spell. Although visions of Odette appear to warn him, Siegfried does not understand. Hopelessly captivated by Odile, he vows to marry her. At that moment, Odette again appears as a vision. This time Siegfried sees her and knows what he has done: he has betrayed Odette and she is doomed to remain under von Rothbart’s spell forever. As Odile and von Rothbart celebrate their success, Siegfried rushes out in despair, to seek his lost love.

ACT IV

At the lakeside, Siegfried begs Odette’s forgiveness. Sadly, Odette tells him that he is forgiven but that nothing can alter the fact that his pledge to her was broken. Siegfried is devastated, and Odette, seeing his sorrow, expresses her undying love for him. They dance together for the last time, knowing that soon she must return to the swans, never to see him again. As dawn approaches, von Rothbart returns, ordering the swan maidens back to the lake. Odette, now resigned to her fate, bids a sad, lingering farewell to Siegfried. The Prince knows that she is gone forever. In utter grief, he is left alone.
About the Artists

Choreography: Kent Stowell

Kent Stowell was Artistic Director and principal choreographer of Pacific Northwest Ballet from 1977 until his retirement in June 2005. Mr. Stowell began his dance training with Willem Christensen at the University of Utah, later joining San Francisco Ballet. He joined New York City Ballet in 1962 and was promoted to soloist in 1963. In 1970, he joined the Munich Opera Ballet as a leading dancer and choreographer. In 1973, Mr. Stowell was appointed ballet master and choreographer of Frankfurt Ballet, and he was named, with Francia Russell, Co-Artistic Director of the company in 1975. In 1977, Mr. Stowell and Ms. Russell were appointed Artistic Directors of Pacific Northwest Ballet. His many contributions to the repertory include Swan Lake, Cinderella, Stowell & Sendak Nutcracker, Carmina Burana, Firebird, The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, Hail to the Conquering Hero, Carmen, and Silver Lining. In 2001, the University of Utah honored Mr. Stowell with its Lifetime Achievement Award. Mr. Stowell’s other awards and honors include the Washington State Governor’s Arts Award, the Dance Magazine Award and an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Seattle University. In 2004, Stowell received the ArtsFund Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award, the Seattle Mayor’s Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement and the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award and was recognized by the King County Council for his achievements in the arts. On June 12, 2010, Mr. Stowell was awarded an honorary Doctor of Arts from the University of Washington.

Staging: Francia Russell

Francia Russell was Artistic Director of Pacific Northwest Ballet and Director of Pacific Northwest Ballet School from 1977 until her retirement in June 2005. She is responsible for the addition to the Company’s repertory of many works of George Balanchine. Ms. Russell’s most influential teachers were Felia Doubrovska, Antonina Tumkovsky, Vera Volkova, Robert Joffrey, and George Balanchine. She joined New York City Ballet in 1956 and was promoted to soloist in 1959. She retired from the company in 1961, danced for a year with Jerome Robbins’ Ballets USA, and taught on the faculty of the School of American Ballet in 1962-1963. In 1964, Balanchine appointed her ballet mistress of NYCB. Ms. Russell was one of the first ballet masters chosen by Balanchine to stage his works. She has staged more than one hundred productions of Balanchine ballets throughout North America and Europe. In 1987, she staged the first Balanchine ballet in the People’s Republic of China for the Shanghai Ballet, and in 1988-1989, she staged the historic first authorized performance of Balanchine’s work in his homeland for the Kirov Ballet in St. Petersburg. From 1975 to 1977, Ms. Russell and Kent Stowell were Co-Artistic Directors of Frankfurt Ballet. Ms. Russell’s numerous awards include the Washington State Governor’s Arts Award, the Dance Magazine Award, an Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Seattle University, and the Brava Award from Women’s University Club of Seattle. In 2004, Ms. Russell received the Arts Fund Lifetime Achievement in the Arts Award, the Seattle Mayor’s Arts Award for Lifetime Achievement, and the Ernst and Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award and was recognized by the King County Council for her achievements in the arts. On June 12, 2010, Ms. Russell was awarded an honorary Doctor of Arts from the University of Washington.
Composer: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840-1893) studied at the Conservatory in St. Petersburg, Russia. Tchaikovsky is one of the most popular and influential of all romantic composers. His work is expressive, melodic, and grand in scale, with rich orchestrations. His output was prodigious and included chamber works, symphonies, concerti for various instruments, operas, and works for piano. His creations for ballet include Swan Lake, The Nutcracker, and The Sleeping Beauty.

Costume Design: Paul Tazewell

Paul Tazewell has been designing costumes for theater, film and television, dance, and opera for over 25 years. In 2016, he received the 2016 Tony Award for best costume design for Hamilton, and the Emmy Award for outstanding costume design for The Wiz Live! His extensive resume includes work on a number of Broadway and off-Broadway shows, including Caroline, or Change, A Raisin in the Sun, Guys and Dolls, Elaine Stritch at Liberty, Def Poetry Jam, On the Town, Dr. Zhivago, and Side Show. Mr. Tazewell has received Tony Award nominations for Bring in ‘Da Noise, Bring in ‘Da Funk, The Color Purple, In the Heights, Memphis, and A Street Car Named Desire. His awards include the 1999 Jefferson Award in Chicago, The Princess Grace Fellowship Award, and four Helen Hayes Awards, among others. In 2002, Pacific Northwest Ballet commissioned Paul Tazewell to design costumes for the world premiere of Donald Byrd’s Seven Deadly Sins. Mr. Tazewell is a graduate of the North Carolina School of the Arts and NYU Tisch School of the Arts. He was a resident artist and associate Professor of Costume Design at Carnegie Mellon University (2003-2006).

Scenic Design: Ming Cho Lee

Ming Cho Lee was born in Shanghai, China, in 1930 and moved to the United States in 1949. A renowned theatrical scenic designer, Mr. Lee is also professor of design and former co-chair of the Design department at Yale University’s School of Drama. He has designed nationally and internationally for 50 years, for opera, dance, Broadway, and regional theater, and is the recipient of the National Medal of Arts, the highest national award given in the arts. Other awards include the Mayor’s Award for Arts and Culture; Tony Award for Lifetime Achievement, Outer Critic’s Circle and Drama Desk Awards; the TCG Theatre Practitioner Award; many others from the theater and Chinese communities; and five honorary degrees. He established a rich collaborative relationship with Founding Artistic Director Kent Stowell and PNB’s production department, designing sets for The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet (1987), Firebird (1989), Carmina Burana (1993), Silver Lining (1998) and Swan Lake (2003). Designs for American dance companies include Martha Graham, American Ballet Theatre, Joffrey Ballet, Eliot Feld Ballet, and José Limón. Internationally, Mr. Lee has designed productions for Covent Garden (London), Royal Danish Ballet, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre (Taipei), the Hong Kong Cultural Center, and Bühnen Graz (Austria), among others.
Discussion Topics

Movement:

**Pre-performance Discussion:**
Describe ballet as a way to communicate stories, ideas, and feelings without using words. Ask them how they can tell if someone is angry, happy, sad, or frightened just by walking into a room. Share the story of Swan Lake.

**Pre-performance Questions:**
- What kinds of movements might match emotions such as love, anger, happiness, or sadness?
- Would these movements be fast or slow? Sharp or smooth?
- How might a dancer move to convey to the audience they are a swan?

**Post-performance Questions:**
- How did the choreography communicate various emotions?
- Were there any parts of the choreography that were confusing to you? Why?
- Were there any movements that repeated (creating a theme)?
- Can you create a short movement sequence inspired by what you saw?

Costumes:

**Pre-performance Discussion:**
Costumes are important because they help identify the characters in the story. Without words, audience members can rely on costuming to distinguish characters even before they begin dancing. Each piece helps define a character and adds to the setting. Some dancers will perform multiple parts and change costumes several times.

**Pre-performance Questions:**
- What kinds of costumes do you expect to see in Swan Lake?
- How long would it take to make so many costumes? *(about one year)*
- What kinds of materials/considerations are important for dance clothing?
- Why do you think it is important for dancers to wear tights?

**Post-performance Questions:**
- What different types of costumes did you see?
- How would you describe the style?
- How did the costumes help tell the story?
- What colors did you see in the costumes?
- Which costumes would it be easiest to dance in? The most difficult?
Music:

Pre-performance Discussion:
Remind students that music is all they will hear at the ballet. Dancers tell the story with movements, not words. Ballet relies heavily on musical cues - helping the dancers remember choreography and stay together. You may also play short musical excerpts from Swan Lake for students (see Resources, page 13).

Pre-performance Questions:
How can music tell you when something scary or exciting happens in a movie? What kind of music do you expect to hear during Swan Lake? Why is music important for a ballet performance? Does anyone in your class play a musical instrument? Which one(s)?

Post-performance Questions:
How was the music different in each scene? The same? What instruments did you hear? How did the music foreshadow or mimic plot development?

Sets and Lighting:

Pre-performance Discussion:
Swan Lake is based on a story with various settings. The sets in this production help us understand that the story takes place in a forest by a lake and a ballroom. Elements like a full moon, shown with lighting effects, and a fog machine during the scene at the lake help create different moods and settings.

Pre-performance Questions:
How many different settings are there in the story? What kinds of considerations might set designers need to make for ballet? How could lighting change the mood on stage?

Post-performance Questions:
What did the sets look like? What types of scenery did you notice? How did the set design coordinate with the costume design?

Additional Post-performance Questions:
Did all of the elements work together to create a successful performance? If you were the choreographer, how would you do it? What elements would you keep the same? What would you change?
Resources

LITERATURE:

Swan Lake
By Margot Fonteyn;
Illustrated by Trina Schart Hyman
ISBN: 978-0152006006

Swan Lake
By Rachel Isadora
ISBN: 978-0399217302

Ella Bella Ballerina and Swan Lake
By James Mayhew
ISBN: 978-0764164071

MUSIC:

Listen and Purchase Online:
Swan Lake- London Symphony Orchestra
30 second clips available free online
http://amzn.to/2ALuH2h

Support PNB! Link to Amazon.com through PNB’s website and PNB will receive up to .5% of the purchase price. More information at https://www.PNB.org/support/amazon/

BEHIND THE SCENES:
Visit the PNB website for webcasts, photos, rehearsal videos, and behind-the-scenes information: https://www.PNB.org/season/17-18/swan-lake/

Additional Activities:
Visit the PNB Webpage for Teachers at https://www.PNB.org/Community/Teacher for:

- Additional movement activities and lessons
- Dance vocabulary activities
- A behind-the-scenes study guide
- Scheduling in-school workshops
- Professional development workshops
- PNB Teacher Discount for performance tickets
- Field Trips to PNB studios

For more information or questions, please contact PNB Community Education: 206.441.2432 or education@PNB.org
PNB Community Education programs are committed to serving all members of the community. We believe every child and adult has the ability and merit to dance. Programming is inclusive, regardless of race, national origin, disability status, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, or gender.

For more information about PNB’s Community Education programs:
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