

*SWAN LAKE*  
*STUDY GUIDE*

BALLET IDAHO



**BIA**  
BALLET IDAHO ACADEMY

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# WELCOME TO BALLET IDAHO

We are delighted to share the joy of dance and the expressive power of ballet with you and your family. Ballet Idaho performances are a wonderful way to expose children to the transformative power of creativity through the performing arts.

We invite you to explore the magical world of *Swan Lake*. This Study Guide includes resources to prepare children for the performance. We encourage you to use the Ballet Idaho Study Guide before and after the performance to explore movement and dance, learn about ballet, and discover what happens behind the scenes of a ballet production.

We hope the Ballet Idaho Study Guide, combined with the performance of *Swan Lake*, sparks conversation and reflection, inspires creative expression, and fosters an appreciation and understanding of dance as an art form. Enjoy the performance!

## ABOUT BALLET IDAHO

Ballet Idaho offers a full season of performances, an Academy of dance, and extensive educational outreach programs for students in Boise, the Treasure Valley, and throughout Idaho. As the only professional ballet company in Idaho, Montana, or Wyoming, Ballet Idaho provides important artistic opportunities and experiences that greatly enrich the creative vitality of the Idaho community.

Our mission at Ballet Idaho is to promote classical and contemporary ballet by encouraging artists to greatness and inspiring the public to value the performing arts. We enrich our community through quality performances, disciplined training, dance outreach, and education.

Ballet Idaho has been performing in Idaho since 1972. Currently it has an artistic staff of 26 dancers, a professional teaching staff of 15, a professional costume designer, a production staff of three, and an administrative staff of 12. Up to 40 musicians from the Boise Philharmonic and two pianists provide musical accompaniment for Ballet Idaho's performances, rehearsals, and classes depending on the production or project.

We are committed to strengthening our community by providing accessible and diverse arts programming for schools and children throughout Boise and the extended Treasure Valley.

Ballet Idaho served a total audience of 23,871 this past year and our educational outreach programs served over 15,000 students during the academic year.

## PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

**Ballet Idaho Academy:** Our Academy offers professional training in ballet and other dance forms with year-round open enrollment. Classes are held in five state-of-the-art studios at Esther Simplot Performing Arts Academy in Downtown Boise. During the summertime, Ballet Idaho Academy offers camps, youth ballet, maintenance classes, and a summer intensive.

**Youth Ensemble School Performances:** Led by Ensemble Director, Sarah Powell, academy students tour local schools and community venues with a selection of dances and a lecture demonstration. The production is designed with interactive elements and its aim is to engage and educate the audience on dance history and performance.

**Learning Through Dance:** A ten-week Artist-in-Residence outreach program for third-grade classrooms in Boise and the Treasure Valley with a unique curriculum developed by Ballet Idaho.

**By Special Invitation:** Our program provides an opportunity for individuals represented by local organizations from a wide array of socio/economic/ethnic backgrounds to attend a full production of Ballet Idaho's mainstage performances, free of charge.

## ABOUT ARTISTIC DIRECTOR PETER ANASTOS

Peter Anastos has choreographed more than 100 stage works for the finest national and regional ballet companies in the United States as well as for modern dance companies, theater, film, and television. He has also choreographed in Europe, Asia,



and Latin America, and his ballets are performed worldwide. Mr. Anastos enjoys a longstanding collaboration with Mikhail Baryshnikov and their projects include American Ballet Theater's *Cinderella*, CBS Television's *Baryshnikov in Hollywood* (Emmy Award nomination) and the photography book, *The Swan Prince* for Bantam Books.

Mr. Anastos has had the rare honor of receiving two Guggenheim Foundation Fellowships in Choreography and four Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts.

For the Broadway stage he choreographed *I Hate Hamlet* and *Where She Danced*, based on the life of Isadora Duncan. Other major theatre credits include *33 Variations* (Arena Stage, Washington, D.C.) and *Chess* (National Company). He has choreographed several television specials and two Hollywood films, *Addams Family* and *Addams Family Values*, both for Paramount Pictures. He was choreographer-in-residence for the Santa Fe Opera and Sundance Theatre Festival, part of Robert Redford's Sundance Institute in Utah.

# DURING THE PERFORMANCE

## AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE: PREPARE FOR THE PERFORMANCE

**A live performance is a very exciting experience for the audience as well as the performers. The audience should pay close attention to what is happening on stage and participate and applaud at the appropriate times. What are some of the differences between going to the theater to see a live performance and watching a video or going to a movie? What makes a good audience member?**

## DURING THE PERFORMANCE

### Watch the dancers carefully

- Look for movement motifs, familiar ballet steps, impressive jumps, and exciting partnering lifts
- Think about how the costumes and sets help tell the audience something about the story, idea, or mood of the ballet
- Consider how the dancers are using movement to express themselves or tell a story

### Listen to the music

- When there is live accompaniment, clap when the conductor enters and watch how the conductor and musicians interact
- Listen for your favorite instruments
- Think about how the music and the choreography work together

### Clap when you see something you really like

- During a ballet performance, the audience usually claps at the end of a scene or

ballet, but the audience can also clap after a difficult sequence of turns, exciting jumps, or when a dancer lifts another dancer high in the air

- Say “Bravo!” when you see something on stage that you find very exciting. Bravo is an Italian word that means “great job!”
- Applaud when the performance is over. This tells the dancers, orchestra, and crew that you appreciate their hard work and give a standing ovation if you really enjoyed the performance

### A good audience member will...

- Watch the performance quietly
- Remain seated during the performance. Will not put their feet on the seats or kick the seat in front of them
- Use the restroom before the performance
- Turn off phones and cameras - absolutely no phone calls, texting, photos, or videos are allowed during the performance
- Wait for intermission or after the performance to enjoy food, candy, or chewing gum in the lobby

## AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

Think about how the artists used movement, music, costumes, and sets to communicate a story, idea, or feeling to the audience. Talk with a friend, classmate, teacher, or family member about your favorite part of the performance.

# EXPLORING MOVEMENT, DANCE, AND BALLET

## MOVEMENT

How can movement alone tell a story? Think about this: you can often tell a lot about how people are feeling just by looking at them. Their emotions, and sometimes their thoughts, show on their faces and in how they move. There are many ways people can communicate without words.

Movement is one way to communicate and express yourself. Try communicating without words. Use facial expressions and body movement to communicate that you are feeling excited, nervous, or surprised. Did you change the expression on your face for each emotion? How did you use your hands to show your emotions and thoughts? Did you move your shoulders and arms? Did you stand very still, or did you jump or skip? Dance is a way to express yourself!

## DANCE

Dance is a special way of moving, usually to music. As far as historians know, dance is as old as humans are; it has always been a way for communities and groups of people to tell stories and pass values and ideals from one generation to another. Today we see dance in traditions like coming-of-age ceremonies (such as a bar mitzvah or quinceañera), celebrations (weddings and parties), and festivals (such as Carnival and Lunar New Year). There are many different kinds of dance from all over the world. Some dances are performed on a stage for an audience while others are forms of social dances (line dancing or salsa). Often dances have set steps that everyone in a culture or community

knows, but sometimes dance can be an individual form of self-expression.

## BALLET'S BEGINNINGS

Ballet is a form of dance that has a codified technique established hundreds of years ago in the royal courts of Italy and France. Formal group dances from the royal courts developed into the art form we know now after King Louis XIV (the “Sun King”) of France established the first ballet school, the Académie Royale de Danse, in Paris in 1662. Because this happened in France, French became the “official” language of ballet. To this day, all of the steps in ballet still have French names, so you can take a ballet class anywhere in the world and know exactly what to do.

**Can you name three different genres or styles of dance? Maybe a style of dance that you have seen on a stage, in a movie, or at a community festival? Think about the dance steps, costumes, and music. Is this a social dance that requires a group of people, or can it be performed as a solo or duet? What makes these genres similar or different? A few examples of different dance styles to think about are: ballet, jazz, hip hop, tap, and modern. There are also many different styles of folk dances and cultural dances from around the world.**

A dancer's body is his/her instrument for expression, and it must be fine tuned to meet the demands of the codified steps and movements. A unique element to ballet training is the use of turnout. Ballet requires a dancer to turn out from the hips, calves, and ankles to increase movement range and efficiency, and beauty.

## BALLET TERMS

What does it mean to be a **professional ballet dancer**?

How many years do you think it takes to become a professional ballet dancer?

Just as professional athletes must train for years before they can join a professional sports team, most ballet

dancers train for at least 10 years before they are ready to join a ballet company. Sometimes you will see kids your age in a ballet, like Clara in the seasonal treasure, *The Nutcracker*. These young dancers are still students in training at Ballet Idaho Academy.



Ballet Idaho Academy student dancer as Clara, dancing with a professional dancer

## THE LANGUAGE OF BALLET

When you take a ballet class, the ballet teacher will use French words to describe the movements. Ballet schools and dance companies all over the world use the same

French vocabulary to describe ballet steps, coining it a universal language, which emerged 350 years ago from the first ballet school in France.

Dance steps are similar to words in a sentence. It takes a lot of words to tell a story. It also takes a lot of dance steps or moves to create a ballet. When you are watching a dance performance, try to recognize some of the dance steps, positions, and vocabulary terms included in this section.

**Children in Ballet:** Whether children are cast in story ballets depends on the particular story as well as the preference of the Artistic Director. *The Nutcracker*, for example may use over 100 children, whereas *Swan Lake* does not have many child roles. Instead, advanced academy students will be cast in the Swan scene in order to build a large corps of Swans.

**Choreography:** In ballet, the dancers perform steps that a choreographer creates to communicate a story or idea to the audience. Sometimes the steps go along with the music at the same rhythm, speed, or tempo. Steps in ballet can be done in many different ways (soft or sharp, fast or slow, sudden or sustained) and they can be traditional, drawn from the hundreds of years of ballet history, or newly invented.

**Composer:** One who writes the music.

**Corps de ballet:** A group of dancers who work together as an ensemble; they form a background for the principal dancers and are the backbone of any ballet company. In *Swan Lake*, you'll notice the large corps of swans help to frame Odette, the Swan Maiden, and through movement and staging they express to the audience their protective role.

**Diagonals:** Dancers often move in a diagonal on the stage so they are not flat to the front. This creates a sense of depth for the audience, which is aesthetically pleasing.

**Entrances and Exits:** During the course of a ballet, dancers often enter and exit the stage at various times and places, which makes a dynamic impact.

**Gesture:** Movement of a body part or combination of parts, with an emphasis on the expressive aspects of the movement.



Grand Jeté

**Jeté:** A leap from one foot to the other in which the front working leg appears to have been thrown into the air. A jeté can be performed in different directions. In a grand jeté, both legs are fully extended.

**Pas de deux:** A “step of two” is a dance duet in which two dancers, typically a male and a female, perform together. In Act I of *Swan Lake*, you’ll see the White Swan dance with Prince Siegfried.

**Pantomime:** The art of telling a story through gesture, expressing a mood or an emotion or describing an action without words.

**Pirouette:** To turn; a rotation of the body on one leg.

**Pointe Shoes:** Shoes traditionally worn by female dancers that enable them to dance on the tips of their toes. Pointe shoes were originally created to help elevate the ballerina even more, in order



Pointe Shoes

to add to the ethereal quality on stage. The area covering the toe is made of layers of fabric glued together in the shape of a box covered in satin and hardened. The sole is made of hard leather to prevent the shoe from breaking when bent. To keep the shoes on tightly, the dancers sew satin ribbons and elastic to the sides and tie the ribbons securely around their ankles. For a professional dancer, a pair of pointe shoes may only last a couple of performances!

**Principal Dancer:** A principal dancer (often shortened to principal) is a dancer at the highest rank within a professional dance company, particularly a ballet company. A principal may be male or female. They are usually the star of the ballet.

**Representation of Nature:** In *Swan Lake* Act I, the dancers don white tutus and feather hair pieces to represent swans. They move elegantly across the stage, rippling their arms as if they are wings while their heads tilted at an angle to represent a swan’s long neck.

**Solo:** When a dancer takes center stage and performs alone. Prince Siegfried dances a solo in the forest to show his turmoil over turning 21 and his longing to find true love.

When you are watching a ballet, listen carefully to the orchestra and notice how the dance steps match the music. What instruments do you hear? Is the tempo fast or slow? How does the music make you feel? Does the music make you want to jump, hop, or turn? How does the music and the choreography work together to tell the story? Think about these questions when you are watching a dance performance.

Principal dancers Elizabeth Barreto and Andrew Taft



## CONVERSATION WITH PRINCIPAL DANCER ELIZABETH BARRETO

**What got you started in dance?**

My mother is a dance teacher, so I grew up in the dance studio. I began taking ballet classes when I was 3 years old.

**What is your favorite role to have danced?**

My favorite role is Princess Aurora in *The Sleeping Beauty*. I performed it several times as a student, but I performed it for the first time as a professional dancer in April, 2016, with Ballet Idaho. It was a dream come true and I loved every minute on stage.

**Why do you dance?**

**Barreto:** I dance because it makes me feel alive. It's part of who I am. I'm drawn to the challenge of striving for perfection in every movement, while finding ways to express my feelings at the same time. It never gets old or boring because there is always something to improve.

**What else do you enjoy doing?**

When I'm not dancing, I enjoy going on long walks with my dog, Charlie, and baking delicious treats. I also sew and design dance clothing.

**If you were the Artistic Director, what ballets would you present?**

If I were in charge of choosing a few ballets for the company to perform, these are some of my favorites: *Giselle*, *La Bayadere*, Jerome Robbins' *The Concert*, George Balanchine's *Stars and Stripes*, and anything by William Forsythe.

# THE HISTORY

The famous composer, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, first conceived *Swan Lake* in 1868 when traveling down the River Rhine with the Director of Moscow Imperial Theatres. During their journey, they passed many romantic ruins and castles, and together they came up with the notion to create a ballet with enchanted swans transforming into humans - a theme that is traced back to Russian and German Folklore. The first version of the ballet, which opened in 1877 at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, was for the most part a failure. Due to poor choreographic and production choices and mediocre dancing, critics were disappointed. The public was also slow to accept Tchaikovsky's symphonic score, many said it was undanceable. It wasn't until 1895, when it underwent a revival that it gained popularity, eventually becoming a national treasure. Two prominent choreographers of the time, Lev Ivanov and Marius Petipa were largely responsible for its revival and success. Both were geniuses, adding artistry and depth to their arrangements. They employed high caliber dancers and introduced new technical feats such as the 32 fouettes danced by the Black Swan. It wasn't long before *Swan Lake* captivated audiences across Europe, eventually making its way to the United States. Despite the various versions and interpretations of *Swan Lake* that exist today, it continues to endure the test of time. With its timeless love story and beauty, coupled with its magnificent musical score, *Swan Lake* remains a treasured classic throughout the world.



Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky

# THE STORY

## ACT 1, SCENE 1

Prince Siegfried arrives at his 21st birthday celebration on the palace courtyards. Here, he finds all of the royal families and townspeople dancing and celebrating, while the young girls are anxiously seeking his attention.

During the exquisite celebration, his mother gives him a crossbow. She informs him that because he is now of age, his marriage will be quickly arranged.

Hit with the sudden realization of his future responsibilities, he takes his crossbow and runs to the woods with his hunting buddies.

## Act 2

Getting ahead of the group, Prince Siegfried finds himself alone in a peaceful spot by an enchanted lake where swans gently float across its surface. While Siegfried watches, he spots the most beautiful swan with a crown on its head.

His buddies soon catch up, but he orders them to leave so he can be by himself. As dusk falls, the swan with the crown turns into the most beautiful young woman he has ever seen. Her name is Odette, the Swan Queen.

Odette informs the young prince about an evil sorcerer, Von Rothbart, who happens to be disguised as Prince Siegfried's mentor. It was Rothbart who turned her and the other girls into swans. The lake was formed by the tears of their parents' weeping. She tells him that the only way the spell can be broken is if a man, pure in heart, pledges his love to her.

The prince, about to confess his love for her,

is quickly interrupted by the evil sorcerer. He takes Odette from Prince Siegfried's embrace and commands all of the swan maidens to dance upon the lake and its shore so that the prince cannot chase them. Prince Siegfried is left all alone on the shore of Swan Lake.

### ACT 3

The next day at the formal celebration in the Royal Hall, Prince Siegfried is presented with many prospective princesses. Although the ladies are worthy of his attention, he cannot stop thinking about Odette.

His mother commands him to choose a bride, but he cannot. For the time being, he satisfies his mother's request by dancing with them.

While the prince dances, trumpets announce the arrival of Von Rothbart. He brings his daughter, Odile, on whom he has cast a spell to appear as Odette. The prince is captivated by her beauty and he dances with the imposter.

Unbeknownst to Prince Siegfried, the true Odette is watching him from a window. The prince soon confesses his love to Odile and proposes marriage, thinking that she is Odette.

Horried, Odette flees into the night. Prince Siegfried sees the real Odette running from the window and realizes his mistake.

Upon his discovery, Von Rothbart reveals to the prince the true appearance of his daughter Odile. Prince Siegfried quickly leaves the party and chases after Odette.

### ACT 4

Odette has fled to the lake and joined the rest of the girls in sadness. Prince Siegfried

finds them gathered at the shore consoling each other. He explains to Odette the trickery of Von Rothbart and she grants him her forgiveness.

It doesn't take long for Von Rothbart and Odile to appear in their evil, un-human, and somewhat bird-like forms. Von Rothbart tells the prince that he must stick to his word and marry his daughter. A fight quickly ensues.

Prince Siegfried tells Von Rothbart that he would rather die with Odette than marry Odile. He then takes Odette's hand and together they jump into the lake. The spell is broken and the remaining swans turn back into humans. They quickly drive Von Rothbart and Odile into the water where they, too, drown. The girls watch the spirits of Prince Siegfried and Odette ascend into the heavens above Swan Lake.



# ACTIVITY PAGES

# BALLET IDAHO

We encourage children and families to discover the joy and wonder of dance by taking a ballet class, watching a performance, and drawing or writing about dance. We recommend using the Study Guide to help children explore movement, learn about dance, and discover the joy of ballet. Use these activity pages before or after a performance to connect, enjoy, and reflect on the dance experience.

Parents and teachers may send activity pages and surveys to:

Ballet Idaho  
Attn: Student Matinée Programs  
501 S 8th Street  
Boise ID 83702

To learn more about Ballet Idaho, visit us online at [www.BalletIdaho.org](http://www.BalletIdaho.org) or visit the Ballet Idaho Facebook page.



# ACTIVITY PAGE - LET'S DANCE

Imagine you are a ballet dancer performing onstage. Think about the dancers, costumes, and sets needed for this performance. Are there other dancers onstage with you? What do the costumes look like? Are there sets and props to help tell the story to the audience? What kind of music is playing? Write and draw about it.

# BALLET IDAHO

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

AGE \_\_\_\_\_



What is the title of your ballet? \_\_\_\_\_

Describe what is happening on the stage. Don't leave out the details!

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## ACTIVITY PAGE - ANALYZE SWAN LAKE

### CHOREOGRAPH YOUR OWN DANCES FOR THE SNOW MAIDEN OR THE MISCHIEVOUS BLACK SWAN

There have been many choreographers of *Swan Lake* from Ivanov to Balanchine to Peter Anastos. You can even choreograph your own ballet! One popular scene in Act 1 is when Prince Siegfried goes off to the forest to hunt with his hunting buddies. Another contrasting dance is performed by the Swans.

How would you imagine Prince Siegfried and the Swan Maiden, Odette, would dance when they first meet in the woods? How do you think this would contrast with the style of the evil Black Swan who eventually tricks Prince Siegfried into loving her instead? Come up with a movement phrase bringing out the different characteristics of the White Swan and Von Rothbart.

### USING MATH SKILLS AS A CHOREOGRAPHER

Choreographers use math all the time, oftentimes without even realizing it. Below are some ways that choreographers may use math in *Swan Lake*. Perhaps you can help them through their process!

- If there are 16 Swans in the scene at the lake and the choreographer places 4 Swans center stage, how many would he need to place on each side to create a symmetrical scene?
- If a choreographer has 48 counts to fill at the King's Palace and gives equal portions to Prince Siegfried and each of his 5 friends, how many counts does each dancer have to make something up?

- A choreographer has 64 counts left to complete the White Swan Pas De Deux (dance for two). During these 64 counts, he plans to give each dancer 16 counts to dance solo, and then have them dance together. Out of these 64 counts, how many counts will they be dancing together?

### WATCH AND LEARN

Watch the Black Swan Pas De Deux on YouTube. After watching the video clip, describe what you saw:

- Describe the dancers' movements.
- Do the movements convey emotion?
- How does the music make you feel?
- Is the tempo fast or slow?
- How does the music influence the dancers' movements?
- Did you see some of the ballet terminology described earlier?

ACTIVITY PAGE -  
DRAW SWAN LAKE

Draw a picture of your favorite part of the ballet, *Swan Lake*.



Why is this your favorite part of the performance? How did it make you feel?

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Is this your first ballet performance? Yes / No

Did you enjoy the performance? Yes / No

How did the dancers communicate during the performance?

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POST-PERFORMANCE SURVEY  
TEACHERS



School \_\_\_\_\_ *Swan Lake*, Friday April 20, 2018 12:30pm

What are the ages of the children who attended the performance with you? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you accompany your students to other performing or visual arts programs? Yes / No

If yes, which? Museums / Theater / Symphony / Opera / Other \_\_\_\_\_

I used the Study Guide in preparing students for the performance. Yes / No

Approximately how much time did you spend on pre- and post-performance discussion and activities with your students? < 1 hour / 1-3 hours / 3-6 hours / > 6 hours

Which section(s) of this Study Guide did you find most useful? \_\_\_\_\_

Which section(s) of this Study Guide did you find least useful? \_\_\_\_\_

The volume of information provided in the Study Guide is too much / sufficient / too little.

What other materials or subject matter would help you to prepare children to see the ballet?

Describe any difference you perceive in the usefulness of this material for boys and girls.

How satisfied were you with the overall experience?

Very satisfied / Satisfied / Somewhat Satisfied / Not satisfied.

Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

Was this your first live ballet performance? Yes / No

Would you like to see another ballet? Yes / No

What would make the performance a more interesting experience?

Scheduling: What month, day, and performance time is most convenient for your group?

Month	Day of Week	Performance Time
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How could we improve this Study Guide? \_\_\_\_\_

Please send surveys and activity pages to Ballet Idaho, Attn: Student Matinée Programs  
501 S 8th Street, Boise ID 83702. Pick-up may be organized by contacting  
CBollinger@balletidaho.org or 208-343-0556 x231.