

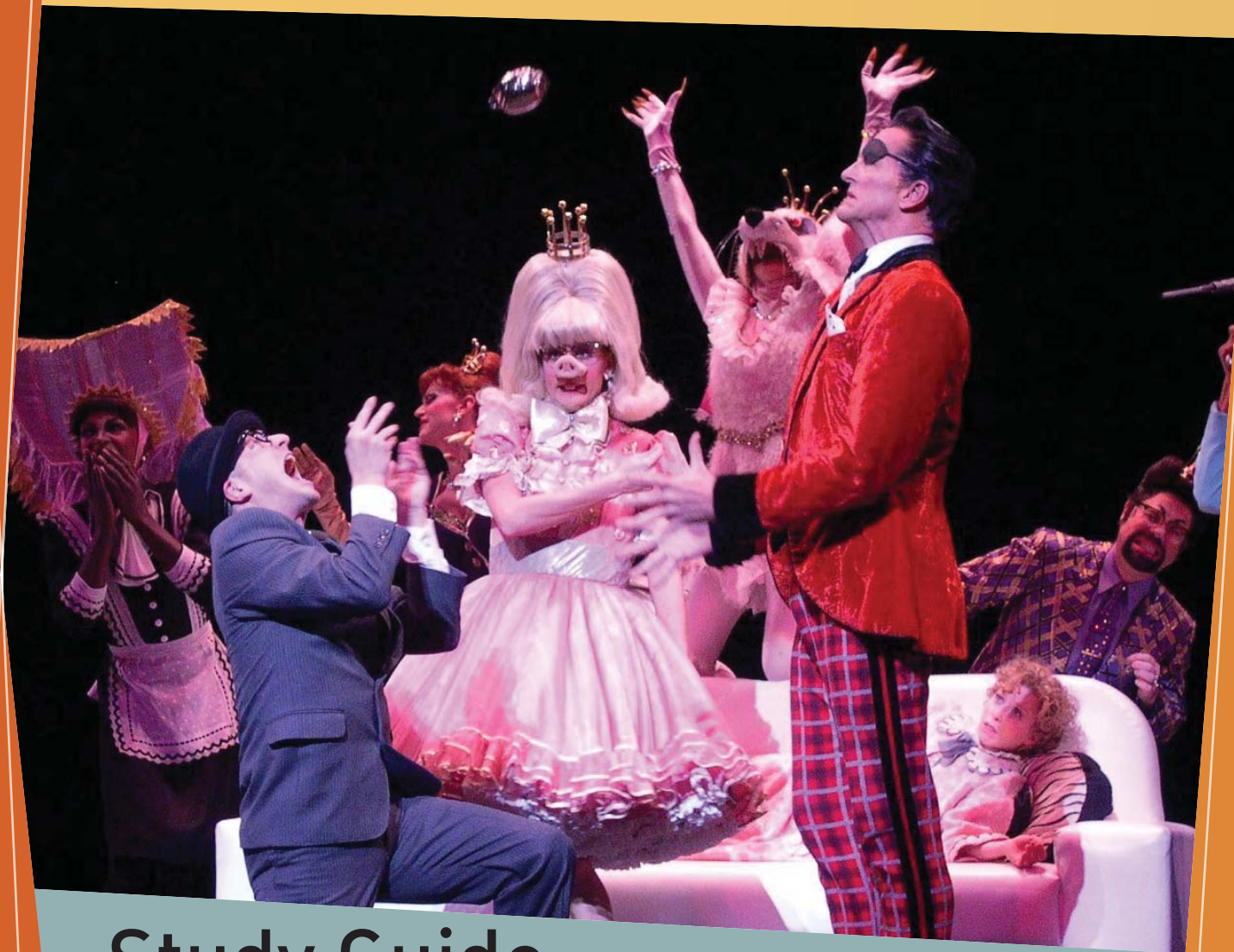


dance music theater

Performances

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

SchoolTime 07/08



Study Guide

Mark Morris Dance Group—*The Hard Nut*

Thursday, December 20, 2007 at 11:00 a.m.

Zellerbach Hall



dance music theater

Performances

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

About Cal Performances and *SchoolTime*

The mission of Cal Performances is to inspire, nurture and sustain a lifelong appreciation for the performing arts. Cal Performances, the performing arts presenter of the University of California, Berkeley, fulfills this mission by presenting, producing and commissioning outstanding artists, both renowned and emerging, to serve the University and the broader public through performances and education and community programs. In 2005/06 Cal Performances celebrated 100 years on the UC Berkeley Campus.

Our *SchoolTime* program cultivates an early appreciation for and understanding of the performing arts amongst our youngest audiences, with hour-long, daytime performances by the same world-class artists who perform as part of the main season. Teachers have come to rely on *SchoolTime* as an integral and important part of the academic year.



Cal Performances Education and Community Programs Sponsors

Cal Performances' Education and Community Programs are supported by American Express Company Foundation, California Arts Council, California Mortgage & Realty, Design Community & Environment, Evelyn & Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, Orton Development Inc., Sharon & Barclay Simpson, Pacific National Bank, The Wallace Foundation, Bernard E. & Alba Witkin Charitable Trust, and The Zellerbach Family Foundation.

Welcome

November 28, 2007

Dear Educators and Students,

Welcome to Cal Performance's *SchoolTime*! On **Thursday, December 20, 2007 at 11:00 a.m.** your class will attend the *SchoolTime* performance of ***The Hard Nut*** by the **Mark Morris Dance Group** at Zellerbach Hall on the UC Berkeley campus.

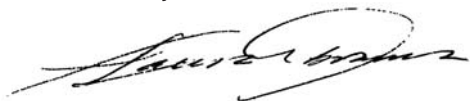
The Hard Nut, choreographed by Mark Morris, is an innovative interpretation of the ever-popular *Nutcracker* Ballet. Morris, along with cartoon artist Charles Burns, have transported the setting of the adventure-filled Christmas Eve party from 19th - century Germany to 1960s suburban America. Morris combines popular, modern and classical dance to tell the story of E.T. A. Hoffmann's "The Nutcracker and Mouse King" fairy tale in a new, refreshing and most original way.

This study guide will prepare your students for their field trip to Zellerbach Hall and give you a framework for how to integrate the performing arts into your curriculum. Your students can actively participate at the performance by:

- OBSERVING how the dancers use their bodies to communicate the story
- LISTENING to Tchaikovsky's unique and expressive score and compare the dynamics of the music with the actors on stage
- THINKING ABOUT the characteristics that distinguish modern dance and ballet
- REFLECTING on the sounds, sights, and performance skills observed at the theater

We look forward to seeing you at *SchoolTime*!

Sincerely,



Laura Abrams
Director of Education
& Community Programs



Rica Anderson
Education Programs Administrator

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1 Theater Etiquette

Be prepared and arrive early. Ideally you should arrive at the theater 30 to 45 minutes before the show. Allow for travel time and parking, and plan to be in your seats at least 15 minutes before the performance begins.

Be aware and remain quiet. The theater is a “live” space—you can hear the performers easily, but they can also hear you, and you can hear other audience members, too! Even the smallest sounds, like rustling papers and whispering, can be heard throughout the theater, so it’s best to stay quiet so that everyone can enjoy the performance without distractions. The international sign for “Quiet Please” is to silently raise your index finger to your lips.

Show appreciation by applauding. Applause is the best way to show your enthusiasm and appreciation. Performers return their appreciation for your attention by bowing to the audience at the end of the show. It is always appropriate to applaud at the end of a performance, and it is customary to continue clapping until the curtain comes down or the house lights come up.

Participate by responding to the action onstage. Sometimes during a performance, you may respond by laughing, crying or sighing. By all means, feel free to do so! Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form. For instance, an audience attending a string quartet performance will sit very quietly, while the audience at a gospel concert may be inspired to participate by clapping and shouting.

Concentrate to help the performers. These artists use concentration to focus their energy while on stage. If the audience is focused while watching the performance, they feel supported and are able to do their best work. They can feel that you are with them!

Please note: *Backpacks and lunches are not permitted in the theater. Bags will be provided for lobby storage in the event that you bring these with you. There is absolutely no food or drink permitted in the seating areas. Recording devices of any kind, including cameras, cannot be used during performances. Please remember to turn off your cell phone.*



2 About the Performance

The Hard Nut

On Thursday, December 20, *SchoolTime* presents Mark Morris Dance Group's performance of *The Hard Nut*. Instead of taking place in 19th-century Germany, like the original *Nutcracker*, *The Hard Nut* begins in a 1960's suburban home in the United States. The costumes and the sets are representative of that time period. You and your students will see Act II; a brief synopsis of Act I is included to provide a context for what you will see. If you are able to view Act I on video prior to the performance, your students will be well prepared for what they will see at *SchoolTime*.

Act I Synopsis

Act I begins at Mr. and Mrs. Stahlbaum's annual Christmas Eve party. Their three children, Fritz, Marie and Louise wait in the den. The party guests engage in various social dances. Drosselmeier, a friend of the family brings animated toys that he's made, including the Nutcracker, which Fritz immediately breaks. The children fight. The guests go home. The family goes to bed. The housekeeper cleans up.

Marie can't sleep and comes downstairs to see if the Nutcracker is resting comfortably. At midnight she is frightened by rats that have come in to fight with the toys. Everything in the room grows to giant size. G.I. Joes, led by the Nutcracker, battle rats led by their mutant Rat King. Marie kills the Rat King with her slipper. She falls unconscious. The Nutcracker is transformed into a young man. Marie is tucked in. A worried Drosselmeier makes his way through a snowstorm to Marie's bedside.



Act II Dances

Drosselmeier Tells Marie the Story of The Hard Nut
The Curse
Spanish Dance
Chinese Dance
Russian Dance
French Dance
Drosselmeier Finds the Hard Nut
The Curse is Lifted
Waltz of the Flowers
The World Celebrates the Love of Marie and Drosselmeier
Marie and Young Drosselmeier Dance Together
The Gala
The Lovers Unite



ACT II Synopsis— The Dances to be Performed at *SchoolTime*

As Act II begins, Marie is still recovering from the battle of the mice. Drosselmeier comes in to tell her one of his stories, “The Hard Nut.” This story within a story goes like this:

Once upon a time, a King and Queen had a beautiful baby daughter named Pirlipat. The Queen’s old enemy, the Rat Queen, threatened to harm little Pirlipat. While the nurse was left to guard the baby, the Rat Queen snuck into the baby’s carriage and bit her, placing a curse on her that made the princess hideously ugly. The Royal family was horrified by the sight of their formerly beautiful daughter. The only way to remove the curse, the Rat Queen said, is to find the magic nut which a young man must crack with his teeth. The King commanded Drosslemeier to search for the nut. Drosslemeier traveled all over the world looking for it. He finally gave up, without success and returned home, and there he found the Hard Nut. The big day came when several young men tried to crack the nut and they all failed. Then Drosslemeir’s handsome young nephew tried and succeeded, but in the process, he stepped on the Rat Queen and killed her. This placed the curse on him. Just as Pirlipat was becoming beautiful again, the nephew became a Nutcracker and Pirlipat wanted nothing to do with him.

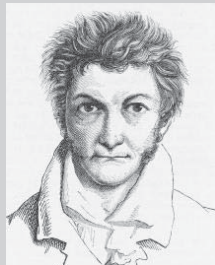
Marie then decides to take matters into her own hands and stops the story, she offers her love to Drosslemeir’s nephew. To celebrate Marie’s budding womanhood, her mother leads the plant world in the “Waltz of the Flowers.” In the end, Marie and her new boyfriend dance together and everyone joins in. This is a love story between two people, but it is also about the love that exists in the world, and the love that sits right in front of all of us.

Interesting Facts About the Original Story

“The Nutcracker and the Mouse King” by E.T.A. Hoffman

E.T.A Hoffman, the author of “The Nutcracker and the Mouse King,” never intended his tale to be a children’s story. His words portrayed a grim view of humanity and relationships. What we know today as a fairy tale of a young girl’s magical dream actually began as a story filled with dark shadows.

Published in 1816, Hoffman’s tale was revised by Alexander Dumas, who eliminated much of the bitterness and adapted the story for children. The new version was read with interest by Marius Petipa, the senior ballet master of the Russian Imperial Ballet, who then commissioned Piotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in 1891 to compose a score for a full-length production. *The Nutcracker* debuted on December 17, 1892 in Russia at Mariinsky Theatre, which is still the home to the Kirov Ballet.



E.T.A Hoffman, Author

Ernest Theodor (Wilhelm) Amadeus Hoffmann was born in 1776 in Königsberg, Germany. He changed his third name, Wilhelm, to Amadeus in 1813 in honor of the great composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Originally educated as a lawyer, he was one of the main figures of German Romanticism as a writer, composer and artist. His works are eclectic with fantasy worlds interacting with everyday life and supernatural characters who reveal people’s hidden secrets. His stories inspired many composers including Piotr Ilyitch Tchaikovsky, who composed the music for *The Nutcracker*. Hoffman died in Berlin in 1822.



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, Composer

The Russian-born composer, Tchaikovsky (1840-1893), did more than any other composer to elevate the quality of ballet music in the 19th century, making it an equal partner of the choreography. His ballet scores are symphonic and filled with rich melodies; they are evocative and speak directly to the listener’s emotions. His score allow the music to be dynamic, permitting it to do most of the storytelling. In addition to three ballet scores, Tchaikovsky produced nine operas, six symphonies, three string quartets, numerous chamber works and concertos for various instruments, overtures, short pieces for piano and over 100 songs and choral works.



Marius Petipa, Choreographer

Famous Russian choreographer Marius Petipa (1822-1910) is responsible in large part for revitalizing ballet as an art form. A ballet master and choreographer from France, Petipa arrived in Russia in 1847. During his 60-year career at the Mariinsky Theater’s Imperial Ballet, he created 46 new ballets and revised 17 more. Petipa’s genius was for combining the basic steps and movements of classical ballet into endlessly innovative patterns and inventive variations. His ballets were lavish, multi-act spectacles with romantic or storybook plots. They were filled with regal processions, folk and national dances, mime and divertissements (suites of dances that have nothing to do with the plot but are meant to entertain or show off the talents of the dancers), as well as numerous solos, duets, trios and ensembles for waves of dancers who criss-crossed the stage in intricate designs.

3 About the Artists

Mark Morris Dance Group



Mark Morris, choreographer

Morris was born on August 29, 1956 in Seattle, Washington. He formed the Mark Morris Dance Group in 1980, and has since created

over 100 works for the company. From 1988–1991, he was Director of Dance at the Théâtre Royal de la Monnaie in Brussels, the national opera house of Belgium. Among the works created during his tenure were three evening-length dances: *The Hard Nut*; *L'Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato*; and *Dido and Aeneas*. In 1990, he founded the White Oak Dance Project with Mikhail Baryshnikov. Mr. Morris is also much in demand as a ballet choreographer. He has created four works for the San Francisco Ballet since 1994 and received commissions from such companies as American Ballet Theatre, Boston Ballet, and the Paris Opera Ballet. He has worked extensively in opera, directing and choreographing productions for the New York City Opera, English National Opera, and the Royal Opera, Covent Garden. Mr. Morris was named a Fellow of the MacArthur Foundation in 1991, commonly known as a “genius” award.

Mark Morris Dance Group

The Mark Morris Dance Group was formed in 1980 and gave its first concert that year in New York City. The company began touring to cities both in the United States and in Europe, and in 1986 it made its first national television program for the PBS series *Dance in America*. After being in Belgium for three years, the company returned to the United States in 1991 as one of the world’s leading dance companies, performing across the United States and at major international festivals. It has maintained and strengthened its ties to several cities around the world, most notably here in Berkeley, where Cal Performances presents the company every year.

In fall 2001, the Dance Group opened the Mark Morris Dance Center in Brooklyn, New York, the company’s first permanent headquarters in the United States. It houses rehearsal space for the dance community and outreach programs for local children, as well as a school that offers dance classes to students of all ages.

MARK MORRIS



DANCE GROUP



Craig Biesecker



Samuel Black



Joe Bowie



Charlton Boyd



Elisa Clark



Amber Darragh



Rita Donahue



Lauren Grant



John Heginbotham



David Leventhal



Laurel Lynch



Bradon McDonald



Dallas McMurray



Maile Okamura



June Omura



Noah Vinson



Jenn Weddel



Julie Worden



Michelle Yard



Domingo Estrada



Kristin Foote



Chelsea Glassman



Hsin-Yi Hsiang



Brian Lawson



Claudia MacPherson



Kraig Patterson



Wendy Reinert



Guillermo Resto



Kanji Segawa



Utafumi Takemura



Samuel Wentz

4 About the Art Form

Ballet and Modern Dance

Guiding Questions:

- ◆ How did ballet begin? How has ballet evolved?
- ◆ What are some unique characteristics of ballet?
- ◆ Discuss the similarities and differences between modern dance and ballet.

History of Ballet

The roots of classical ballet go back to Renaissance Europe (c. 1300 -1600) where it was first presented by the Italian nobility. Those lavish performances combined music, mime, costume, poetry, singing, pageantry, elaborate stage effects, and dancing. Early ballet was participatory with the audience joining the dance at the end of the performance. The word ballet originally comes from the Italian, *ballare* (to dance) and *balletto* (little dance).

At first, the performers who appeared in these *ballets de cour* (court ballets) were not professionals, but members of the court; even kings and queens took part. Professional dancers did not appear on stage until the reign of Louis XIV, who ruled France from 1643 to 1715. Louis XIV, known as the Sun King, often performed in court ballets as a young man, but when he got older and gained weight, dancing became more difficult, and he stopped. Court protocol demanded that if the King didn't dance, none of his court could either.

Since Louis loved these regal entertainments, he created a Royal Academy of Music and Dance in Paris to train professional musicians, singers, and dancers. He also gave permission, for the first time, for ballets to be performed in public theaters. Many of today's classical ballet steps, poses, and movements derive from those developed at the Royal Academy, where dancers were trained in the elegant style beloved by the king.



King Louis XIV



Jean-Georges Noverre



Ballerina wearing classical tutu

In the 18th century ballet became a serious art form on par with the opera. Jean-Georges Noverre helped advance the technical standards of ballet with his focus on the *ballet d'action*, in which the movements of the dancers are designed to express character and assist in the narrative. At this time, women played a secondary role as dancers. They wore heavy, layered costumes, which included hoops, corsets, high heels and large wigs which prevented a graceful freedom of movement.

However, during the 19th century, ballerinas began experimenting with new techniques, most notably dancing on the toe point of the foot, pointe work, which rocketed the ballerina into prominence as the ideal stage figure. Around this time the Romantic Movement came into artistic vogue as a reaction to the rising salience of science and industrialization. Choreographers composed romantic ballets around otherworldly, often supernatural stories. These “unreal” ballets portrayed women as fragile, delicate creatures who seemed so ethereal that they gave the illusion of defying gravity, and could be lifted effortlessly.

While France had been ballet’s leading capital, in the 19th century new innovators began to come from other countries, most notably Russia. Many memorable ballets based on western folklore, or evoking exotic and faraway places, were developed there in the mid-to-late-1800’s. For instance, choreographer Marius Petipa collaborated with the composer Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky on *The Nutcracker* (1892), *The Sleeping Beauty* (1890), and his definitive *Swan Lake* (1895).

During this time, as the choreography demanded more detailed and acrobatic legwork, dancers began to perform in

costumes such as the classical tutu that revealed their legs. The tutu was a short skirt supported by layers of crinoline. Dancers also wore a leotard and tights as undergarments so glimpses of their bare flesh wouldn’t scandalize audiences of the time.

The Form of Ballet

Characterized by graceful yet precisely defined movement, ballet choreography emphasizes symmetry and repeating patterns. Striving to give the illusion of weightlessness, dancers hold their bodies in an upright position and extend their arms and legs away from the body. They also turn their legs out from the hips, and perform many turns and movements high on the balls of their feet or even the tips of their toes— known as *en pointe*.

Ballet uses five basic positions of the feet, and the terminology one hears in a ballet class is in French. As ballet puts great emphasis on the method and execution of movement, ballet students are required to learn the names, meanings, and precise technique of each movement. While ballet dancers train their bodies to be strong and flexible, strength is particularly important in the legs, feet and the abdominals. A strong core is necessary for many movements in ballet, especially turns, and strong feet are essential for the many hours ballerinas spend on *pointe*.



Examples of Ballet Steps & Positions

Jeté [zhuh-TAY]

Throwing step. A jump from one foot to the other in which the working leg is brushed into the air and appears to have been thrown. There is a wide variety of *jetés* and they may be performed in all directions.

Chaînés [sheh-NAY]

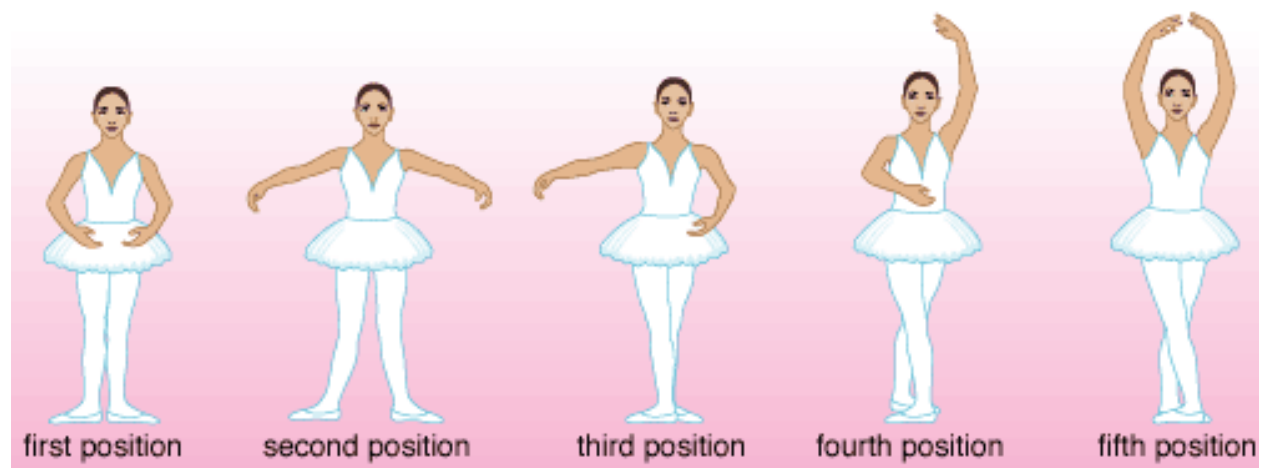
Chains, links. This is an abbreviation of the term *tours chaînés déboulés*, which means a series of rapid turns on the points or demi-pointes done in a straight line or in a circle.

Plié [plee-AY]

Bent, bending. A bending of the knee or knees. This is an exercise to help make the joints and muscles soft and pliable and the tendons flexible and elastic, and to develop a sense of balance. There are two principal *plies*: *grand plié* or full bending of the knees (the knees should be bent until the thighs are horizontal) and *demi-plié*, or half-bending of the knees. *Pliés* are done at the bar and in the center of all five of the basic positions.

Mime in Ballet

Pantomime or Mime—acting without words or speech translated into movement—is one of the oldest forms of theater and is found in traditions around the world. The pantomime tradition in ballet, which goes back to Renaissance court entertainments, was also influenced by the *commedia dell'arte*, a form of traveling street theater that arose in Italy in the mid-16th century and became popular all over Europe. *Commedia* used improvised dialogue, masked *stock characters*, dancing, acrobatics, and mime to present plays based on a limited set of easily identified *scenarios*. The younger roles (e.g., Harlequin, Pierrot, Pierrette, Pulcinella and Columbine) were taken by the best dancers. Specific dramatic gestures conveying meaning, feeling and actions are an important feature of classical story ballets such as *Swan Lake*. There are dozens of “words” in the language of ballet mime.



Above: The 5 basic ballet positions in French: première (prehm-YAHR), second (se-GOHND), troisième (trwah-ZYEM), quatrième (kah-tree-EHM), cinquième (san-KYEM).

Introduction to Mime

These gestures can be used to introduce your students to basic pantomime expressions. Practice the following. Then, play a game of charades where students pick a word to pantomime for the class, while other students guess what word is being expressed.

anger - shake your fists above your head.

ask or plead - clasp your hands together in a begging gesture.

beautiful - with the thumb of your right hand make a circle around your face going from right to left.

crying or sadness - trace tears down your face.

dancing - raise your arms high above your head with your hands circling each other.

death - cross your outstretched wrists, with fists tightly clenched in front of your body.

fear - hold your hands in front of your body, with palms facing outward, while leaning the upper body backward or turning away from the danger; raise your left arm over the head, shielding the face with right palm.

kiss - touch your lips with the fingers.

love - place your crossed hands over your heart and turn your head slightly to the left.

marriage - use your right index finger to point to the ring finger of your left hand.

princess - lift your hands just above the top of your head as if enclosing a crown.

promise - place your left hand over your heart and hold your right hand straight up with two fingers pointed upwards.

protect - with your body facing the danger, throw back both arms and hold your head high.

queen - let the index finger of your right hand touch top of your forehead.

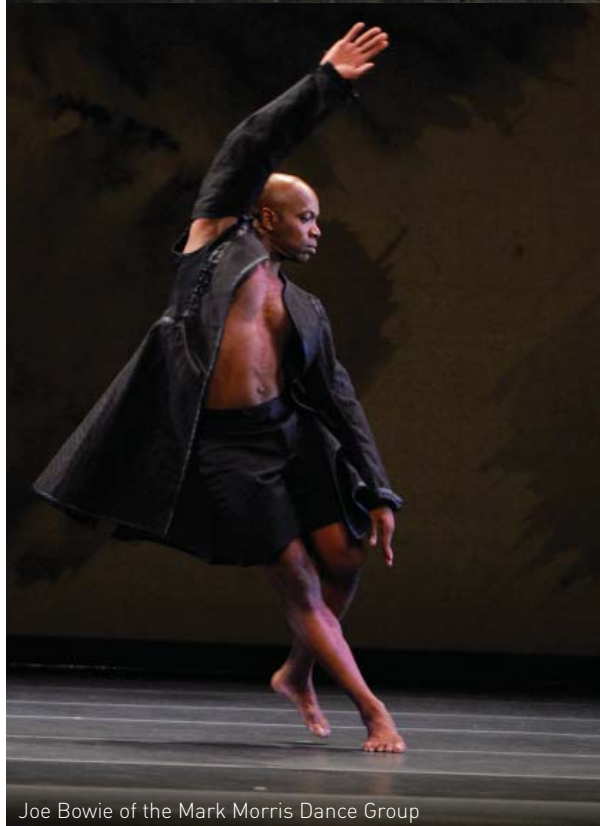
remember - touch your temple with the index finger.

stop - hold up your hand, palm out.





Isadora Duncan



Joe Bowie of the Mark Morris Dance Group

The Influence of Modern Dance

Today, ballet companies sometimes include other dance genres in their performances. In *The Hard Nut*, Mark Morris melds classical ballet steps with modern dance movement.

A much younger art form than ballet or folk dance, modern dance was developed in the 20th century, primarily in the United States and Germany. Modern dance was a rebellious response to the traditional rigidity of classical ballet. Known for its invention and nontraditional attitude, modern dance's vocabulary pushed the boundaries set by traditional schools of dance, expanding the standardized movements of ballet to include everyday actions like walking, running and falling. Modern dance pioneers like Isadora Duncan, Ruth St. Denis and Rudolf von Laben each sought to inspire audiences to a new awareness of how the body could move and express emotion.

Each modern dance company has its own style and unique movement vocabulary according to the artistic director's creative talents. Mark Morris creates original dances much as the first innovators of modern dance once did, and his ensemble only performs dances that he creates.



Scene from the Mozart Dances

5 About Nutcrackers

Guiding Questions:

- ◆ What were the earliest nutcrackers like?
- ◆ Why did townspeople enjoy the nutcracker designs made by miners?
- ◆ What do nutcrackers symbolize in German folklore?

The Significance of Nutcrackers

By Debby Felix, used with permission

Finding tools for opening or removing the shells of nuts challenged our earliest ancestors. Ancient excavations exposed nutshell fragments and it is believed that those nuts were broken using stones. Later, tools were made specifically for the task of cracking the hard shells of nuts.

The earliest nutcrackers were simple and functional, but eventually beautifully crafted brass and even carved nutcracker characters emerged as an art form in the 15th and 16th centuries. Many of the carved characters took on the form of birds, animals and humans. When a nut was placed in the “mouth” of these dolls, levers or screws on the back could be worked to push the lower jaw up against the upper jaw to crush the nut.

The nutcracker story came from the creation of European nutcrackers in Switzerland, France, Germany, and England during the 16th and 17th centuries.

In the German regions of Sonneberg and Erzgebirge, near the Bohemian border, the Ore mountains were rich



with mineral deposits. Many villagers worked in mines, but carved wood during the winter until they could return to work. Life was tough for the miners, who worked long hours, endured hardships and poverty, and often saw the fruits of their labor in the mines taken by their superiors. They cleverly designed the carved nutcrackers as caricatures of powerful people like kings, policemen, and soldiers, which the townspeople enjoyed because these figures were placed at their service to perform the lowly task of cracking nuts. When mineral deposits expired, miners began to make the nutcracker dolls all year round. Eventually, these one-of-a-kind standing soldiers and kings became a symbol of the region and were sold all over Europe. A holiday table setting was not complete without a bowl of nuts and a handsome doll standing beside it!

Nutcracker Trivia:

Nutcrackers were especially popular with Germans who coined the phrase, “Gott gibt die Nüsse aber knacker müsst man sie selbst” (“God gives the nuts but we have to crack them ourselves”). This story was intended to teach children that life was hard but rewarding. This little verse made it a favorite toy, possibly because it enabled children to reach one of life’s rewards more easily.

According to German folklore, nutcrackers were given as keepsakes to bring good luck to a family and protect the home. The legend says that they represent power and strength and serve like a trusty watch dog guarding the family from evil spirits and danger. A fierce protector, the nutcrackers bare their teeth to the evil spirits and serve as the traditional messenger of good luck and goodwill.



6 Learning Activities

Language & Performance Arts (Grades 1-8)

Story Dance

- Choose a story or folktale that you have read in class. Start by brainstorming and listing on the board all of the important scenes. Put the scenes in order; divide the class into the same number of groups as scenes, and assign each group a scene. Give each group a large piece of paper and drawing implements and ask them to draw their scene for a storyboard.

- Assemble the storyboard in a prominent place. Ask each group to think about the characters and the actions in their scene. Can they come up with a “signature” gesture for each character? (For example, the swan may unfold her arms and slowly mimic flying.) Can they create movements to represent the actions in their scene? Allow students to decide who will play each **character** (several students may also represent one character), who will be the “**set**” or “**scenery**,” creating shapes for this with their bodies, who will make the **sound effects**. Encourage students to be creative with the movement in their scene. They should be imaginative with how they use the performance space, their body levels and the directions they might face or move toward. They might also choose when to use repetition, unison, and canon movement.

- Have each group share their scene with the class.

Language & Visual Arts (Grades 3-12)

Designing a Set

- When Mark Morris adapted *The Nutcracker* into *The Hard Nut*, he updated the setting to a 1960’s suburban American household. Think of a fairytale that you like. If you were to stage it, how might you update it? From which character’s point of view would you tell the story?

- Write your new version of the story out, retelling the story from this character’s point of view and setting the tale in a time period of your choosing.

- On a large piece of paper, draw with colored, pencils, crayons, pastels or markers a set for the production of your version of the fairytale. Consider the mood and message of the story that you’d like to convey through the set.

- Share and discuss the different versions of the folktales.

- Post the drawings all around the class and do a “museum walk,” viewing all the works.

Language Arts and Writing (Grades 3-12)

Post-Performance Activity: Be a Critic

Reviews are an important part of the professional performing arts world. Reviews are written by critics to describe the show and let the general public know what he/she thought of the performance. This activity allows students to “put on the critics hat” and express their own point of view about the performance.

1. Read the ‘Hard’ may be nutty, but it’s sweet,” a sample review from *The Contra Costa Times* (see page 16). Identify words or phrases that seem to be particular to the writing style of the review. Discuss the critic’s response to the performance and any bias that may have been included in writing the review.
2. Have students write a review of the *SchoolTime* performance they attended at Cal Performances. Make sure to include the **date, time** and **place** of the performance. Remember that a review includes the whole experience, including elements of the performance space, for example; the climate in the theater, condition of the theater, did the performance start on time? These elements are all part of the audience experience and will help others decide whether or not they want to see the performance.
3. Have students work in pairs for peer editing, then have them share their reviews with the class.
4. As a culmination of this activity we invite you to nominate a few of the reviews to be:
 - 1) submitted to Cal Performances
 - 2) included in your class newsletter
 - 3) submitted to your school newspaper

CONTRA COSTA TIMES

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 17, 2003



MARIE (LAUREN GRANT) falls in love with the Nutcracker Prince (David Leventhal) in Mark Morris' "The Hard Nut," a spoof on the holiday favorite "The Nutcracker."

'Hard' may be nutty, but it's sweet

By Anita Amirrezvani
SAN JOSE MERCURY NEWS

Chances are you've never seen a "Nutcracker" quite like this one. Mark Morris' zany retelling of the traditional Christmas story is set in a 1960s suburban home, where a yule log burns on a big TV, the maid has attitude, the party guests do the bump and Mom is a guy in drag.

But it would be mistake to view "The Hard Nut" as pure spoof. The show, which repeats Thursday through Sunday at UC Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall, toys with conventions while celebrating time-honored "Nutcracker" themes: the generous spirit of Christmas and a young girl's first experience of falling in love.

As Marie, Lauren Grant radiates innocence and hope compared to her siblings. Brother Fritz is a rambunctious little character who can't help but mess up the party (you'd swear June Omura was a boy). Older sister Louise (Julie Worden) exudes teenage hormones with a streak of meanness.

Friend and family inventor Drosselemeier (Rob Besserer) introduces the mysterious power of love by bringing Marie the wooden nutcracker. His duet with his nephew, the boy Nutcracker (David Leventhal), is a highlight of "The Hard Nut." It says, "This is how to be a loving man." When the Nutcracker dances later with his beloved Marie, it's touching to see how well he has learned his lesson about love.

Better yet, "The Hard Nut" is often uproariously funny. The



THE MICE LOOK threatening in "The Hard Nut," which plays at UC Berkeley's Zellerbach Hall, Thursday-Sunday.

DANCE REVIEW

- WHO: Mark Morris Dance Group
- WHAT: "The Hard Nut"
- WHERE: Zellerbach Hall, UC Berkeley
- WHEN: 8 p.m. Thursday and Friday; 2 p.m. and 5 p.m. Saturday; 3 p.m. Sunday
- HOW MUCH: \$32-\$56
- CONTACT: 510-642-9988; www.calperfs.berkeley.edu

Snow Scene is cast with female dancers as well as beefy males dressed in tutus with Sno-Cone swirls on their heads. It got roars of appreciation last Friday night, as did the Waltz of the Flowers, a dance about springtime and the joys of,

ahem, regeneration.

Live music adds zest to the show. The Tchaikovsky score is performed by members of the Berkeley Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Robert Cole. The set by cartoonist Charles Burns is a white-and-black fantasy that looks just right against Martin Pakledinaz's splashy green and red costumes.

Don't miss "The Hard Nut" if you enjoy seeing convention turned on its head, but still have a soft heart.

Resources

RELATED VIDEOS AND CLIPS ON THE INTERNET

www.youtube.com

Search under:

- “The Hard Nut: A Look Back” (10 minutes)
- “Mark Morris” (various short clips)

www.calperformances.net

Mark Morris video program notes

SPARK (KQED PUBLIC TELEVISION)

www.kqed.org/spark

*You can stream the 10 minute stories on your computer, or purchase a video or DVD.

Mark Morris (Setting a piece on the San Francisco Ballet)

<http://www.kqed.org/arts/people/spark/profile.jsp?id=4639>

THE HARD NUT

Now available on DVD. You can purchase a copy at www.amazon.com

WEBSITES, BOOKS, CDS, AND RELATED STUDY AREAS

Mark Morris Dance Group

<http://www.markmorrisdancegroup.org>

BOOKS (GEARED TOWARDS ADULTS)

Mark Morris – Joan Acocella

Morris’ L’Allegro, il Penseroso ed il Moderato: A Celebration – Edited by Jeffrey Escoffier and Matthew Lore

Time and the Dancing Image – Deborah Jowitt

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Ballet for Beginners – Marie-Laure Medova

Coppelia- Margot Fonteyn

Dance – Bill T. Jones and Susan Kuklin

Dance!- Elisha Cooper

Dancing Wheels – Patricia McMahon

First Lessons in Ballet – Lise Friedman

I Dreamed I Was a Ballerina- Anna Pavlova

Kids Dance – Jim Varriale

Let’s Dance – George Ancona

Max – Rachel Isadora

On Your Toes: A Ballet ABC – Rachel Isadora

MUSIC RECOMMENDATIONS

George Balanchine’s The Nutcracker

– David Zinman and the New York City Ballet Orchestra (\$13.99 on iTunes)

Tchaikovsky: Swan Lake Highlights – John Lanchbery and Philharmonia Orchestra (\$5.99 on iTunes)

Duke Ellington: Three Suites – Duke Ellington (versions of The Nutcracker) (\$9.29 on iTunes)

OTHER IDEAS

-Author study: Rachel Isadora

A former dancer, she has written many books related to dance

-Native Americans in ballet: Maria Tallchief (most famous)

-African-Americans in dance: Arthur Mitchell and Alvin Ailey

BOOKS ON ARTS EDUCATION

Body, Mind, and Spirit in Action – Patricia Reedy

Framing Education as Art: The Octopus

Has a Good Day – Jessica Hoffmann Davis

Variations on a Blue Guitar – Maxine Greene

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT DANCE IN THE BAY AREA AND DANCE EDUCATION
DANCE CLASSES (FOR CHILDREN OR ADULTS)**

East Bay schools include: Oakland Ballet Academy, Destiny Arts Center, Destined 2 Dance, African Queens, AXIS Dance Company, Shawl-Anderson Dance Center, Luna Kids Dance, Berkeley Ballet, Berkeley City Ballet, East Bay Center for the Performing Arts, The Beat, and Ashkenaz

San Francisco schools include: ODC, Dance Mission, San Francisco Dance Center, Rhythm and Motion at ODC, SF Conservatory of Dance, San Francisco Ballet, and the Mission Cultural Center

Marin schools include: Roco Dance and Fitness, Marin Ballet, and Luna Kids Dance

DANCE EDUCATION WORKSHOPS FOR TEACHERS

Luna Kids Dance

www.lunakidsdance.org

Performing Arts Workshop

www.pawssf.org

California Dance Education Association

www.cdeadance.org

National Dance Education Organization

www.ndeo.org

7 Glossary

canon– in music an imitation of one melodic line by another, in which the second line starts after the first.

caricature– a representation in which the subject's distinctive features or peculiarities are deliberately exaggerated to produce a funny or grotesque effect.

charades– a game where players acts out a word or phrase for others to guess

choreography – the art of creating and arranging dances or ballets.

commedia dell' arte– a popular form of comedic improvisational theatre that began in Italy in the 15th century and traditionally had plots which focused on situations involving romance, jealousy and old age.

commissioned– granted permission or asked to carry out a particular task or duty

composer– a person who writes music.

core– group of muscles located in the trunk area of your body; core muscles help you maintain balance and good posture

debut– first public appearance

duet– a dance for two people

eclectic– selecting what seems best out of various styles or ideas and bringing those separate selections together

ensemble– a group of supporting entertainers, as actors, dancers, and singers, in a theatrical production. Also a piece choreographed for the chorus of a ballet company.

excavation– to expose or uncover usually by digging

folktale– a belief, legend, or story that is passed on among people.

innovator– to introduce something new; make changes in anything established

interpretation– an artist's distinctive personal version of a song, dance, piece of music, or role; a rendering.

keepsakes– anything kept, or given to be kept, as a token of friendship or affection; remembrance

leotard– a skintight, one-piece garment for the torso, having a high or low neck, long or short sleeves, and a lower portion resembling either briefs or tights

melody– a pleasing succession or arrangement of sounds; a rhythmically organized sequence of single tones so related to one another as to make up a particular phrase or idea

mime– the art of portraying characters and acting out situations or a narrative by gestures and body movement without the use of words; pantomime.

narrative– a message that tells the particulars of an act or occurrence or course of events; a story

nobility– a class of persons privileged and distinguished by high birth or rank

opera– an extended dramatic composition, in which parts are sung to instrumental accompaniment.

overtures– an instrumental composition intended especially as an introduction to an extended work

pageantry– a spectacular and grand performance or display

pointe– in ballet, dancing that is performed on the tips of the toes

poverty– the state of being poor; lack of the means of providing material needs or comforts.

repertoire– the entire stock of skills, techniques, or devices used in a particular field or occupation.

revise- to alter something already written or printed, in order to make corrections, improve, change, or update

rigidity- stiff or unyielding, constant and without change

scenarios- an imagined or projected sequence of events, especially any of several detailed plans or possibilities

score- the music created for a movie or theatrical piece.

solo- dance performed alone

stock character- role that relies heavily on cultural types or stereotypes to define the personality, manner of speech, and other characteristics of the character

suburban- relating to, or characteristic of the culture, customs, and manners typical of life in a suburb, or district lying immediately outside a city or town.

supernatural- pertaining to, or being above or beyond what is natural; unexplainable by natural law or phenomena; abnormal

symmetry- An exact matching of form and arrangement of parts on opposite sides of a boundary, such as a plane or line, or around a central point or axis

symphony- an elaborate instrumental composition in three or more movements, similar in form to a sonata but written for an orchestra and usually of far grander proportions and more varied elements

tenure- status granted, usually after a probationary period, indicating that the position or is permanent or stable

trio- a piece for three performers



8 California State Standards

Music Grades K-12

1.0 Artistic Perception

Processing, analyzing, and responding to sensory information through the language and skills unique to music

Students listen to, analyze, and describe music and other aural information, using the terminology of music.

3.0 Historical and Cultural Context

Students analyze the role of music in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting cultural diversity as it relates to music, musicians, and composers.

Role of Music

3.1 Describe the social functions of a variety of musical forms from various cultures and time periods (e.g., folk songs, dances).

Diversity of Music

3.4 Describe the influence of various cultures and historical events on musical forms and styles.

Dance Grades K-12

1.0 Artistic Perception

Processing, analyzing, and responding to sensory information through the language and skills unique to dance

Students perceive and respond, using the elements of dance. They demonstrate movement skills, process sensory information, and describe movement, using the vocabulary of dance.

2.0 Creative Expression

Creating, performing and participating in dance

Students apply choreographic principles, processes, and skills to create and communicate meaning through the improvisation, composition, and performance of dance.

3.0 Historical and Cultural Context

Understanding the historical contributions and cultural dimensions of dance

Students analyze the function and development of dance in past and present cultures throughout the world, noting human diversity as it relates to dance and dancers.



This Cal Performances *SchoolTime* Study Guide was written, edited and designed by Laura Abrams, Rica Anderson and Nicole Anthony. Copyright © 2007 Cal Performances