Distance Learning Guide

This guide is designed to help you:

• Introduce the story and artistry of Swan Lake to students.
• Introduce students to classical music in a fun an engaging way.

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Community Engagement Mission
Intrinsic to The Washington Ballet’s mission to bring the joy and artistry of dance to the nation’s capital, our community engagement programs provide a variety of opportunities to connect children and adults of all ages, abilities and backgrounds to the art of dance. We aspire to spark and enhance a love for dance, celebrate our cultural diversity and enrich the lives of our community members.

To learn more visit: www.washingtonballet.org

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ARTISTIC & PRODUCTION TEAM

Julie Kent, Artistic Director

Victor Barbee, Associate Artistic Director
Elaine Kudo, Ballet Master
Rubén Martín Cintas, Ballet Master


Artistic Operations
Andrés Holder, General Manager
Catherine Eby, Company Manager
Clayton Willis, Artistic Coordinator
Glenn Sales, Music Supervisor

Kyle Grant, Production Manager
Karen Storms, Assistant Production Manager
Susan Kilbourne, Assistant Stage Manager
Monica Leland, Wardrobe Supervisor
Carolynn Hawthorne, Assistant Wardrobe Supervisor
Noelle Greata, Wardrobe Assistant
Christopher R. M. Insley, Production Carpenter
C.C. Gould, Production Electrician
Noah Guthman, Properties Manager

The Company Dancers
Katherine Barkman, Nardia Boodoo, Adelaide Clausss, Kateryna Derechyna, Nicole Graniero, Esmiana Jani, Sona Kharatian, Ayano Kimura, Alex Kramer, Tamás Krizsa, Corey Landolt, Eun Won Lee, Olivia Lipnick, Ariel Martinez, Tamako Miyazaki, Javier Morera, Ashley Murphy-Wilson, Andile Ndlovu, Maki Onuki, Alexandros Pappajohn, Gian Carlo Perez, Daniel Roberge, Oscar Sanchez, Rolando Sarabia, Stephanie Sorota, Sarah Steele, Brittany Stone
Apprentices: Victoria Arrea, Kimberly Cilento, Gilles Delellio, Stephen Nakagawa, Lucy Nevin, Samara Rittinger, Masanori Takiguchi

The Studio Company Dancers
Andrea Allmon, Peyton Anderson, Rafael Bejarano, Nicholas Cowden, Jessy Dick, Abigail Granlund, Lope Lim, Audrey Malek, Aurora Mostacci, Helga Paris–Morales, Alexa Torres
The Swan Lake Story

Act I - It is Prince Siegfried’s 21st birthday and he is celebrating with friends. The Queen Mother arrives to give him his present, a crossbow, and reminds him that he must choose a bride at the ball the next evening. Siegfried, realizing that his carefree days are at an end, leaves the party at the height of the festivities to seek the solace of the woods. Benno, his friend, finds him and suggests they go hunting. Siegfried declines, preferring to be alone.

Act II - Prince Siegfried enters a moonlit clearing in the forest by a lake and sees a magnificent swan in flight. He carefully takes aim, but, to his astonishment, the bird transforms into a breathtakingly beautiful girl. Unable to resist his curiosity, he steps out, only to startle and frighten her. He assures her he will do her no harm and asks her to explain her magic. She tells him she is Princess Odette, who fell under the spell of an evil sorcerer, Von Rothbart, and now her fate is to be a swan by day and swim on this lake of tears. She can only become human at night. She reveals she is condemned for eternity unless a young man swears eternal fidelity to her and marries her. Only then can the spell be broken. But if he should forswear her, then she must remain a swan forever. Prince Siegfried falls in love with Odette, but before he has a chance to tell her, the evil sorcerer appears. The Prince, in his passion, reaches for his crossbow, but Odette immediately protects the sorcerer with her body, for she knows that if he is killed before the spell is broken, she too will die. The sorcerer disappears, and Odette slips away into the forest. Siegfried realizes his fate is now entwined with hers. Dawn approaches and Odette is compelled by the spell to turn back into a swan. Siegfried is left awestruck.

Act III - It’s the night of the ball. Eligible young princesses from all over the world arrive and are presented to Prince Siegfried so that he may choose a bride. The prospective brides dance for the Prince and the Queen Mother. As Siegfried struggles with his responsibility to marry, he keeps thinking about Odette. Suddenly, an uninvited guest arrives. It is the evil sorcerer, Von Rothbart, in disguise. He has brought his daughter, Odile, on whom he has cast a spell to make her look like Odette. Siegfried is seduced by Odile, and announces his intention to marry her. Meanwhile, Odette, had been watching through the window. Von Rothbart asks Siegfried to swear fidelity to Odile, which he does, only to discover the real Odette in the window moments after. He realizes too late that he has been the victim of a terrible trick. Odette flees into the forest weeping and Siegfried rushes to the lakeside to find her.

Act IV - A great storm rages. Siegfried finds Odette and begs her forgiveness. Odette tells Siegfried she must kill herself, or she will be a swan forever. Von Rothbart appears and Siegfried declares he would rather dies with Odette than marry Odile. The lovers leap into the lake together and are united in life after death.

Misty Copeland and Brooklyn Mac as Odette and Prince Siegfried in The Washington Ballet’s Swan Lake.
Swan Lake Creators

The story of *Swan Lake* is believed to be inspired by German folk tale "The White Duck" and the Russian folk "The Stolen Veil" by Johann Karl August Musäus. While both tales differ significantly from the ballet, they utilize the swan as a symbol of strength, elegance and purity. The idea of a swan-princess is a common and recurring theme throughout much of Slavic and German literature.

**The Composer**—*A person who writes music.*

**Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky** (1840—1893) is one of the most popular Russian composers of all time. He lived and composed during the 19th century which is called the Romantic period because artists, writers and musicians focused on feelings and passions more than any other theme. It was popular during this time to compose music that told a story and Tchaikovsky’s ballet’s are often called story ballets. Tchaikovsky’s compositions include 11 operas, 3 ballets and over 100 songs.

The original **Choreographer**—*A person who creates dance compositions by planning and arranging movements and patterns for dances, especially ballets.*

**Julius Wentsel Reisinger** (1828 – 1892) was a Czech ballet choreographer. He created more than twenty works on various European stages and directed the Moscow company of the Bolshoi Theatre. He was the choreographer the original production of Swan Lake in 1877.

**Marius Petipa** (1818–1910) was one of the most influential figures of classical ballet. Petipa was born in Marseilles, France. His father was a dancer, and Petipa began dancing in his father’s travelling company when he nine years old. In 1847 he made his debut as principal dancer and ballet master of the Mariinsky Ballet in Russia. He became famous as a choreographer in 1859 with his production of *The Pharaoh’s Daughter*. He went on to choreograph many world famous ballets that are still performed today. The Mariinsky Ballet Company and school became a model for all ballet around the globe throughout the 20th century. Peptipa’s successful production of Swan Lake in 1895 is the version most ballet company’s base their staging’s on.

**Lev Ivanov** (1834 -1901) was a Russian ballet dancer and choreographer. He studied with Marius Petipa and eventually became the Second Ballet Master of the Imperial Ballet. He worked along side Marius Petipa as his health declined.

**Collaborators**—*People who work together and cooperate to create a work of art.*

**Tchaikovsky, Petipa and Ivanov**, worked very closely to create *The Sleeping Beauty* Ballet in 1890, *The Nutcracker* in 1892 and *Swan Lake* in 1895. These ballet’s are some of the best known classical ballets in the world.
The History of Swan Lake

*Swan Lake*, which tells the story of a princess turned into a swan by an evil sorcerer’s curse, is one of the most popular ballets of all time. The music was composed by Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky in 1875-76. Although the first production premiered in 1877 at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, most ballet companies base their stagings on Marius Petipa and Lev Ivanov’s choreography from their 1895 production for the Imperial Ballet at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, Russia. Since ballet is not a written language, the choreography of famous ballet’s is passed down from generation to generation through Ballet Masters, Répéteurs and Dancers.

The original 1877 production of Swan Lake was a flop. The original choreography was created by Czech ballet choreographer Julius Reisinger (Václav Reisinger), who was also the director of the Bolshoi Ballet. Throughout the production process Tchaikovsky and Reisinger had little to do with one another. Tchaikovsky preferred to write the score as he saw fit, rather than be dictated to by his colleague. This led to inevitable tensions between the two and meant that the score was subjected to numerous re-writes before it was deemed ready for performance in the spring of 1876. The first performance was not the critical success that Tchaikovsky and Reisinger would have hoped for. Audiences at the Bolshoi Theatre were left unimpressed by the choreography and the set design, and Tchaikovsky’s score was considered heavy and oppressive.

The early criticisms led to several alterations being made to the score, and as the production became more polished and audiences became familiar with the music, *Swan Lake* soon became accepted as one of Tchaikovsky finest achievements. Today Swan Lake is an ever-present feature in the repertoire of the Bolshoi Theatre, and is the most commonly performed ballet across the world.

The Washington Ballet’s production will be curated and tailored to our dance company by Julie Kent, our Artistic Director and Victor Barbee, our Associate Artistic Director. They will be drawing on their years of experience as professional dancers at The American Ballet Theatre, the detailed Stepanov notations.
Set Design

The creation of theatrical, as well as film or television scenery. Scenic designers design sets and scenery that aim to support the overall artistic goals of the production.

Swan Lake’s Setting

The ballet takes place in two locations. Acts I and III take place in the ballroom and courtyard of Siegfried’s Castle.

Acts II and IV take place next to a lake in a forest. Both are represented by large painted backdrops. For the lake, smaller side backdrops of painted trees frame the stage to give the illusion of a bigger forest.

Original Set Design by F. Gaanen for the décor of Act II of Swan Lake, Moscow, 1877
Meet the Characters

**Odette**: Village girl who has been turned into a swan by the evil wizard Von Rothbart. Falls in love with Prince Siegfried.

**Siegfried**: Prince who has arrived at an age where he must choose a wife. While on a hunting trip into the woods meets and falls in love with the girl/swan named Odette.

**Von Rothbart**: Evil wizard who turns Odette into a swan.

**Odile**: The evil Von Rothbart’s daughter who tries to trick Prince Siegfried into thinking she is Odette by transforming herself to look like her.

**Benno**: Siegfried’s best friend

**The Queen**: Siegfried's mother

**Cygnets and Swans**: Magical swans that inhabit the forest and protect it and their queen.
Introduction to Classical Music

Classical music is a general term which normally refers to European music that was composed during the 18th and 19th centuries and played by an orchestra. It is music that has been created by professional musicians who are trained in the art of composing, which is creating music and writing it down in music notation so that other musicians can play it. It has also come to mean very famous music that is still popular centuries after it was created.

A Musician is a person who plays a musical instrument or is musically talented. Anyone who composes, conducts, or performs music is referred to as a musician. A musician who plays a musical instrument is also known as an instrumentalist.

An Orchestra is a large group of musicians who play together on various instruments. The orchestra is divided up into sections based on the type of instruments in it. Usually, the sections of an orchestra include strings, woodwinds, brass and percussion. The orchestra is led by the conductor.

Sheku Kanneh-Mason, 2016 winner of BBC Young Musician Award, performing with the BBC Symphony Orchestra.
The Music of Swan Lake

Ballet dancers perform while a live orchestra plays in the orchestra pit in front of the stage.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1840—1893) is one of the most popular Russian composers of all time. He lived and composed in the 19th century, during an era called the Romantic period. It was called that because artists, writers and musicians focused on feelings and passions more than any other theme during this era. It was popular during this time to compose music that told a story and Tchaikovsky’s ballet’s are often called story ballets. Tchaikovsky’s compositions include 11 operas, 3 ballets and over 100 songs.

The Romantic period (1830—1910) marks a period in music history when emotional expression became more important than formal classical structure. Composers expanded the size of orchestras as well a the types of instruments used in order to have a bigger ranges in pitch and dynamics. Melodies got longer and harmonic progressions got more and more elaborate. New musical structures created during this era include:

A **nocturne** which is a musical composition that reflects the moods and feelings of night time.

A **rhapsody** which is a single-movement work that is episodic, meaning it has distinct groups of musical ideas. It’s categorized by free-flowing in structure, and features a range of highly contrasting moods. Rhapsodies are compositions with an air of improvisation and virtuosity – something that's going to take you on a journey, just like a dramatically recited epic poem.

**Swan Lake** is scored for a romantic-sized orchestra which includes the following sections and instruments.

Strings: violins I and II, violas, violoncellos, double basses

Woodwinds: piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets in B-flat, A and C, 2 bassoons

Brass: 4 horns in F, 2 cornets in A and B-flat, 2 trumpets in F, D, and E, 3 trombones (2 tenor, 1 bass), tuba

Percussion: timpani, snare drum, cymbals, bass drum, triangle, tambourine, castanets, tam-tam, glockenspiel

Other: harp
The Music of Swan Lake

Classical Music Notation

Swan Lake Op. 20
Dance of the Little Swans

Tchaikovsky
Music Activities

1) Count the number of each instrument.
2) Color each section of the orchestra a different color.
3) Have students listen to excerpts from *Swan Lake* by Pytor Tchaikovsky.
4) Ask them if they recognize the melody? Have they heard it before?
5) Ask student to share how the music makes them feel? What emotions do they think the music is trying to convey?
6) Have students move around the room to the music.
7) How did the music make you want to move?
Music Activities

Meet the ORCHESTRA

Match the names of the musical instruments in the box to the pictures below.

1. bagpipes
2. bassoon
3. clarinet
4. double bass
5. drums
6. electric guitar
7. flute
8. guitar
9. harp
10. keyboards
11. oboe
12. piano
13. saxophone
14. saxophone
15. tambourine
16. trumpet
17. tuba
18. violin

brass woodwinds strings percussion
Music Activities

SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA WORD SEARCH

BASS CLARINET  BASS DRUM  BASSOON  BRASS  CONTRA BASSOON
CASTANETS  CELLO  CLARINET  CONTRA BASSOON  FLUTE
CYMBALS  DOUBLE BASS  ENGLISH HORN  MARACAS  SAXOPHONE
FRENCH HORN  GONG  HARPSICHORD  PICCOLO  SAXOPHONE
OBEE  PERCUSSION  PICCOLO  TIMPANI  TUBA
SNARE DRUM  STRING  TAMBOURINE  TIMPANI  WOODBLOCK
TRIANGLE  TROMBONE  TRUMPET  TUBA  WOODWIND
VIOLA  VIOLIN

Name: ________________________________

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