



BNY MELLON PRESENTS
PITTSBURGH BALLET THEATRE
AND
DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM

Student Matinee!
March 14 and 22, 2019

PBT + DTH



- Pittsburgh Ballet Theatre is a ballet company here in Pittsburgh and Dance Theatre of Harlem is a ballet company from New York City. DTH is coming to Pittsburgh to dance with PBT for two weeks in March.
- DTH also came 2 years ago to perform with PBT.



- This video was made when DTH came to dance with PBT in 2017. In the video you'll see Virginia Johnson, the director of DTH, and Terrence S. Orr, the director of PBT, discussing why they think it's important that the two companies are collaborating in this way.

The matinee is a mixed repertory performance.

Balamouk - 12 minutes long (performed by DTH)

- 10-minute pause (stay in your seats!) -

Orange - 18 minutes long (performed by both companies together)

- 10-minute pause (stay in your seats!) -

Rubies - 19 minutes long (performed by PBT)

After the performance we'll have a Question and Answer session with dancers!
(about 30 minutes)

This performance is different from a story ballet like *The Nutcracker* or *Swan Lake*. Instead of one long ballet this is three shorter ballets.

Contemporary Ballet



The ballet style that you'll see at the matinee are neo-classical and contemporary ballet.

Classical and Neo-classical Ballet



Contemporary ballet is different from classical ballet. What are some of the differences you see here?

Classical: balance, symmetry, vertical, elaborate costumes

Neo-classical: off-balance and off center, costumes are lighter and simpler

Classical versus Neo-classical Ballet

Classical

Pointe work

Turn-out of the legs

Detailed narrative

Heavy theater sets / costumes

Graceful, flowing, precise movements

Ethereal qualities

Balance is vertically centered

Symmetry important

Neo-classical

Pointe work (Mostly)

Turn-out sometimes altered

Plotless / non narrative

Minimal sets / costumes

emphasis on athleticism
Increased speed, energy and attack

More grounded and real qualities
Sleekly modern and sophisticated look

Balance can be off-center

patterning important



In this video a ballet teacher coaches a dancer in neo-classical ballet, and they discuss the differences between classical and neo-classical ballet.

“Hear the dance and see the music.”

- Choreographer George Balanchine

1. The dancer in the video mentions this quote by Balanchine - discuss with class what they think it means.

Background on the ballets



Balamouk

Performed by Dance
Theater of Harlem



Balamouk means “house of the insane” - it is the name of the music that is used in the ballet.

The ballet is new - it was created just last fall for Dance Theatre of Harlem.

Choreographed by
Annabelle Lopez
Ochoa



Annabelle Lopez Ochoa creates contemporary ballets. She has a Belgian mother and a Columbian father, and grew up speaking French and Spanish. Her heritage influences how she creates her choreography, because of her mixed background she is inspired to use a fusion of different music and dance styles. In Balamouk you'll see ballet, modern dance and African and Latin dance styles..

“Until the age of seven I thought I was white, then my mother put me in front of a mirror and said; see who you really are; a young girl with Colombian origins.”



In this video Ms. Lopez Ochoa you can hear a little bit about her and her style of ballet (about :15 to 1:30 if you don't want to watch the whole thing - about 3 minutes)



This is part of the music of Balamouk. Klezmer music - Yiddish / Jewish music from Eastern Europe, used a lot at weddings and celebrations. Very happy and jazzy music.



“Sparkling and joyous”

“Kaleidoscopic”

“Layered and colorful”

This ballet is very colorful and vibrant and bursting full of ballet and dance.

Orange

Performed by both DTH
and PBT dancers together



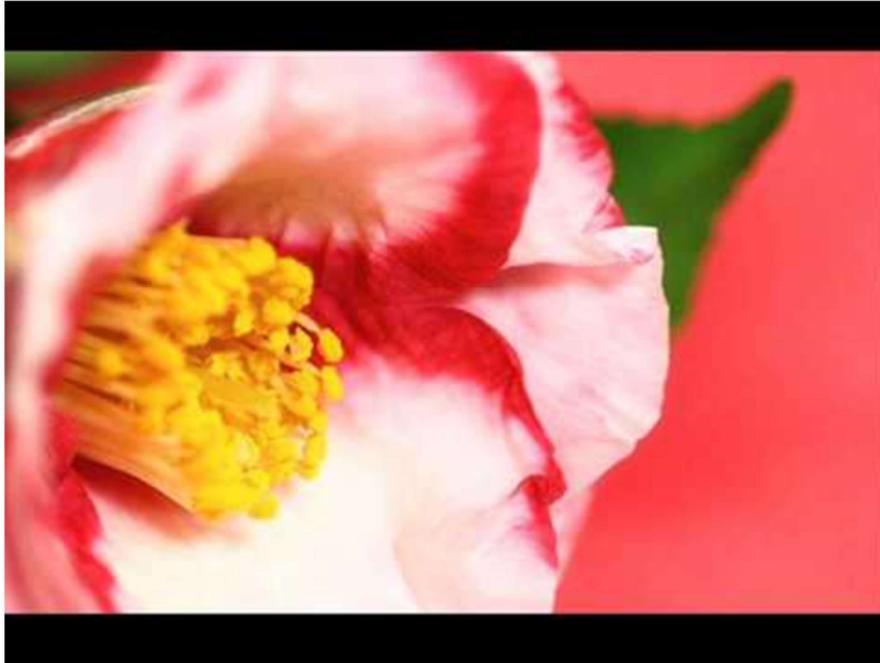
Stanton Welch, Houston Ballet



Stanton Welch is the artistic director of Houston Ballet. He was a principal dancer with Australian Ballet and has created ballets for many American and international ballet companies.



Video: 0:00 - 2:12: Welch describes his background and how he became a choreographer, and how he creates ballets



All of the music in the ballet is by composer Antonio Vivaldi. Here is the first music you'll here in the ballet: "Concerto for oboe, strings and continuo in F major"
Gentler than the Balamouk music but lively and sparkling and beautiful



The ballet is for 3 couples. Classical ballet movement with pointe shoes and beautiful lifts and turns, but also modern dance movement - you'll even see dancers rolling on the ground!

Rubies

Performed by Pittsburgh
Ballet Theatre





Choreographed by George Balanchine

He is the most important ballet choreographer for the last 100 years.

He is called the father of contemporary or neoclassical ballet. He took classical ballet and modernized it, made it more athletic, gave it more speed. He wanted to stretch the limits of ballet and the human body as far as they would go.



One day Balanchine walked by a jewelry store in New York City and saw some beautiful jewelry in the window. He loved the way the jewels sparked, how they were cut, their colors and their brilliance. He was inspired to make a ballet that expressed some of the beautiful characteristics of the jewels.



So Balanchine created a ballet called *Jewels* in 1967. *Rubies* is one section of that ballet. The other sections are *Emeralds* and *Diamonds*.



Video: 1:25 - 1:33 In this video ballet teachers and dancers talk about *Rubies* and it's style and movement.



In *Rubies* you will see the speed and the athleticism that Balanchine loved to show off in his dancers. The movements are formal ballet steps but they are also sassy, athletic, jazzy and sharp.

<https://www.nycballet.com/ballets/r/rubies.aspx>

Video: A clip of *Rubies* from New York City Ballet - (45 seconds - scroll down on the page to the video) What are some adjectives that would describe the movement of *Rubies*?



The music is by a Russian composer named Igor Stravinsky. He wrote the music in 1929. Balanchine chose this music because he felt it revealed the essence of each of the jewels in the ballet. It's called Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra. Capriccio means a lively piece of music that's fairly short and free-form, not structured. This capriccio is very jazzy and sparkly, and Balanchine created movement to match those traits in the music.

The costumes were created by a designer named Karinska. She was a famous ballet costume designer - she knew how to make costumes dancers could move in but that also really made the dancers' movements even more noticeable, beautiful and exciting.

The August Wilson Cultural Center



The matinee is at the August Wilson Cultural Center, which is named after a famous African-American playwright from Pittsburgh. The theater seats 450 people and gives the audience an up close and personal view of the performance!

Reverence - Appreciation and Gratitude



Every ballet class and every ballet performance end with “reverence” (re ver AHNCE).

-like a bow or curtsy

- It serves as a sort of “finish” to the class and is a gesture of mutual appreciation among all present - students, teachers, musicians. It also is an expression of gratitude and respect for the traditions and beauty of the artform.