



Snow White

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The March 23, 2018 student matinee of *Snow White* will feature the entire narrated ballet, performed by nearly sixty Pacific Northwest Ballet School students. The performance will begin at 10:30am and will last one hour with no intermission.

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Front Cover: PNB School Student. Digital composite by Ben Kerns.

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This study guide was created by Pacific Northwest Ballet's Community Education staff for use by teachers and students attending the student matinee of *Snow White*. Reproduction of this guide in its entirety is allowed and encouraged. For questions, contact education@PNB.org or 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 is dark during the ballet.
- Audience members are expected to sit still and quietly in their seats.
- Photography and video recording are strictly prohibited. In addition to being distracting to the dancers and other audience members, *Snow White* 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:

- The story is told through movements, along with music, costumes, and sets. Although not typical for ballets, there is some narration (talking) in *Snow White*.
- 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 movements, music, sets, costumes—and HAVE FUN!

Photos (top to bottom):
Students arrive at McCaw Hall (photo © Bill Mohn)
Elementary students at McCaw Hall (photo © John Austin)
Marion Oliver McCaw Hall (photo © Rodger Burnett)

About Pacific Northwest Ballet



Founded in 1972 and 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 around 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

2:05 - 3:00pm: 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.



About Snow White



Book cover of *Grimm's Fairy Tales*, 1812 edition

Snow White is one of the most widely recognized fairy tales worldwide. The most well-known version was written by the Brothers Grimm in 1812. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm wrote many collections of fairy tales in the 19th Century, which included *Snow White*, *Hansel and Gretel*, *The Frog Prince*, and *Rapunzel*. The stories, previously shared aloud for generations, were preserved through the Grimms' written work. The story of *Snow White* has inspired many works of art, including film, music, theater, paintings, and dance.



Photo of Marguerite Clark as Snow White in the 1912 Winthrop Ames Broadway play

Pacific Northwest Ballet's *Snow White* premiered on March 18, 2012. Although a previous version was performed in 2001, this new production features new sets, costumes, and choreography. The ballet is performed by Pacific Northwest Ballet School (PNBS) students in levels VI-VIII and the Professional Division; the students range in age from 14-20 years old. PNBS is one of the top classical ballet training centers in the United States. PNBS trains over 1,000 aspiring dancers each year, and offers open classes to area teens and adults.

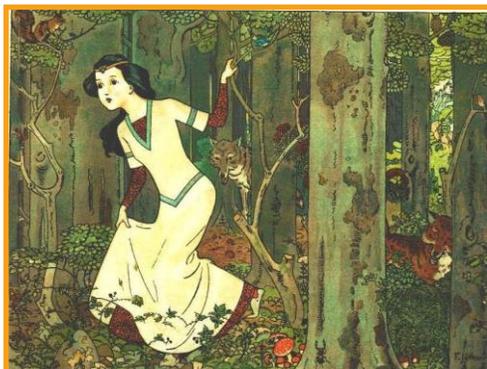


Illustration by Franz Jüttner (1905-1910)

The Student Division, ages 8 and up, is highly selective, with curriculum designed to prepare students for the rigors of a professional ballet career. In addition to Levels I-VIII, PNBS offers a pre-professional curriculum known as the Professional Division (PD). The PD program is a full-time, 1-2 year course designed for recent high school graduates as a final step before a professional ballet career. PD students train 6-8 hours per day, 5-6 days per week, and rehearse and perform with the company.

About PNB's *Snow White*

Many former PNBS students who performed in past productions of *Snow White* are now professional dancers with Pacific Northwest Ballet, including Principal dancer Lesley Rausch, the first Snow White, and Corps de Ballet dancer Elle Macy, pictured here.



By the Numbers

61	Roles
2	Casts
16	Average age of the cast
65	Costumes
4	Performances
3	Months of rehearsal

The Story of Snow White

As the curtain lifts . . .

a King and his Queen are on a stroll among the trees in an enchanted forest. The Seven Dwarfs arrive and eagerly ask the King to tell them the story of *Snow White*. The King tells how Snow White's mother dreamed of having a beautiful daughter, but when the child was born the mother died...

As the story continues, Snow White grows into a young woman, becoming more beautiful each day. However, her father has married another woman, who is beautiful, but vain. This Evil Queen has a magical mirror that she asks "Mirror, mirror, on the wall...who is the fairest of them all?" One day, the mirror replies "Queen thou art the fairest that I see here, but Snow White is fairer than us all." Instantly, she commands a Huntsman take Snow White into the forest to kill her. The huntsman does not have the heart to do so, and instead tells Snow White "Run away!"

As evening approaches, Snow White finds a little door to a little cottage and goes inside. Once inside, she finds seven little beds. Tired from her long journey, she yawns, stretches, and falls fast asleep. While sleeping, she dreams of meeting her Prince.

In the morning, the Dwarfs return home and find Snow White sleeping. When they hear her story, they offer for her to stay with them. But they warn her—be careful and do not let anyone inside.

Meanwhile, the Evil Queen is convinced she must now be the fairest in the land. Again she asks the mirror, "Mirror, mirror, on the wall...who is the fairest of them all?" The mirror replies "Queen, thou art the fairest that I see here, but over the mountains where the Seven Dwarfs live, Snow White is alive. And there is none as fair as she."

Upon hearing that Snow White is still alive, the Evil Queen creates a poisonous apple and transforms herself into an old beggar woman. She travels to the Seven Dwarfs' cottage, determined to become the fairest in the land. Innocently, Snow White takes the apple and with one bite appears to have died. Distraught, the Dwarfs return home and weep at her bedside.

Soon, a prince appears in the forest. He sees the beautiful Snow White and with his kiss the Evil Queen's spell is broken. Once again the Evil Queen is told by her magical mirror that Snow White is still alive. The Queen is so angry that she tries to put a curse on the mirror. But the spirit in the mirror escapes her grasp and the Evil Queen, filled with jealousy and rage, becomes caught in her own image for all eternity.



About the Artists

Choreography and Concept: Bruce Wells



Choreographer **Bruce Wells** has created over 50 ballets. A native of Tacoma, Washington, Mr. Wells' dance career began as a student at the School of American Ballet. He joined New York City Ballet, under the direction of George Balanchine, in 1967 and was promoted to soloist in 1969. His choreographic career began in workshops that Mr. Balanchine coached in the early 1970's. From there he became resident choreographer for the Connecticut Ballet from 1975 to 1979, choreographing his first full length ballet, *Coppelia* in 1976. From 1979 to 1989 Mr. Wells was resident choreographer for the Boston Ballet, where he created over 20 works which included *The Nutcracker*, *La Fee Mal Gardee*, *Swan Lake*, and his highly acclaimed *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. From 1984 to 1989 he was also Associate Artistic

Director for the company. He then joined Pittsburgh Ballet Theater for six seasons as resident choreographer, creating new productions of *Romeo & Juliet*, *Firebird* and *The Great Gatsby*, among others.

Mr. Wells has choreographed works for The Australian Ballet, Dance Theater of Harlem, Pacific Northwest Ballet, Atlanta Ballet, Milwaukee Ballet, Ballet Chicago, Cincinnati Ballet, The Nashville Ballet, Oregon Ballet Theater, Jacob's Pillow, and many more. Mr. Wells served on the faculty of Pacific Northwest Ballet School from 1999-2014. Mr. Wells created three children's ballets for PNBS: *Snow White*, *Hansel & Gretel*, and *Pinocchio*. A frequent guest teacher and freelance choreographer, his most recent assignment was as guest teacher for the Dutch National Ballet in Amsterdam.

Staging: Michele Curtis



Michele Curtis joined the faculty of Pacific Northwest Ballet School in 2006 after a performing career in both classical and contemporary dance companies. She also serves as the PNB Family Matinee Ballet Master. She has performed with Connecticut Ballet, New Jersey Ballet, Mark Morris Dance Group, Donald Byrd/The Group, Pilobolus Dance Theater and Seattle Dance Project. From Los Angeles, CA, she received her early training from Catherine Kingsley, Meredith Baylis, Yvonne Mounsey, Rosemary Valaire, Stanley Holden, The Joffrey Ballet, Pacific Northwest Ballet and Merce Cunningham Dance Company. Ms. Curtis holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in dance from UCLA.

Photos (top-bottom, pages 9 and 10):
Bruce Wells

Michele Curtis (photo © Andrew Brucker)
Jules Massenet (photo by Pierre Petit)

Costume for *Snow White*, mid-creation (photo by Larae Hascall).
Elle Macy in front of the Dwarfs' cottage, designed by Edie Whitsett.

Music: Jules Massenet



France's most prolific and successful opera composer, **Jules Massenet** (1842-1912) studied at the Paris Conservatoire, winning the Prix de Rome in 1863 at the age of 21. Massenet achieved initial success with his operas *Don César de Bazan* and *Marie-Madeleine*. After taking a break from music to serve in the Franco-Prussian War, he settled into teaching at the Conservatoire and writing operas. His style of opera, paired with the particular time he wrote them, brought him wide popularity. In addition to his own music, he influenced his contemporaries in France and the generation that followed. Massenet's operatic works include *Manon* and *Don Quixote*; he also composed ballet music, oratorios, orchestral works, and about two hundred songs.

Costumes: Pacific Northwest Ballet Costume Shop



PNB's Costume Shop is a permanent, fully-staffed, in-house production center 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 every costume worn by PNB dancers has been built in PNB's Costume Shop.

For *Snow White*, choreographer Bruce Wells collaborated with the shop staff on each costume. Sketches and new costumes for principal roles (Snow White, The Evil Queen, etc.) were created specifically for this production. For other roles, existing costumes from the PNB repertory were used. By carefully selecting, editing, and altering these pieces to match the new ones, a cohesive look was established.

Scenery: Edie Whitsett



Edie Whitsett (1959-2011) was a well-known Seattle scenic designer. *Snow White* was her third collaboration with Bruce Wells for PNB School productions, including *Pinocchio* and *Hansel and Gretel*. Her credits with PNB include *Ballet Imperial*, *Chrysalis Regarding* and *Zirkus Weill*. She also created *Lucia Di Lammermoor* for Seattle Opera, *Arms and the Man* for Intiman, *Souvenir* for ACT, *The Pied Piper* for Tacoma Opera and countless designs for Seattle

Children's Theatre—including *The Brentown Musicians*, *High School Musical*, *Charlotte's Web*, *The Velveteen Rabbit* and *Pinocchio*.

Discussion Topics

Movement:

Pre-performance Discussion:

Describe ballet as a way to communicate stories, ideas, and feelings without using words. While there is a narrator in *Snow White*, the dancers must move and act in ways that let the audience know what their character is experiencing without talking. Ask students how they can tell if someone is angry, happy, sad, or frightened just by looking at the person.

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?
- What steps would you do, or expect to see, when a character is working? Celebrating?

Post-performance Questions:

- How did the choreography tell the story?
- 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 to identify the characters in the story. Without words, audience members can rely on costuming to distinguish characters even before they begin dancing. Additionally, there are special considerations when making ballet costumes so dancers can move freely. There are 65 different costumes used in *Snow White*- ranging from classical tutus (sticking straight out from the hips), jackets, dresses, tights, boots, capes, crowns, and hats.

Pre-performance Questions:

- What kinds of costumes do you expect to see in *Snow White*?
- How long do you think it takes to make so many costumes? (*Over six months*)
- 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:

- How did the costumes help tell the story?
- Which costumes were your favorites? Why?
- Which costumes would it be easiest to dance in? The most difficult?

Discussion Topics (continued)

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:

- Why do you think music is important for ballet?
- How do you know when something scary or exciting is about to happen in a movie?
- What kind of music do you expect to hear during *Snow White*?
- Does anyone in your class play a musical instrument? Which ones?

Post-performance Questions:

- How was the music different in each scene? The same?
- If you were creating a ballet, would you prefer to pick music that was already composed, or music that was created specifically for your choreography?

Sets and Lighting:

Pre-performance Discussion:

The set for *Snow White* 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 create. Although it is a classical ballet, the set has a modern sensibility, as it was created for the premiere (2012).

Pre-performance Questions:

- What kinds of things would you build to create a forest? The dwarfs' cottage?
- What considerations might set designers need to make for ballet versus a play?
- How could lighting change the mood on stage?

Post-performance Questions:

- What did the sets look like? What types of scenery did you notice?
- What types of props were used by the dwarfs? By the Evil Queen?
- 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?
- How would you do it if you were the choreographer?
- What elements would you keep the same? What would you change?

Resources

LITERATURE:

- Ages 2-6: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Little Golden Book)
R.H. Disney ISBN: 978- 0736421866
Golden/Disney, 2003 Available at www.amazon.com
- Ages 5-9: *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (Sunburst Book)
Jacob & Wilhelm Grimm ISBN: 978- 037444682
Square Fish; Sunburst Edition, 1987 Available at www.amazon.com
- Age 9 & up: *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (Call Edition; includes original illustrations)
Jacob & Wilhelm Grimm ISBN: 978- 1606600108
Calla Editions, 2010 Available at www.amazon.com

MUSIC:

Massenet: Orchestral Suites New Zealand Symphony Orchestra
To purchase, or listen to 30-second clips online: <http://www.amazon.com/>

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 *Snow White* website for webcasts, photos, and behind-the-scenes information: <https://www.PNB.org/season/17-18/snow-white/>

Additional videos of Pacific Northwest Ballet rehearsals, behind-the-scenes life, and performances: <http://www.youtube.com/user/pacificnwballet>

Additional Activities:

Please visit the PNB website at <http://www.PNB.org/Community/Teacher/> for:

- Additional 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:
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.

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