



# GISELLE

October 28 - 30, 2016

Benedum Center · Pittsburgh

PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE

AUDIENCE PRODUCTION GUIDE

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## Audience Production Guide for

# GISELLE

**October 28 - 30, 2016**

### **The Benedum Center for the Performing Arts**

**Choreography** Jean Coralli, Jules Perrot, Marius Petipa  
**Staged at PBT by** Terrence S. Orr and Marianna Tcherkassky

**Music** Adolphe Adam

**Libretto** Jules Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Théophile Gautier

**World Premiere** The Paris Opera, June 28, 1841

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## Romantic Ballet



Christopher Budzynski and Alexandra Kochis in *Giselle*, 2012 Photo by Aimee DiAndrea

*Giselle* is one of those ballets we keep coming back to. Filled with emotion and drama, and requiring perfect technique and grace, it remains—at 175 years old—one of the most popular and beloved ballets of all time.

*Giselle* was created during the Romantic era in ballet, which dates roughly from the late 1820s to 1870. Before this time ballet themes were drawn from Greek and Roman mythology and from stories of heroic deeds. Ballet dancers were primarily men—

and costumes, shoes and wigs were heavy and formal. The art form celebrated the aristocracy and political and social power.

The Romantic Movement changed all of that. Romantic artists rejected *The Enlightenment*—the dominant cultural force of the 18th century—which highly valued science and the pursuit of knowledge. Romanticism's favorite themes were directly opposite: the mysteries of nature, imagination, emotion and the supernatural. Artists' subjects were everyday folks, the simple life, an idealized past, and the beauty of the natural world. They wrote and painted about the afterlife, transcendent love, and the conflict between humans and nature. Their pursuit wasn't for knowledge per se, but for a sometimes indefinable, unattainable "ideal." These themes took hold in ballet and began to shift its presentation dramatically. It began to explore the inner psyche of its characters, and to reflect on the profound human experiences of good and evil, of love and death.

Movement in ballet changed as well. There was a willowy and rounded look, technical skills still required power and control but also a softer execution. Choreography was becoming more expressive, more intentional, more symbolic—and it became an essential part of ballet storytelling.

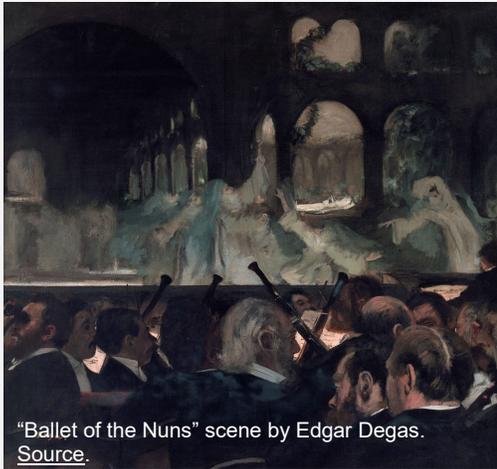


### The Ballerina Comes into her Own

With the Romantic era came a fundamental shift of focus to the ballerina. She was often now an ethereal spirit or fairy (an unattainable woman) and costuming evolved to help her achieve that look. Her skirt, made of flowing layers of light fabric, rose to mid-calf—we know it now as the Romantic tutu (the pancake-like classical tutu wouldn't appear until later in the century). The audience could see her intricate footwork, as well as a new style of shoe being worn by ballerinas. This shoe, the prototype of the current pointe shoe, allowed the dancer to dance *nearly* on the tips of her toes (true pointe shoes came several decades later), making her appear weightless, and as if she were floating, skimming the surface of the stage. She looked positively otherworldly.

Christine Schwaner as *Giselle*, 2012, photo Rich Sofranko

**A Romantic Evolution:** Early ballets that helped invent and define Romantic ballet and set the stage for *Giselle*:



***Robert le Diable***, an 1831 opera by Giacomo Meyerbeer, included a ballet by Filippo Taglioni. The opera tells the story of Robert, the son of a mortal mother and the Devil. Act 3 is known as “Ballet of the Nuns” —a creepy scene of veiled (and dead) nuns emerging from their graveyard tombs to dance. Act 2 in *Giselle*, with its dance of the Wilis, echoes this scene. Taglioni’s daughter Marie, was the lead nun.



The ballet ***La Sylphide*** debuted in 1832 and again starred Marie Taglioni. Théophile Gautier, a distinguished French dance critic and author—and the primary creative force behind *Giselle*—was in the audience. The setting of Act I is in an ordinary village; Act II is a supernatural world. The ballet’s structure and its tragic love story, involving a *sylph* or spirit, foreshadowed *Giselle*.

Marie made ballet history in *La Sylphide*, becoming the first ballerina to dance an entire ballet on pointe. She was also the first to hike up her skirt and introduce the Romantic tutu to the world.

Marie Taglioni in *La Sylphide*. [Source.](#)

## About *Giselle*

The inspiration for *Giselle*, which premiered at the Paris Opera in 1841, came from Théophile Gautier, a prominent Romantic Era writer and critic. He was fascinated by two ghost stories: one was a Slavic legend about Wilis, young maidens who were engaged to be married but who died of grief after being jilted by their fiancés. Their spirits haunted the highways in the dark of night, luring young men and forcing them to dance to their deaths. The other story is Victor Hugo’s *Fantômes*, a poem about a young woman whose passion for dance leads her to her grave, where even “her ashes . . . gently move.”

Gautier was thrilled by the possibilities that these ghosts held for ballet. He collaborated with librettist Jules Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges to quickly write a scenario; they then consulted with renowned choreographer Jules Perrot, who thought it would be a perfect vehicle for the talents of a rock star ballerina (and Perrot’s lover), Carlotta Grisi. Composer Adolphe Adam, working on another project at the Opera, was so taken with the story that he put everything on hold and quickly composed the score for *Giselle*. Ballet Master Jean Coralli at the Paris Opera worked with Perrot to design the choreography.

What they created together became one of the supreme achievements of ballet, a work that’s been performed across the world for almost two centuries. Marius Petipa (*The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*) restaged the ballet at the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg in 1903, the version on which most modern productions are based.

# The Story

## Synopsis

### Act I

The setting is a vineyard village bordering the Rhine River in Germany. In the early morning Count Albrecht, accompanied by his squire Wilfred, arrives. The Count has been captivated by the beautiful peasant maiden, Giselle, whose love of life and free spirit are expressed by her passion for dancing. Albrecht and Wilfred retreat inside a cottage that neighbors Giselle's home.



Villagers greet Giselle's mother, Berthe, as they pass through on their way to gather the last of the grapes before the Harvest Festival.

Hilarion, the village huntsman and a gamekeeper to the court, returns from his early morning chores. He is in love with Giselle and leaves a bouquet of flowers at her cottage door.

Count Albrecht emerges from his cottage disguised as the peasant, Loys. Wilfred inspects his disguise and expresses some concern. Albrecht dismisses him and Wilfred leaves reluctantly. Albrecht, in his guise as Loys, excuses himself from the grape-pickers so that he can be alone with Giselle. He swears eternal love to her, and she performs the traditional daisy test, "he loves me, he loves me not." Hilarion interrupts protesting that he, not Loys, truly loves Giselle. A quarrel ensues, and Albrecht instinctively reaches for his sword, which as a nobleman he is accustomed to wearing. This behavior strikes Hilarion as odd.

The villagers return, and Giselle invites them to join in dance to celebrate the harvest. Berthe warns Giselle that her life may be endangered if she overexerts herself dancing because she has a frail heart. Berthe is struck by a hallucination of her daughter in death. She sees her as a Willi, a restless spirit who has died with her love unrequited.

A horn sounds in the distance, and Wilfred rushes in to warn Albrecht that the Prince of Courland and his hunting party are about to arrive. Hilarion witnesses this exchange and is puzzled by the deference the squire pays to Loys. As Wilfred and Albrecht hastily depart, Hilarion breaks into Albrecht's cottage. The royal hunting party arrives led by the Prince of Courland and his daughter, Bathilde. Giselle and Berthe offer them rest and refreshments. Bathilde is taken by Giselle's charm and beauty. The two confide in one another and learn that they are both engaged to be married. Bathilde presents Giselle with a gold medallion for her dowry. After the royal party leaves to return to the hunt, Hilarion emerges from Albrecht's cottage with a hunting horn and sword, evidence that Loys is actually a nobleman.





The villagers return and proclaim Giselle the Queen of the Harvest Festival and she dances for them in appreciation. Hilarion interrupts the festivities to denounce Loys as an impostor. Albrecht tries to deny these charges and threatens Hilarion with the sword. Hilarion blows the hunting horn, a signal for the Prince to return, and the hunting party reenters. Loys' true identity as Count Albrecht is exposed when Bathilde reveals that he is her fiancé. The devastation of learning of Albrecht's duplicity is too much for

Giselle's frail constitution. Losing her will to live, she dies of a broken heart.

## Act II

The scene is set in a clearing in the forest where Giselle's grave lies. Hilarion is beside Giselle's grave mourning her death. After being frightened by ghostly visions, Hilarion flees into the forest.

Out of the mist the Wilis are summoned by their Queen, Myrtha, to attend the ceremonies that will initiate Giselle into



their sisterhood. The Wilis are spirits of affianced maidens who died as a result of being jilted by untruthful lovers. With their love unrequited, their spirits are forever destined to roam the forest from midnight to dawn, vengefully trapping any male who enters their domain and forcing him to dance to his death. Hilarion reenters the clearing and is trapped by the vengeful Wilis. He is commanded to dance to his death.



Albrecht, who arrives to leave flowers on Giselle's grave, is also trapped. Myrtha commands him to dance until he dies, but Giselle comes to his rescue. Propelled by her love for Albrecht, she dances for him and with him—sustaining him until dawn, when the Wilis lose their power. Albrecht is saved from death and Giselle returns to her grave. Her pure love and selfless forgiveness free her spirit from the Wilis' fate, and she rests in peace for eternity.



## He Loves Me, He Loves Me Not

This game that kids have played for centuries plays an important part in *Giselle*: it symbolizes Albrecht’s deceit. Giselle and Albrecht play the game with a daisy; Giselle cuts it short when she fears the last petal will indicate that “he loves me not” (she is right, of course as he is secretly engaged to Bathilde). Albrecht takes the flower, plucks a petal, and fools Giselle into believing that the game’s prediction is “he loves me.”

The game originated in France where it is called *effeuiller la marguerite*. It’s not known exactly how old it is, though the earliest printed recording is from a nun’s songbook published in 1471.

Steven Annegarn and Janet Popeleski in PBT’s *Giselle*, 1990. Photo by Randy Choura

## That Gives Me the Willies!



Could this phrase have been inspired by *Giselle*? There are other theories, but the ballet’s corps of ghostly Wilis are contenders! The Wilis—young maidens who were engaged to be married, but who died after being jilted by their fiancés—are spirits (dressed in wedding gowns) who haunt the night and lure young men, forcing them to dance to their deaths.

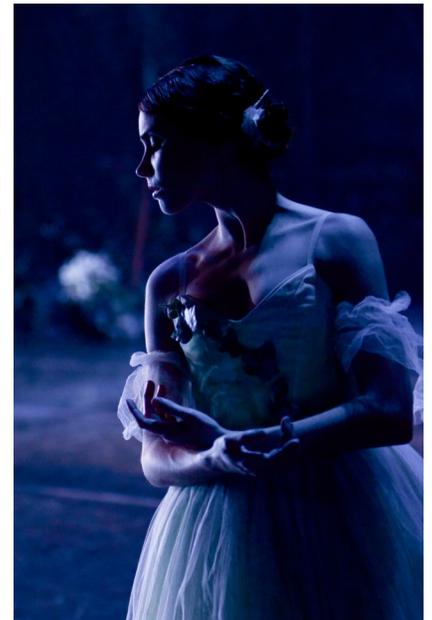
Wilis were around before *Giselle*: Theophile Gautier, who co-wrote the ballet, read a legend about them in Heinrich Heine’s *De l’Allemagne*. He describes them as

*...attired in their bridal dresses, with garlands of flowers on their heads, and shining rings on their fingers, the Wilis dance in the moonlight . . . their faces, although white as snow, are beautiful in their youthfulness...*

The legend was widespread and pronunciation and characterization varied slightly around Eastern Europe. Other variations include *Vila* (female vampire), *Veela*, *Wila*, and *Willies*. In Serbian legend they were maidens cursed by God; in Bulgaria they were girls who

died before they were baptized; in Poland they were young girls floating through the air atoning for frivolous past lives.

In *Giselle*, the Wilis are frightening but also tragic figures. It is thought that one detail in the ballet conveys some of their heartache: the Wilis stand with their arms crossed low across their torsos, as if they are holding phantom babies who will never be born—from marriages that never took place.



Elyssa Hotchkiss as Myrtha, photo by Nicholas Coppula; Caitlin Peabody as a Willi, photo by Aimee DiAndrea. 2012 production.

## A Harry Potter Connection

Author J.K. Rowling introduced Wili-like creatures in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*—her Veelas are creatures whose entrancing beauty can compel men to dance until they die,

## Mime in Giselle

Prior to *Giselle*, ballets made heavy use of pantomime. *Giselle* has its share but also relied on the choreography to tell the story. Here are a few mime translations from the ballet:



Eva Trapp and Christine Schwaner, 2012, photo by Aimee DiAndrea

**Marriage/engagement** (left): right hand points to left ring finger. Giselle and Bathilde tell each other they're engaged, but at first they don't know it's to the same man!

**Love:** one or two hands over the heart.

**Dance:** hands circle each other over the head.

**Beauty:** one hand circles the face.

**What's going on here?** Arms outstretched, palms up and level with hips. This gesture also can ask "where?"



Christopher Budzynski and Julia Erickson, 2012, photo by Nicholas Coppola

**Die / death** (left): hands outstretched, crossed at wrists, a very strong motion. Myrtha tells Albrecht several times that the Wilis are going to kill him. Bertha also makes this motion when she worries that Giselle will die from dancing too much.

**Asking/begging:** hands clasped in front of body.

**Promise/vow/swear:** two fingers raised overhead. Albrecht swears his love for Giselle and sets in motion the ballet's tragedy.

**Don't miss the mime sequence in Act I between Berthe and Giselle—here (loosely!) is the exchange:**

Berthe—arms outstretched toward the ground, palms up, asks Giselle: *What have you been doing here?*

Giselle motions to Albrecht and circles arms above the head: *He and I have been dancing.*

Berthe crosses her forearms several times indicating "no!"—and then sharply crosses her wrists: *You shouldn't! If you dance you will die!*

She looks into Giselle's eyes and has a premonition of the Wilis; then looks up as if seeing something floating by: *Over there, in the forest.* Looks toward the villagers: *Have you seen them?*

She stoops and motions: *They rise out of the ground.* She covers her face indicating a veil: *They are ghosts—Wilis!*

Crosses forearms over her chest and covers her face with her hands, as if a corpse being buried in a coffin: *They will take you to your grave.*

## The Choreography

*Giselle* was originally created by Jean Coralli, ballet master at the Paris Opera, and Jules Perrot a dramatic and expressive dancer and one of the most important choreographers of the Romantic Era. Many of today's productions of *Giselle* rely on the revisions made by Marius Petipa, the most celebrated choreographer of the Classical Era, and creator of *The Nutcracker*, *Swan Lake*, and dozens of other ballets. His version is well documented and we know more about it than the Perrot/Coralli original.

Petipa had a long association with *Giselle*. His brother Lucien was the original Albrecht in the 1841 premiere, and Marius himself danced the role in 1850 as dancer at the Imperial Theater in St. Petersburg, Russia. Perrot was ballet master there at the time and Petipa would have learned from Perrot the intent and design of the original choreography.

Soon Perrot left Russia and Petipa became ballet master, remaining at the Imperial Theater for decades. He revised *Giselle* several times, in 1884, 1887, and 1899. His last revision was in 1903 for the legendary ballerina Anna Pavlova, whose soft, lyrical style influenced this final version. The revision was notated in the Stepanov method of choreographic notation and is in the collection of Harvard University Libraries. Pacific Northwest Ballet in recent years produced a version of *Giselle* the closely follows this record.

### Signature Steps

As with some of Adam's musical passages, certain steps in the choreography act as a leitmotif for a character or feeling. Watch for two of these signature steps in the ballet:



**Ballonné** (bouncing step or hop). This light, airy step symbolizes Giselle's innocence and joy and her love for dancing; she utilizes it in several sequences in Act I. In one solo (added by Petipa in 1887) Giselle performs 32 *ballonnés* on pointe in a row, a major challenge for even the strongest ballerina. Watch the variation [here](#) (the ballonné steps begin at 1:20).

**Arabesque** (left, a position in which one leg is raised behind; usually one or both arms are outstretched in front of the body). The *arabesque* is the signature position and step of Myrtha and the Wilis in Act II. Their arabesques come in many forms and shapes—in particular they dance in a “flattened” arabesque, hopping menacingly across the stage on flat feet. Giselle enters Wili-hood with a set of lightning turns in arabesque. Her choreography overall however is more airborne than the others’—she rises above their fate.

Christine Schwaner and Alexandre Silva, 2012, photo by Aimee DiAndrea

*Ballet blanc* (in which the corps de ballet is dressed all in white with completely unified choreography) is one of ballet's most dramatic conventions. It is beautifully realized in Act II. The Wilis did *ballet-blanc* before the swans in *Swan Lake* and the shades in *La Bayadère*—and are both more frightening and more heartbreaking, dressed in their bridal gowns for wedding days that never came.



Artists of Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, photo by Nicholas Coppola.

## The Role of Giselle



*Giselle* is one of the supreme tests of a ballerina's art: the technical and dramatic requirements are nearly unparalleled in ballet. She must infuse her movement with a huge range of emotion: from giddy infatuation to terrible desperation and disbelief. As a Wili, she has to express intense heartache and loving forgiveness through pristine and virtuoso technique.



The “mad scene” is uniquely challenging as it relies so much on the ballerina's acting skills: she hardly dances at all in the 7-minute long scene. As Albrecht's betrayal becomes all too clear to her and everyone in the village, Giselle can't take it in. She replays in her mind—with halting steps and distracted motions—the daisy scene, where he swore his love to her; she stumbles through the steps of their first pas de deux. Her hair comes down, her anguish on full display. Finally, she dies, from a weak and broken heart.

Top left: Christine Schwaner; top right: Gabrielle Thurlow, JoAnna Schmidt, Alexandra Kochis; left: Alexandra Kochis. Photos by Aimee DiAndrea. Middle photo: Alexandra Kochis by Rich Sofranko.

## “One of the Greatest Giselles:” PBT Ballet Mistress Marianna Tcherkassky

. . . you can tell it never left her. . . she has so much to teach, sometimes, it’s overwhelming.

Former PBT principal Christine Schwaner



Marianna Tcherkassky and Alexandra Kochis at a 2012 *Giselle* rehearsal, by Almee DiAndrea.

In 1976 Marianna Tcherkassky was a soloist with American Ballet Theatre, rehearsing for a performance of *Giselle* in Washington, DC. Principals Gelsey Kirkland and Mikhail Baryshnikov were to perform the roles of Giselle and Albrecht. With only five days until the performance, Kirkland was injured and had to withdraw from the production. Baryshnikov asked Marianna to take Kirkland’s place.

Marianna had never rehearsed the title role but in those five days she made it her own. She has said it was as if she had prepared for it her whole life. As early as the age of four, she remembers watching a film of *Giselle*, and at seven, her mother, a ballet teacher and a former professional dancer herself, began to give Marianna ballet lessons in their home. From that point on this young girl decided not necessarily that she wanted to be a dancer, but that she wanted to be Giselle.

Her performance with Baryshnikov was acclaimed for her technical prowess and sensitive artistry: the *Washington Post* praised her as “a dancer of exceptional taste... as Giselle

last night she showed us genuinely new heights of achievement.” The *New York Times* called her “one of the greatest Giselles America has ever produced.” Promoted to principal dancer, Marianna went on to dance Giselle in dozens of performances with ABT. Ten years later, the Times again praised as one of the best in the world. Now, as PBT’s ballet mistress, Marianna brings her understanding and love of *Giselle* as she coaches PBT’s dancers. “[Giselle’s] themes are universal and timeless. It’s about love and redemption and forgiveness and tolerance,” she says. “I’ve been very fortunate to live in and create this beautiful world.”

**Ms. Tcherkassky speaks on the role of Giselle at Insights on Saturday, Oct. 29 at 7 PM at the theater. 8 PM performance ticket required. Reservations: [education@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:education@pittsburghballet.org). Here she discusses coaching Giselle in a 2012 [PBT video](#); Watch her dance [the pas de deux](#) in Act II of the ballet with Frank Augustyn.**

## The Music

Adophe Adam (1803-1856) was an energetic and prolific composer, with more than 50 operas and 12 ballets to his credit. His most famous works are the ballets *Giselle* and *Le Corsaire* (1856) and the Christmas hymn *O Holy Night* (1847). He was also an instructor at the Paris Conservatory where one of his students was Leo Delibes, composer of the ballets *Coppelia* and *Sylvia*.

Adam composed the score for *Giselle* quickly; he had an outline in three weeks. He worked closely with the choreographers, tailoring the music to the action taking place on stage. He also perfected the use of *leitmotif*—a repeating theme that refers to a specific character or emotion—as a narrative device. Giselle, Albrecht and Hilarion have their own leitmotifs, as do the Wilis. Their theme is used twice as a foreboding premonition, even before the Wilis appear: it’s heard in Berthe’s warning to Giselle in Act I, and also during the “mad” scene, after Giselle discovers Albrecht’s betrayal. When the Wilis finally appear in Act II, we realize we have already been musically warned about them. Another motif to listen for: Giselle and Albrecht’s love theme, which first occurs during the daisy scene pas de deux (dance for two), and which is poignantly echoed in the mad scene.

**Join Maestro Charles Barker for a pre-show discussion of *Giselle*’s beautiful score, Saturday, Oct. 29 at 1 PM; 2 PM performance ticket required. Reservations and information: 412-454-9109 or [education@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:education@pittsburghballet.org).**

Over the years the score for *Giselle* has moved away from the original as numerous conductors and productions added their own flavor. For our production, PBT Maestro Charles Barker has reworked the score to bring it closer to Adam's original music.



A few pieces that are not Adam's remain in the ballet to this day (Maestro Barker has maintained these in our current production). Click on the title to see these dances from a 1977 American Ballet Theatre production.

[Giselle's Variation](#), Act I. Also called *Pas seul*; composed for Marius Petipa's 1887 production, probably by Riccardo Drigo, though Ludwig Minkus is also often credited. (Video shows Natalia Makarova as Giselle; variation begins at 3:50)

[Peasant Pas de Deux](#), Act I (pictured left). This music, by Johann Frederich Burgmüller, was added at the last minute before the premiere performance in 1841. A wealthy ballet patron requested a dance be created for his mistress, dancer Natalie Fitzjames. (Video features PBT Ballet Mistress Marianna Tcherkassky; pas de deux begins at 2:25).

Nicholas Coppula and Eva Trapp, 2012, photo by Aiimee DiAndrea

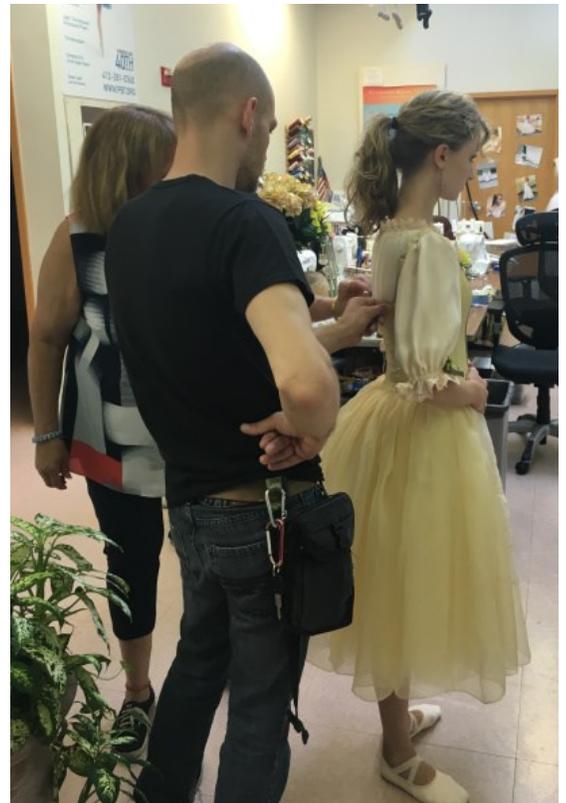
## Costumes and Sets

Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre received a generous donation to create all new costumes and sets for *Giselle* in honor of Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr's 20th anniversary season. We contracted with legendary British ballet and theater designer Peter Farmer to create the designs. Costumes were built in PBT's Costume Shop under the direction of Costumier Janet Groom Campbell and sets were painted at Michael Hagen Studios in upstate New York.

Campbell and her staff of artists brought Farmer's costume sketches to life: drawing custom patterns, hand dying fabric and stitching and adorning a total of 85 costumes, including the romantic tutus for the Wilis. In all the project has used over a quarter of a mile of white tulle!

The costume and scenic designs are crucial to the story's startling shift in setting. The ballet opens with the autumnal colors of a sunny harvest festival; in Act II, the curtain rises on a completely different world—a misty, moonlit forest shrouded in mystery and danger, and inhabited by spectral ballerinas. The set design visually announces the ballet's central conflicts—between good and evil and between the physical and spiritual worlds.

Wonderful insight into creating the costumes (along with photos and video) can be found on the Costume Shop's [Building a Ballet](#) blog. Also check out an [Art from the Ground Up](#) segment on the costumes on WESA radio.



## Designer Peter Farmer

Opulent fabrics, misty scenes and inventive ornamentation are hallmarks of Peter Farmer's work. His costume and scenic designs are works of art in their own right and have been exhibited by art galleries in the U.S. and Europe.

Born in England in 1941, Mr. Farmer received a traditional art school education and quickly became a successful young artist. He was soon seduced by the theatre and by stage design, creating his first *Giselle* for Britain's Ballet Rambert. Farmer's other *Giselle* productions include the Stuttgart Ballet, Dutch National Ballet, Australian Ballet, The Royal Ballet, and Houston Ballet.

Mr. Farmer has had a long association with PBT, creating its 1990 production of George Balanchine's *The Nutcracker* as well as Andre Prokovsky's *The Great Gatsby*, which had its world premiere in Pittsburgh in 1987.

## Flowers in *Giselle*

Props in the ballet include a number of different flowers, which have special meaning in the story:

**Daisy** (from the "he loves me/he loves me not" scene): Daisies are associated with purity and innocence, traits so evident also in Giselle.

Myrtha carries **myrtle**, which was used traditionally in bridal bouquets and symbolizes marital fidelity. Myrtha's name is also derived from the flower.

**Rosemary**: Myrtha also has a wand made of rosemary, which is known as the herb of remembrance. Historically it has been used in rituals for the dead and planted at gravesites.

**Lilies**: Lilies are the traditional flowers of funerals, symbolizing rebirth of the soul at death. Albrecht brings lilies to Giselle's grave; she then dances with them, tossing them for him to pick up. She gives more lilies to Albrecht to show that her love for him hasn't died. At the end of the ballet, the flowers are all he has left of Giselle.



## PBT Connects

Join us at the theater to learn more about *Giselle*! Visit [PBT Connects](#) at our website!

**Family Pointe: Saturday, Oct. 29 at 1 p.m.** Maestro Charles Barker explores *Giselle*'s beautiful score. Patrons of all ages are welcome! Benedum Rehearsal Studio B (enter on Liberty Ave.). Reservations: [\(412\) 454-9109](tel:412-454-9109) or [education@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:education@pittsburghballet.org).

**Insights: Saturday, Oct. 29 at 7 p.m.** Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr & Ballet Mistress Marianna Tcherkassky discuss the ballet and the role of Giselle. Mezzanine level. Please reserve a spot: [education@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:education@pittsburghballet.org) or 412-454-9109.

**Talks with Terry: Sunday, Oct. 30 at 1 p.m.** Take this special opportunity to watch the Company as they finish their warm-up class on stage and talk with Artistic Director Terrence S. Orr about the production. In the theater. No reservations necessary.

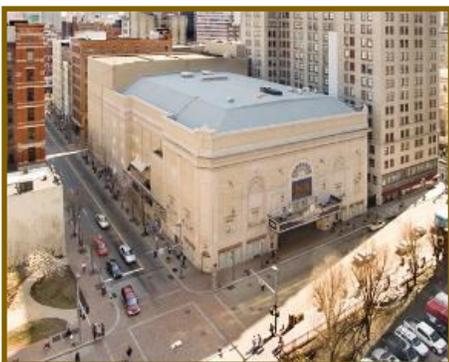
## Accessibility

In conjunction with the Benedum Center for Performing Arts, we are pleased to offer:

- Wheelchair accessibility
- Braille and large print programs available at the theater
- Assistive listening devices
- Audio recordings of select program notes. Click [here](#).
- Sign Language Interpretation and Closed Captioning for select ballets. (These services not available for *Giselle*.)
- Audio-described performance: Saturday, Oct. 29 at 8 PM

For more information about all of these programs please visit the [accessibility page](#) on PBT's website. Should you have a special request that is not listed above or have any questions about our accessibility services, please do not hesitate to contact at 412-454-9105 or [accessibility@pittsburghballet.org](mailto:accessibility@pittsburghballet.org). For more information about the accessibility services at the Benedum Center for the Performing Arts, please visit their [accessibility page](#).

## The Benedum Center



The Benedum Center for the Performing Arts is the crown jewel of the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust and the Cultural District in downtown Pittsburgh. It was renovated in 1987 and is on the National Register of Historic Landmarks. The 2800 seat theatre used to be the Stanley Theater, still visible on the lighted marquees outside. It has the third largest stage in the United States measuring 144 feet wide by 78 feet deep. The Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre, Pittsburgh Opera, and Pittsburgh Civic Light Opera all use the Benedum for their performances.

[Learn](#) more about the Benedum Center. [Investigate](#) the Stanley Theatre's role in music history here in Pittsburgh.