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The March 25, 2016 EYES ON DANCE matinee of *Le Corsaire: A Pirate's Tale* will feature students from Pacific Northwest Ballet School, live music by Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra, and narration by PNB artists. The performance will begin at 10:30am, and will last for one hour with no intermission.

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This study guide was created by Pacific Northwest Ballet's Education Department staff for use by teachers and students attending the EYES ON DANCE matinee of *Le Corsaire*. Reproduction of this guide in its entirety is allowed and encouraged, when proper credits are included. For questions, call 206.441.2432.

Attending a Ballet Performance



Going to the theater for ballet 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 still and quiet in their seats.
- Photography and video recording are strictly prohibited. In addition to being distracting to the dancers and other audience members, *Le Corsaire* is copyrighted artistic 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!
- Clap when you enjoy something, laugh if something is funny, and give a standing ovation at the end if it was amazing. Let the performers know you appreciate their hard work!
- 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 so you can enjoy the performance.



Photos (top to bottom)
Second grade students arrive at McCaw Hall (© Bill Mohn)
Third grade students at McCaw Hall (© John Austin)
Marion Oliver McCaw Hall (© Rodger Burnett)

Most Importantly:

- Enjoy the movement, music, scenery, costumes—and HAVE FUN!

About Pacific Northwest Ballet



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



PNB dancers are full-time professional ballet dancers. The Company is comprised of 48 dancers—21 men and 27 women. The Company dances more than 100 times each year at McCaw Hall in Seattle and on tour. The PNB Orchestra, consisting of 56 professional musicians, accompanies these performances. PNB performs many types of ballet, from story ballets like *Swan Lake* to contemporary works that are performed barefoot.



Founded in 1974, Pacific Northwest Ballet School, under the direction of Francaia 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 more than 23,000 adults and children each year through student matinees, in-school residencies, professional development for teachers, and other community-based programs.

Photos, top to bottom:
Leta Biasucci in George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker*™
PNB Company dancers in Nacho Duato's *Jardi Tancat*
PNB School student and faculty member Jeffrey Stanton
PNB Teaching Artist Shannon Barnes with 4th grade students (© Joseph Lambert)

A Dancer's Day

The dancers at Pacific Northwest Ballet are professionals. This means dancing is their job. Their work is to dance, rehearse, and perform ballets. No day is ever the same, but most days follow a similar routine. For a video of a Day in the Life of a PNB Dancer, visit: <https://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 usually last less than 20 years.

9:30 - 10:00am: Arrive

Dancers arrive early in order to change into ballet clothes, stretch, and prepare for a full day of dancing.



10:15 - 11:45am: 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.



12:05 - 3:00pm: Rehearsal

3:05 - 4:00pm: Break

4:05 - 7:00pm: Rehearsal

Rehearsals are when dancers practice 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 arrived at the theater, they prepare by putting on costumes and makeup, and warming up.



About *Le Corsaire*

Loosely based on Byron's epic tale, *Le Corsaire* recounts the adventures of Conrad, chief of the pirates, and Medora, the young Greek woman he loves. The ballet uses a combination of classical ballet, character dance, and pantomime—three essential elements of 19th-century ballet. We follow Medora and Conrad from the marketplace in the seaside city of Andrianople to the pirates' grotto lair to a pasha's palace on the nearby island of Cos.

This is the premiere of PNB's *Le Corsaire: A Pirate's Tale*, which has been reconstructed and staged by PNB's Doug Fullington. Mr. Fullington is using century-old notation, much like diagrams, from St. Petersburg, Russia, which represent Marius Petipa's 1899 version of the ballet. The ballet is performed by students of Pacific Northwest Ballet School. The original 1856 score by Adolphe Adam, later augmented with music by Cesare Pugni and Léo Delibes, will be performed by the Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra.





Le Corsaire

A PIRATE'S TALE

Music: Adolphe Adam (1856), with additional music by Cesare Pugni (1863) and Léo Delibes (1867)

Choreography: Marius Petipa

Reconstruction and Staging: Doug Fullington

Scenic Design: Charlene Hall with additional scenery courtesy of Pacific Northwest Ballet Scenic Shop

Costumes: Pacific Northwest Ballet Costume Shop

Lighting Design: Randall G. Chiarelli

Duration: 62 minutes

Original Production Premiere: January 23, 1856; Theatre Imperial de l'Opera, Paris, choreography by Joseph Mazilier; revival on October 21, 1876

Petipa Production Premiere: February 5, 1863; Imperial Ballet, St. Petersburg; revivals in 1868, 1880, and 1899

Pacific Northwest Ballet Premiere: March 20, 2016

By the Numbers

89 Roles

2 Casts

15 Average age of the cast

90 Costumes

4 Performances

3 Months of rehearsal



The Story of *Le Corsaire*

Set in and around the bustling Turkish seaside town of Andrianople, *Le Corsaire* tells the tale of Conrad, chief of the pirates, and his love, Medora, a young Greek woman. When Lanquedem, Medora's guardian, tries to send her away with Seyd Pasha to be a servant on the Isle of Cos, Conrad and his men devise a plan to bring her to their pirate lair in a dazzling blue grotto. Once there, Medora pleads with Conrad to give up his pirating ways and free the captives from the Andrianople marketplace. When Conrad consents, his lieutenant Birbanto stages a mutiny which Conrad is able to stop by sheer force of his captain's authority.

Not easily thwarted, Birbanto joins forces with the wily Lanquedem to offer a beautiful lotus blossom to Medora as a gift for Conrad. Without knowing the flower is drenched in sleeping potion, Medora presents the lotus to Conrad, who soon is fast asleep. Masked pirates surround Medora and carry her off to Lanquedem.

Meanwhile, on the nearby Isle of Cos, Seyd Pasha is still fuming from his encounter with the pirates in the marketplace, although the teasing of his favorite servant, Gulnare, helps restore his jolly mood. He is further delighted by the return of Medora (with the scoundrel Lanquedem), although he soon realizes her heart belongs to Conrad. After offering a night's lodging to a mysterious band of travelers, Seyd Pasha is surprised once again as the men throw off their cloaks, revealing themselves to be none other than Conrad and his men come to rescue Medora. As they board their pirate ship, new adventures await them on the high seas!



About the Artists

Choreography: Marius Petipa

Marius Ivanovich Petipa (1818-1910), born on March 11, 1818, in France, was a ballet dancer, teacher, and choreographer. Marius Petipa is cited nearly unanimously by many to be the most influential ballet master and choreographer that has ever lived (among them George Balanchine, who cited Petipa as his primary influence). He is noted for his long career as *Premier Maître de Ballet* of the St. Petersburg Imperial Theatres, a position he held from 1871 until 1903. Petipa created more than fifty ballets, some of which have survived in versions either faithful to, inspired by, or reconstructed from the original—*The Pharaoh's Daughter* (1862); *Don Quixote* (1869); *La Bayadère* (1877); *Le Talisman* (1889); *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890); *The Nutcracker* (which was most likely choreographed by Lev Ivanov, with Petipa's counsel and instruction) (1892); *The Awakening of Flora* (1894); *The Cavalry's Halt* (1896); *Raymonda* (1898); *The Seasons* (1900), and *Les millions d'Arlequin* (a.k.a. *Harlequinade*) (1900). All of the full-length works and individual pieces which have survived in active performance are considered to be cornerstones of ballet repertory.



Staging: Doug Fullington



Doug Fullington is Audience Education Manager and Assistant to Artistic Director Peter Boal at Pacific Northwest Ballet (PNB) in Seattle. He is responsible for developing PNB's audience education programs and is also on the consulting staff of Pacific Northwest Ballet School as dance historian.

Doug is a fluent reader of Stepanov choreographic notation and has contributed reconstructed dances to *The Daughter of Pharaoh* for the Bolshoi Ballet (2001); "Le jardin animé" from *Le Corsaire* for PNB School (2004); *Le Corsaire* for the Bavarian State Ballet (2007); *Giselle* with Marian Smith and Peter Boal for PNB (2011), and *Paquita* with Alexei Ratmansky and Marian Smith for the Bavarian State Ballet (2014). Doug's writings on Stepanov notation have been published in *Ballet Alert!*, *Ballet Review*, *Dance View*, and *Dancing Times*. He has also presented numerous lecture-demonstrations about Stepanov notation on the Guggenheim Museum's Works and Process series.

About the Artists (cont.)

Composer: Adolphe Adam



Adolphe Charles Adam (1803-1856) was a French composer and music critic. A prolific composer of operas and ballets, he is best known today for his ballets *Giselle* (1841) and *Le Corsaire* (1856, his last work), his operas *Le Postillon de Lonjumeau* (1836) and *Le Toréador* (1849) and his Christmas Carol, *Minuit, chrétiens!* (1844) which was later set to different English lyrics and widely sung as *O Holy Night* (1847). Adam was a noted teacher, who taught Delibes and other influential composers.

Costumes: Pacific Northwest Ballet Costume Shop



PNB's Costume Shop is a permanent, fully-staffed, in-house department located at PNB's Phelps Center. Established with the company in 1972, the shop's earlier years focused on maintenance and construction of smaller ballets. By 1989, with the premiere of *Firebird*, the shop had grown to the point where staff had the ability to produce all of the costumes needed for a major work. Since 1987 nearly all costumes worn by PNB dancers have been built in PNB's Costume Shop. For *Le Corsaire*, existing costumes from the PNB Wardrobe department were used. By carefully selecting, editing, and altering these pieces to match the new ones, a cohesive look was established.

Scenery: Charlene Hall and PNB Scene Shop



Charlene Hall, PNB Scene Design Associate, worked in collaboration with PNB Scene Shop to create the scenery for *Le Corsaire*. PNB's Scene Shop, located in a warehouse in Fremont, has been in existence since 1975. The scenery and props for many PNB productions were constructed on site at the scenery shop by dozens of professional artists. The creation of scenery is a highly collaborative process involving the artistic staff, choreographer, designers, and technicians. The most useful tool in this endeavor is a model or models constructed to facilitate discussion. Props and scenery are designed to complement choreography. Lighting, set, and costume designers must work together to achieve a unified whole. The best scenery is one born of such a collaborative effort.

Discussion Topics

Movement:

Pre-performance Discussion:

Describe ballet to students as a way to communicate stories, ideas, and feelings without using words. Ask how they can tell if someone is angry, happy, sad, or frightened just by walking into a room. Share a little about the story and history of *Le Corsaire* (pages 6-8).

Pre-performance Questions:

What kinds of movements might correspond with emotions such as love, anger, happiness, or sadness?

Would these movements be fast or slow? Sharp or smooth?

Do you expect to see steps and movements that are classical or contemporary?

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 also helps define the setting. Some dancers will perform multiple parts and/or change costumes during the performance.

Pre-performance Questions:

What kinds of costumes do you expect to see in *Le Corsaire*?

How long do you think it would take to make so many costumes?

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? What did the colors communicate?

Which costumes would it be easiest to dance in? The most difficult?

Discussion Topics (cont.)

Music:

Pre-performance Discussion:

The music is also an important part in telling the story. Ballet relies heavily on musical cues, not only for the audience but also for the dancers to remember the choreography and work together. You may choose to play excerpts from the ballet, or any music, and have the students practice finding the beat—what dancers do in order to stay together!

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 at the ballet?

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:

The scenery for *Le Corsaire* is complex, fitting with a classical, narrative ballet style. Comprised of backdrops, large set pieces, dramatic lighting, and props, the design took nearly one year to build.

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 and props 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

GENERAL BACKGROUND:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Le_Corsaire

MUSIC:

Listen and Purchase Online:

English Chamber Orchestra

30 second clips available free online

https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B003764800?ie=UTF8&keywords=le%20corsaire&qid=1456346463&ref=sr_1_1&s=dmusic&sr=1-1-mp3-albums-bar-strip-0

Support PNB! Link to Amazon.com through PNB's website and PNB will receive up to 8% 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/15-16/le-corsaire/>

Additional Activities

Visit the PNB Webpage for Teachers at <http://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's Community Education Programs at 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:
education@pnb.org | 206.441.2432
www.pnb.org/community

