



Please Join Us...



Educational Arts Workshop

Special guest speaker from
York University/Faculty of Fine Arts
Dance Department

Workshop **Schedule** Includes

- Interactive Lecture
- Backstage tour
- Live Performance

Cost: \$20.00 per student

(One complimentary teacher's ticket included with every group order of 15 or more tickets)

Dear Teachers,

The Canadian Ballet Youth Ensemble would like to extend an invitation to your school to join us for an educational workshop that is offered with every production that we do. A special workshop has been designed to give students the opportunity to enhance their critical and creative thinking skills related to the key elements of art, music, dance and drama.

Students will witness a live performance on stage featuring world renowned dancers. Prior to the performance students will be given the opportunity to participate in an interactive dialogue on Arts Education with a guest speaker from York University. Following the lecture there will be a backstage tour of the production.

Students will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for the arts as they pertain to:

Dance

- Understand ways that ideas, moods, and feelings are transformed and conveyed through dance
- Explore their own creativity by looking for alternative ways of expression

Drama

- Understand connections between the situations and the character roles

Music

- Understand how music is used to express mood and drama
- Understand the connection of expression to feeling

Visual Art

- Understand how visual art portrays feelings and imagination

To book your workshop, or for further information, please contact us by phone at **905-512-1453** or email at info@cbye.ca.

Sincerely,
The Canadian Ballet Youth Ensemble

What Students Will Learn

Students will gain insight and a broader understanding of how to critique a performance. Newspapers and other publications frequently review dance companies and performances, and there certainly is a method for writing dance criticism. As a classroom assignment, teachers can ask each student to write their own critique based on the knowledge that they obtained from the workshop.



Deciphering Dance

Few people will pursue careers as choreographers, performers or dance critics, but most will see dance in at least some of its many forms. Each viewer will have a unique response to a dance whether performed by a professional in a theater or by a peer in the classroom. Dance has been described as the "art of the instant" and no piece of choreography, even if performed over and over again by the same dancers, will be exactly the same each time it is performed. Dance movement may seem very fast and hard to remember at first, but when you have seen many performances and learned more about this art form, it will become easier to think about and discuss. The process outlined here, which involves describing, analyzing, interpreting and evaluating, will enhance appreciation of the art of dance and assist with the skill development of becoming a dance critic.

Description

What happened during the performance? Describe what you saw.

dancers (solo, duet, trio, quartet, male, female)
costumes (fabric, color, design)
set (dancers move around or dance on or under)
props (dancers hold and manipulate)
music (live, recorded, instrumentation)
lighting (bright, dim, spotlight, general, color)
idea, theme or story (environment, historical event, human relationships, etc.)



Analysis

How are the dance elements of SPACE, TIME, ENERGY/FORCE, BODY, MOVEMENT and FORM seen in the work?

- How did the dancers use SPACE?
place (general space, personal space)
size (big, small, far, close)
pathway (straight, curved, zigzag)
direction (forward, backward, sideways, up, down)
focus (at each other, at the audience, internal)
level (low/close to ground, high/above the floor, middle/between low and high)
- How did the dancers use TIME?
pulse/beat (regular, predictable)
tempo (fast, slow, combination)

music (relationship of movement to musical phrasing and dynamics)
accent (emphasis placed on certain movements)
pattern/rhythm (repeated sequence of slow and fast movement, with or without stillness)

- How did the dancers use ENERGY/FORCE?
attack (smooth/fluid, sharp/jagged/abrupt, jiggly, and vibratory)
weight (heavy/strong, light)
flow (loose/free/continuous, held back/controlled/restrained/bound)
- How did the dancers use their BODIES?
isolation (emphasize certain parts or use entire bodies)
relationships (near/far, meeting/parting, alone/connected, mirroring/shadowing/echoing, etc.)
shape/design (curved or straight, symmetrical or asymmetrical, use of positive and negative space) balance (on or off balance)
- What types of MOVEMENT were performed by the dancers?
locomotor (walk, run, jump, hop, leap, gallop, slide, skip, crawl, roll or combinations of these)
non-locomotor/axial (bend, twist, stretch, swing, lunge, wiggle, shake, fall, melt, sway, turn, etc.)
- What FORM did the dance take?
recurring theme
abstract (non representational)
narrative (representational, in the form of a story)
suite (moderate beginning, slow center and fast end, or group of three short dances)
broken form (unrelated ideas, often used for humor)



Interpretation

- What did the dance mean to you?
- Did the dance imitate or represent a situation or event you could recognize or to which you could relate?
- If the dance was narrative in form, summarize the story or identify the theme.
- Describe your mood after watching the dance. (refreshed, thoughtful, sad, energized, angry)
- Describe the taste, smell, texture, or sound of the dance.
- Identify movements or familiar gestures (a wave, thumbs up, etc.) that contributed to the dance's meaning.

Evaluation



Most everyone will have an immediate and individual response to a dance whether seen on television, in the movies, on the street, or in a theater. While personal opinions are important, it is also possible to compare a particular dance to others that you have seen.

- Did the dance explore the ways the body can move and the designs it can make rather than attempt to tell a story or attempt to communicate a specific message?
- What did you learn about the choreographer? (where and when he/she worked, what was important to him/her)
- Identify other choreographers who have made dances based on similar ideas.
- Was the work in one dance style or tradition? (modern, African, tap, flamenco, jazz, ballet, folklore, Native American, etc.). If not, how did it combine movements and qualities found in several kinds of dance?
- Why was the dance created and performed? (cultural expression, social, recreation, religious, therapy, exercise, education, to communicate to an audience)
- Assess the performers. (well-trained, highly skilled, unskilled, amateur, professional, etc.)
- Who do you think would appreciate a performance of this work? (friends, parents, dancers, politicians)

NOTE -- This process can be used to look at any type of dance. When evaluating your own work, also answer the following questions:

- What was successful about the dance? (commendations)
- How would you improve it? (recommendations)

Classroom Assignment



Become a critic for a day and write your own critique on Hansel and Gretel. Send us a copy. We would love to hear what you have to say. Below are some guidelines that critics follow today:

Step1

Use lots of description. To describe the dance, make sure you use strong verbs. Describe the stage sets, costumes, music, choreography, and dancers. Try to help readers visualize what you have seen.

Step2

Evaluate the dance. Before spending a lot of money on tickets, fans want to know whether a performance is "good" or "bad." They want an educated opinion of the piece. This is the consumer guide portion of dance criticism.

Step3

Interpret the dance for readers. Dance can be difficult to interpret because movements do not have specific meanings like words do. Dance can only vaguely create messages. Such phrases as "may have referred," "was a reminder," and "presumably symbolized" indicate that the writer is interpreting the dance and assigning meaning to the movements.

Step4

Contextualize the dance. It's important to know how a dance piece fits into dance historically. Contextualization can also include biographical, artistic, and even political terms to help the readers understand the dance. It helps readers fit the dance into the bigger picture.