

Graduation Ball

Young People's Performance

FRIDAY, MARCH 4, 2011
10:00 AM

BLANCHE M. TOUHILL
PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
WWW.TOUHILL.ORG
314-516-4949

PUBLIC PERFORMANCES

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2011
7:30 PM

SUNDAY MARCH 6, 2011
2:00 PM



Contents of this booklet may be copied for educational purposes for those students who are confirmed to attend the
Alexandra Ballet's Young People's performances on March 4, 2011
Alexandra Ballet, 68 E Four Seasons Center, Chesterfield, MO 63017, 314-469-6222, www.alexandraballet.com
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Graduation Ball

Music by Johann Strauss

Choreographed after David Lichine, restaged by CiCi Houston

This Alexandra Ballet Educational Booklet for teachers is designed to provide classroom material that can be used to enrich students' experience of the ballet.

It offers lessons to integrate ballet with curriculum in social studies, art, music, literature and writing.

Introduction

ON FEBRUARY 28, 1940, the original Ballet Russe premiered *Graduation Ball* at the Theatre Royal in Sydney, Australia. Using a series of Johann Strauss' compositions, Antol Dorati adapted and arranged them to create the ballet score. David Lichine choreographed the ballet.

Tatiana Riabouchinska danced the female leading role at the premiere. She was one of the Ballet Russe's three famous baby ballerinas who had been promoted and nurtured by George Balanchine and Serge Diaghelev. Riabouchinska's husband and choreographer Lichine danced the male lead.

Synopsis

GRADUATION BALL is the story of a grand ball being given by a boarding school for girls in 1840's Vienna, Austria for a neighboring military academy. As the mutual shyness of both groups is overcome, the young ladies and cadets enjoy an evening of waltzing, the entertainment of a drummer boy, and a rousing dance competition. Under the watchful eye of their Headmistress and General, the annual ball becomes a huge success.

Main Characters

The Headmistress

The General

The Pigtailed Girl

The Junior Girl (the Good Girl)

The Junior Cadet (the Shy Cadet)

The Drummer Boy

The Rival Ballerinas (Fouetté Competition)

(with)

Juniors

Graduating Seniors

Cadets

Contemporary Connections

THE YOUNG LADIES of *Graduation Ball* are students of a finishing school in Vienna. As its name suggests, a finishing school provides the final formal education that succeeds a girl's elementary education. These schools are private boarding schools that may offer a one-year course or an intensive course of study. The purpose of this leg of education is to prepare a young lady for her place in society by offering cultural and social experiences. Also known as charm schools, finishing schools offer courses that range from general etiquette, to cooking, to dancing,

to languages, but the emphasis is on etiquette.

With the advent of feminism and equality, the need for these schools has significantly diminished. Academic and professional paths that were not previously available for women now are, and a young lady usually opts for a university education instead of that of a finishing school at the end of her formal education. One notable recent exception is the late Diana, Princess of Wales who was a product of Institut Alpin Videmanette (now closed) in Switzerland. Prince Charles' current wife Camilla, Duchess of Cornwall also spent some time at Mon Fertile in Switzerland. Once renowned for its finishing schools, Switzerland can boast of only one remaining traditional school, Institut Villa Pierrefeu in Glion-sur-Montreux.

Composer

A FRIEND OF BRAHMS and admired by his contemporaries Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss, Johann Strauss, II (1825-1899) defied his father's wishes that he become a banker. Instead, he followed in his father's footsteps and became the violinist, conductor, and composer who is credited with the waltz's rise in popularity during the 19th century in Vienna.

Johann Strauss, I began his professional life as a violinist in a quartet. As the quartet grew into a small string orchestra, he stepped into the role of its conductor. Later, Strauss formed his own string orchestra and began incorporating popular tunes of the day in the orchestra's repertoire. Its popularity was so great that it became the leading dance orchestra in Vienna. However, in spite of all of his success in Vienna's popular music world, it was his son Johann Strauss, II who became known as the Waltz King.

When Johann Strauss, I died in 1849, Johann Strauss, II inherited his father's orchestra. Although Strauss, II had already been composing, conducting, and performing for Vienna's music scene as his father's chief rival, Strauss, II's fame eventually surpassed that of his fathers. He composed over 500 waltzes, polkas, quadrilles, and other kinds of dance music, as well as several operettas and a ballet. It is the waltz, the German-Austrian turning dance in 3/4 or 3/8, time for which he is best remembered.

Of the many, many waltzes that the Waltz King composed, undoubtedly the most beloved and best known are *The Blue Danube* and *Tales of the Vienna Woods*. Conductor Antol Dorati, however, chose some of Strauss' less familiar compositions to create the ballet *Graduation Ball*. Dorati features *Acceleration Walzer*, *Trisch Trasch Polka*, and *Perpetuum Mobilé* in *Graduation Ball*. The final Galop contains several different Strauss, II polkas and galops. The light-hearted music of one of Vienna's best-loved sons is the perfect foil for the tale of Vienna's young people in *Graduation Ball*.

Ballet: Costuming

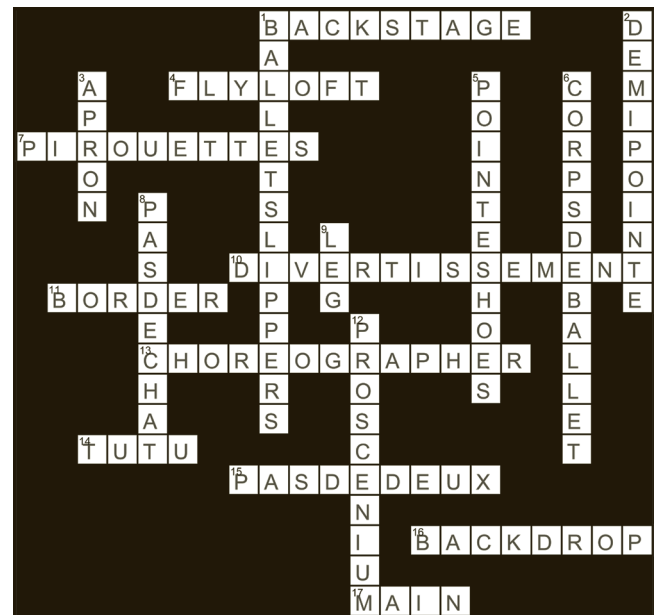
Dance has been a part of the human experience since the dawn of civilization. It has been used as a means to express emotions or to tell a story. Early religious gatherings required participants to join hands and dance in a circle. From this experience comes the word chorus that evolved to mean something quite different.

Although cultures have always used some form of dance for expression and entertainment, ballet really owes a debt to the French courts and royals -- particularly to King Louis XIV. King Louis XIV's enthusiasm for court productions in which he played an integral role gave way to patronage when he became too old to participate. As a result, the King formed The Academie Royale de Ballet that would eventually become the Paris Opera Ballet.

Conventional street dress for the men at this time consisted of often opulent tunics and shirts worn over tights. This convention was an advantage for the male dancers, for it freed them to jump and move freely about the stage. Conversely, the female dancers were trapped by the clothing conventions of the period. Heavy, full skirts, wigs, large headdresses, shoes with heels, and tightly-laced corsets reduced their function to nothing more than stage decorations.

By the 1700's, male dancers began to move and even jump more freely. Women's clothing did not allow women to move as

Crossword Answer Key



freely because it was still too restrictive. A rivalry between two dancers, however, began to push the boundaries of acceptable dance clothing. One dancer released her hair from its complicated style of the period and appeared onstage in loose-fitting clothes. Her rival then removed the heels from her own shoes and shortened her skirts.

Because she could now perform some of the more complicated steps, the role of the female dancer expanded. Pirouettes on demi-pointe made their appearance onstage. And by 1832, Marie Taglioni danced the entire ballet *La Sylphide* on pointe. This produced the grace and lightness that many ballet stories require; for many ballets are based on fairy tales and require magical spirits, usually female, who move differently above the earth than do ordinary human beings.

Pointe shoes, as these shoes came to be called, became harder and more supportive of the dancer's feet. In turn, the new shoes promoted experimentation in dance and allowed dancers to invent and perfect new feats of movement. Skirts continued to rise to provide freedom of movement as well as to allow the audience to observe the dancers' leg movements.

Today, traditional dancewear showcases the elegant lines of the dancer in motion and allows the dancer nearly complete freedom of movement. Dancers of all ages all over the world dress alike. Girls and women wear leather or canvas ballet slippers or satin pointe shoes on their feet and dress in leotards over tights. Men wear leather ballet slippers and dress in a T-shirt or other shirt and a dancer's belt (a kind of underwear for male dancers) under their tights. After literally centuries of innovation in dancewear, sometimes it is difficult to improve upon the original.

Language Arts and Other Standards Activities

Character Development

Choose one character from the ballet and write a paragraph that describes the character's traits. Create an illustration of this character. The character sketches can be read aloud and the students can discuss whether the characters seem real or unreal.

Plot Development

Identify the basic plot elements (ie., conflict, setting, rising action, climax and resolution). Discuss how the plot adds to the story.

Resources

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2012

Systems of the Body: Movement and Choreography (health and science)

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2281

Shaping Patterns and Dancing Shapes (fine arts, math)

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2319

Why Dance? (fine arts, P.E., social studies)

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2328

Boys Can Dance (fine arts, P.E.)

www.artsedge.kennedy-center.org/content/2347

Telling a Story Through Dance (language arts, fine arts)

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Telling a Story Through Dance (language arts, fine arts)

www.national.ballet.ca/education/activities/study-guides.php

Included is the Revised Ontario Arts Curriculum for Grades 1 through 8

Behind the Scenes

TIM HUBBARD, our production stage manager, will provide the students with an interactive presentation of the backstage activities of the stage crew with *What's Going on Back There?* during intermission.

Students will view and learn about the action backstage and get a sneak peek of the backdrop and learn stage terms. Hubbard will demonstrate the importance of the jobs performed by those backstage, the impact of the various types of lighting, and the stage manager's role in pulling it all together.

Tim Hubbard has had an illustrious and diverse career in dance and theater. He has a bachelor's degree in theater from the State University of New York and a master's degree in dance from Butler University. Tim was a founding member of the Indianapolis

lis Ballet Theatre (IBT, later called Ballet Internationale), where he danced many principal and featured roles. While at IBT, Tim also developed a strong production and arts administrative career track, serving as Technical Director, Production Manager, Lighting Designer, Tour Manager, and finally General Manager.

Tim has designed lighting for over a dozen ballet companies, including the Colorado Ballet and Capella Ballet in St. Petersburg, Russia, where he was fortunate to work with his mentor, George Verdak, who staged the Russian premiere of the ballet *Le Bal*. Tim's production management has taken dance companies all over the country and internationally. Working with dancers from many major dance companies in the United States, he recently designed lighting and did the production management for the Gala that celebrated the retirement of Sally Bliss in St. Louis.

Tim has been active in the arts education field throughout his career. He developed educational programs at IBT and Dance Kaleidoscope, a contemporary dance company, where he served as Director of Touring and Education for over five years. He has been a national trainer for teachers at the Grammy Foundation's Leonard Bernstein Center for Learning that fosters an arts-integrated approach to education.

Tim was an adjunct professor in the College of Education at Butler University where he offered classes that instructed pre-service elementary education teachers how to integrate the arts into their classrooms and curriculum. In addition, he is a freelance project manager and consultant in arts education and was instrumental in helping to create the Indiana Academic Standards for Dance. In 2005 Tim received a Creative Renewal Fellowship from the Arts Council of Indianapolis.

Audience Behavior

ATTENDING THE BALLET at the Blanche M. Touhill Performing Arts Center is an opportunity to teach audience etiquette.

Because this activity deals with the practice of appropriate audience behavior, we encourage you to have this discussion just prior to your trip to the theater. It is important for the students to know that we want everyone in the theater (and classroom) to enjoy the performance without distraction. The point of theater etiquette is to allow all to enjoy the performance. Remember that the dancers, actors and musicians are performing for the entire audience.

Explain to students that they will be making a very special journey. They will be going to a theater for a performance of a famous ballet. You may explain that the theater is a special place

for people to experience amazing and beautiful things. However, in order to fully appreciate the performance, a certain kind of behavior is necessary.

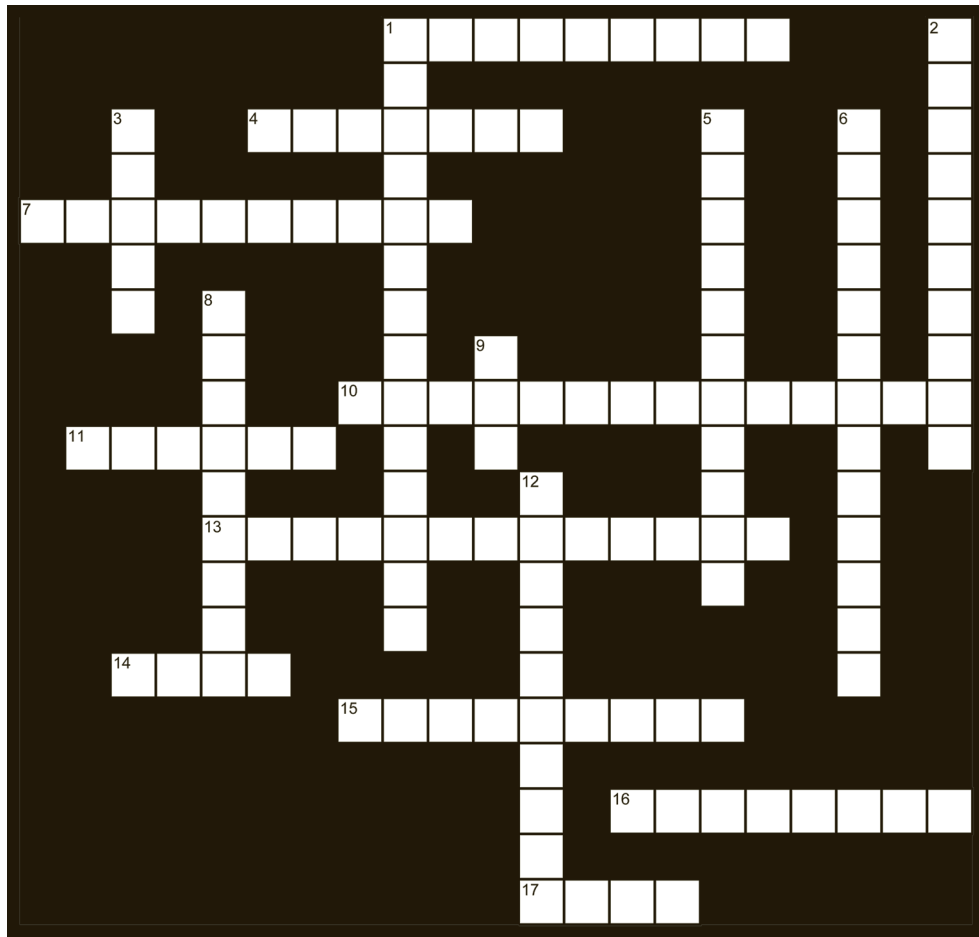
The following discussion might be helpful in preparing students for the performance.

- ☐ How many of you have been to a theater?
- ☐ How many of you have been to a ballet performance?
- ☐ What was the performance and where was it?
- ☐ How did people behave during the performance?
- ☐ Is going to the theater like going to a football game?
- ☐ Is it like going to a symphony performance? Why or why not?
- ☐ How do people express themselves at a ballet? (Do people talk loudly, eat, move around, or jump up and down during a dance concert? Do people pay close attention? Are they quiet? When do they applaud?)
- ☐ Why do we behave differently at a ballet performance than at a baseball game?
- ☐ How do you intend to behave when you go to the ballet performance?

Guidelines

- ☐ It is important to be quiet during the performance so that everyone can enjoy the performance. The time to ask questions of your teachers or parents is during the intermission or after the performance.
- ☐ Candy and other treats should be consumed in the lobby because opening wrappers or bags during the performance is noisy and distracts others.
- ☐ If you are uninterested in the performance that does not mean that those around you are not, so it is very important to maintain quiet and to stay in your seat. Let your mind wander: What would you do if you could design the costumes or if you could tell the dancers what to do? What story might you use?
- ☐ Do show your appreciation for the performance by clapping at its end.
- ☐ Clapping at the end of a solo or pas de deux is acceptable and even encouraged if the dancer or dancers perform something difficult or exceptionally well.
- ☐ Whistling and stomping your feet are not considered appropriate expressions of appreciation for productions that take place in a theater.
- ☐ No matter how comfortable the seats are, it is never acceptable to bounce in them or to kick the seats in front of you.
- ☐ Make sure that you can see the stage before the performance begins.
- ☐ Use the restroom before the performance: Getting up in the middle of a performance prevents those around you from enjoying the performance.

- Corps de ballet
- Choreographer
- Divertissement
- Pas de deux
- Apron
- Backdrop
- Backstage
- Border
- Fly loft
- Leg
- Main
- Proscenium
- Pas de chat
- Pointe shoes
- Demi pointe
- Tutu
- Ballet Slippers
- Pirouettes



Across

- 1. The part of the stage behind the main curtain
- 4. The space above the stage used for storing scenery (2 words)
- 7. A full turn of the body on the point of the toe or the ball of the foot
- 10. Suite of dances which often dominated the final acts of late 19th-century ballets
- 11. Wide and short curtains used to mask or hide the upper portion of the stage from the audience's view
- 13. Person responsible for creating and arranging the steps and patterns of a dance work
- 14. A skirt for ballerinas, usually made of layers of sheer fabric
- 15. A dance for two; a duet (3 words)
- 16. A screen, curtain, or painted cloth used as part of the scenery for a production
- 17. The curtain that separates the audience from the stage

Down

- 1. Flexible, heel-less cloth or leather slipper (2 words)
- 2. On the balls of the feet rather than on the toes (2 words)
- 3. The part of the stage in front of the main curtain
- 5. Dance slippers, usually covered in satin, reinforced with stiff, thick material in the toe to enable the ballet dancer to dance on her toes (2 words)
- 6. Dancers who regularly perform together as a group but not the soloists, principals or character artists (3 words) (3 words)
- 8. A light, springing stop that travels in a sideways direction, taking off from one foot and landing on the other, meant to mimic the movement of a cat (3 words)
- 9. Narrow and tall curtains used to mask or hide the side portions of the stage
- 12. The frame around the stage opening that separates the stage from the auditorium

NOTE: Do not enter spaces when there is more than one word in the answer.

Alexandra Ballet

UNDER FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC director Alexandra Zaharias, the company continues a St. Louis dance tradition of over 60 years. Born out of a love of dance, Alexandra Ballet is a stage on which those dancers who aspire to professional careers can grow and mature. It provides an opportunity for dancers and dance lovers alike to experience the tradition, richness and beauty of dance.

Alexandra Ballet is classically oriented and seeks to cultivate an appreciation for the art of dance as an essential ingredient in the life of the community. Its Board of Directors draws its membership and support from the community. Its volunteers are committed to creating an opportunity for both performers and the public to benefit from the art of dance. Its memberships with Dance St. Louis and Chesterfield Arts keeps it in step with its audiences and in touch with this ever-changing art.

The repertoire ranges from traditional to contemporary, and performances showcase original works and the restaging of classics by nationally and internationally-known choreographers with the collaboration of guest artists. Major public concerts, festivals, Young People's Performances and guest appearances throughout the St. Louis area highlight Alexandra Ballet's artistic calendar.

Alexandra Zaharias, Artistic Director, is founder of the Alexandra School of Ballet, established in 1949. She was National Dance Chairman for the National Society of Arts and Letters and past president of the St. Louis chapter. She has served as co-director of the Midwestern Music and Art Camp, University of Kansas and taught ballet at Fontbonne College in Clayton, Missouri. She was dance consultant for the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission, Shaw Visual and Performing Arts School, on the advisory panel of the Regional Arts Commission, Saint Louis, and served as a dance panelist for the Missouri Arts Council. She also directed four seasons of the *The Nutcracker* and choreographed Kinder and Young People's Concerts for the Saint Louis Symphony. She served as historian for the National Board of Regional Dance America and is an honorary member of the Dance St. Louis Troupe. Miss Zaharias's awards include the Hellenic American Achievement Award in 1991, the Arts & Education Council's Excellence in the Arts Award in 1999, and most recently the St. Andrew's Ageless-Remarkable St. Louisian of 2009.

Alexandra Ballet is a not-for-profit organization and receives funding from the St. Louis Regional Arts Commission, Missouri Arts Council, Arts and Education Council, and patrons in the community.

General Public Performances of *Graduation Ball*

MARCH 5 SATURDAY 7:30 PM

MARCH 6 SUNDAY 2:00 PM



Alexandra Ballet is a member of:

- Chesterfield Arts • Missouri Citizens for the Arts • Dance St. Louis
- Regional Dance America, Mid-States Honor Company

Alexandra Ballet is partially funded by:

