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*indicates activities to help your trip to the ballet tie in to the Common Core State Standards

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*Photo by Jessica Kaminski - Company Dancer Valarie Harmon*

This guide was written by Alyson Chavez - Director of Community Outreach & MBII Manager and Lori Flanigan - Community Outreach & MBII Coordinator, MBII Artistic Staff
The Nutcracker - Synopsis

Based on E.T.A. Hoffmann’s book, this is the story of a magical Christmas journey... Look for the “Be on the Lookout!” section at the end of each act so you won’t miss a moment of the magic onstage!

Prologue: Drosselmeyer’s Workshop
It’s Christmas Eve in the toymaker’s magic workshop where Drosselmeyer and his nephew Karl, finish preparing a very special nutcracker doll for Clara Tannenbaum.

Be on the Lookout!
- Pay attention to the dolls Drosselmeyer is making in his shop and the objects on his work table; you will see them again!
- What do you think Karl has in the tiny present he almost forgets to bring to the party? Who do you think it is for?

ACT I ~ The Tannenbaum Family Drawing Room
Drosselmeyer and Karl are the guests of honor at the Tannenbaum family’s Christmas celebration. The Tannenbaum children – Clara, Fritz and the oldest Marie – wait anxiously for their arrival.

The Tannenbaum house is filled with the smell of delicious food, festive entertainment and good will. The children’s grandparents arrive with gifts for each of them. Drosselmeyer and Karl finally arrive and the gift giving begins. Karl has his gift for Marie Tannenbaum.

Drosselmeyer delights the children with his magic tricks, producing a floppy clown and a dancing shepherdess doll. Fritz decides he too will entertain everyone by dancing with the wooden sword that his grandparents gave him.

Photo by Mark Frohna - Company Dancer
Barry Molina
Dinner is served and everyone except Marie, Karl, Drosselmeyer and Clara go into the dining room. Drosselmeyer gives Clara her special present – the magic nutcracker doll. Fritz returns to steal the doll and it breaks as Clara tries to rescue it.

Drosselmeyer repairs the doll as family and friends return from the dining room. The guests depart and the Tannenbaum family retires for the evening.

**Be on the Lookout!**

- **Grandfather and Grandmother** are fun (and funny!) characters to watch. The dancers have to act like they are 70 years old, so watch how they walk, sit and dance.
- Not only do dancers have to act older but some have to act **younger**. Fritz and Clara are played by adult dancers who have to act like they are 6 or 8 years old! Do you think they’re believable?
- Pay attention to the toys the kids receive from Drosselmeyer - they all **come to life** later in the ballet!

**The Transformation**

The drawing room is dark and still as Clara enters to find her nutcracker doll. Marie follows her younger sister to escort her back to her bedroom. A big white figure enters the room and moves menacingly towards them. Marie challenges the figure only to find out it is Fritz trying to scare them.

The drawing room clock chimes midnight and smoke starts to pour out of the stove. Suddenly, a mouse runs out of the stove and starts to chase them around the room. Soon the room is filled with mice and rats. Drosselmeyer appears to banish them as the children run to him for protection. He sprinkles magic dust over them and the magical journey begins.

The Christmas tree begins to grow, the furniture moves by itself and the room transforms in size. The Rat King appears with his army of mice and rats and he tries to take Clara’s nutcracker doll. Toy soldiers, led by a life-sized nutcracker doll, try to protect the children.

The Rat King suddenly overpowers the nutcracker doll, but Fritz seizes the opportunity to strike the Rat King over the head with his sword, knocking him unconscious.
Marie is distressed to see the nutcracker doll broken and defeated, but Drosselmeyer brings the doll back to life, transforming him into his nephew Karl. Drosselmeyer introduces the children to the Snow Queen. She leads them to the land of snow and the stream train that will carry them to the land of toys and sweets.

![Image of a steam train]

Be on the Lookout!

- The Transformation is the most **technically** difficult part of “The Nutcracker”. Set pieces are moving around, backdrops are changing and special effects are executed onstage.
- Imagine being one of the **mice** - you can only see out of your mask through the “mouth” of the mouse and you are running around a dark stage filled with smoke and lots of other dancers.
- Watch how the set gets bigger and bigger which makes the toys and the kids look smaller and smaller - **toy size** in fact! Do you see the mouse hole at the back of the stage? Watch for a mouse to scurry out!
- The Tannenbaums leave their living room on a **magic toy train**. This train is actually two sided - what color is it first? How about second? Guess what makes the steam? A fire extinguisher! Sometimes one of the dancers is controlling it from the train and sometimes a stagehand is hiding in the train with the dancers.
- The snow scene is quite an aerobic workout for the dancers. It’s also difficult because of the **falling paper snow**. The snow comes out of a big turning drum 20 feet above the stage. As it turns round and round, snow comes out of it as if through a sieve. The snow is recycled and used for each show. By the end of the production, bobby pins and jewels from the costumes can get swept up in the snow, so sometimes, there’s more than paper falling. The snow can get pretty slippery under the dancers’ pointe shoes, so they have to be careful!
**ACT II ~ The Land of Toys and Sweets**

The flying train travels over clouds of angels to the land of toys and sweets. Drosselmeyer follows on the back of a bumble bee. Carousel animals transport characters from around the world. They are all creations of the magic toy maker, Drosselmeyer.

Clara, Fritz, Marie and Karl arrive in the magical land of toys and sweets. Drosselmeyer introduces them to his creations.

Darkness looms in this magical wonderland as the Rat King and his herd of mice attempt to spoil the fun. Karl takes Fritz’s sword and defeats the Rat King and his cohorts.

The children celebrate their victory and are treated to entertainment featuring Drosselmeyer’s creations. Fritz and Clara take delight in the sight of the Spanish and Arabian couples. Clara dances with the Chinese dragon and the Shepherdess doll with her dancing geese. Fritz joins in with the Clowns and both he and Clara dance with Mother Ginger and her many Russian children as well as the dancing flowers. But the real surprise is seeing the entertainment culminate in a romantic dance between the two people they know and love - the chivalrous Cavalier Karl and Marie as the Sugar Plum Fairy.

Drosselmeyer whisks the children magically back to their drawing room where they will awaken the next morning wondering if this was simply a dream or a magical adventure that they will never forget.

**Be on the Lookout!**

- When the carousel first appears, it looks like one piece - how is it really put together?
- Each of these sections of dance that make up the Land of the Toys and Sweets are called “divertissements” in ballet - or “entertainments”. They are small dances within a big ballet that don’t really have anything to do with the story but that show-off the dancers’ talents. Which is your favorite?
- Can you tell how many dancers make-up the Chinese dragon?
- How do you think that Mother Ginger gets so tall? Here’s a clue - look at her feet? Any guesses as to how they do that?
- Pay special attention to the three Jacks (or clowns) in this act. They are constantly up to fun and hijinks. They are responsible for dragging the tuffet with Fritz and Clara across the stage before the Sugar Plum grand pas de deux and they do it differently in each performance. What did they do the day you were there?
- In some versions of “The Nutcracker” only Fritz and Clara are in the story. Our version adds Karl, Drosselmeyer’s nephew, and Marie, the oldest of the Tannenbaum children. In our ballet, Karl and Marie become the Sugar Plum Fairy and the Cavalier which makes it all the more meaningful!
Photo by Rick Brodzeller  - Company Dancer Susan Gartell
Did You Know...

- The **dancers** have been rehearsing for 5 weeks on “The Nutcracker”!
- There are 4 casts (or groups of dancers playing the roles) in the show!
- The dancers dance from 9:00 a.m. until 6:15 p.m., Monday through Friday for 31 weeks a year!
- There are 15 performances of “The Nutcracker” and 2 student matinees!
- There are 22 dancers in the main company.
- There are 21 dancers in Milwaukee Ballet II (MBII).
- The dancer’s at Milwaukee Ballet come from all over the world. Dancers in the main company and MBII come from the United States, Armenia, Australia, Brazil, China, France, Japan, Mexico, and Spain.

**Over 200 Milwaukee Ballet School & Academy** students auditioned to be in “The Nutcracker” this year! 140 students made it and are in the production!

There are **46 players** in the **Milwaukee Ballet Orchestra**!

Creating the **costumes** for “The Nutcracker” required:
- 300 yards of tulle (the soft net material that a tutu is made of) in the tutus of Sugar Plum Fairy, Snow Queen, the Flowers and Snowflakes! (Each snowflake dress has different snowflake patterns on it so they are unique - just like real snowflakes!)
- 153 inches of trim on the Nutcracker Prince's jacket
- 140 costumes on stage during each performance
- 80 pattern pieces for each Toy Soldier’s jacket
- 66 tiny ruby-colored glass beads on the Shepherdess’ lavender vest
- 40 appliqué circles on Mother Ginger’s skirt (each circle is composed of 10 pattern pieces)
- 4 dozen handmade roses on each shoulder of the Spanish dress
- 20 months to design and build all new sets and costumes
- $1,000-$2,000 and 40 hours to create one short, trimmed tutu
- $50,000 a year to buy the company dancers’ pointe shoes
- $45-70 to buy 1 pair of pointe shoes (and girls use 1 to 6 pairs a week!)

- **Uihlein Hall** in the Marcus Center for the Performing Arts seats 2,305 people!
- 4 rows of orchestra seats (rows AA-DD) are removable and can be stored underneath the orchestra level
- The seating design is known as “continental” which means that each row spans the width of the auditorium so that all the prime viewing areas were used for seating instead of an aisle
- The chandelier weighs 25,000 pounds and it is 25 feet across! It is made up of 432 light bulbs and it is decorated with glass and gold mirrors. It is counter-weighted so it can be lowered to the orchestra for easy maintenance
The Stories and People Behind
The Nutcracker

THE HISTORY

“The Nutcracker” was originally based on a story written by German writer E. T. A. Hoffmann. Tchaikovsky was commissioned to write the music in 1891 by the Imperial Theatre of St. Petersburg (Maryinsky Theatre), but he was initially unhappy with the setting of a children’s Christmas party. The legendary choreographer Marius Petipa (first ballet-master to His Imperial Majesty the Tsar) presented Tchaikovsky with an exact scenario which he wanted, including the rhythm; tempo, and number of measures for each dance. Petipa later became ill, and the choreographic work was assumed by his assistant, Lev Ivanov. (Lev Ivanov is also credited with the white acts of “Swan Lake:” - the acts that feature the beautiful corps of dancing swans!)

“The Nutcracker” debuted on December 17, 1892, in the Maryinsky Theatre, which is still the home of the Kirov Ballet. The original cast included ballet students, just as the Kirov Ballet and Kirov Academy production does today. Although popular inside of Russia, “The Nutcracker” was not performed outside of Russia until 1934, when Nicholas Sergeyev staged it at the Sadler Wells Theatre in England. By that time in Russia, after the Revolution, the Russian presentation had been restaged by Vassily Vainonen.

The Ballet Russes de Monte Carlo debuted a shortened version of “The Nutcracker” in the United States in 1940. It was this production of “The Nutcracker” that George Balanchine and Alexandra Danilova remembered and “danced out” for San Francisco Ballet’s Willam Christensen. Because of this, the United States got its first full-length version in 1944, even though the director had never seen it! This version gave birth to the American tradition that lives on through ballet companies every holiday season! Kirov-trained Balanchine must have been inspired by the success and he created a new staging in 1954, which has become “The Nutcracker” most American audiences know. The Balanchine production in turn, inspired many other versions throughout the world.

A lot of people think every version of “The Nutcracker” is the same - but they’re not! Milwaukee Ballet’s version was choreographed by our Artistic Director, Michael Pink. Learn more about him on page 12!
THE AUTHOR

Ernst Theodor Amadeus Wilhelm Hoffmann was born on January 1, 1776 - the same year the Declaration of Independence was written in the United States. Ernst had a dismal and dark upbringing. He was the child of a troubled family, who was raised by his uncle because his parents divorced when he was three, his mother was always sick and his father disappeared. Ernst had interests in music, art, writing and later, law.

Ernst changed his second middle name from Wilhelm to Amadeus to honor his idol - Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart!

Hoffmann was born in Koenigsberg, a college town on the Baltic Sea in what is now Germany. Ernst grew up in a house filled with gloomy and rather strange older relatives. It was one of those relatives, his Uncle Otto, who introduced him to music. By the time he was thirteen, Hoffmann had learned to play the piano, the violin, the harp, and the guitar. He had even begun to compose his first musical works. In his teens, Hoffmann expanded his studies to include painting and drawing. Together with his best friend, he also began reading all kinds of books, including adventure stories and classics written by William Shakespeare.

From 1792-1800 Hoffmann studied law at the Koenigsberg Law University and while he was a law student, he taught music, painted, wrote and worked in the Koenigsberg Supreme Court. Although his writings were well received, he did not publish them under his own name. His personal goal was to reach success as a composer first and then he would reveal himself as a writer. Along the way, Hoffmann's bizarre lifestyle and the strange combination of his career wanderings led him from trouble to success and back again.

- Among those listed as his influences are: Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, the Bible, William Shakespeare, Jonathan Swift, Miguel de Cervantes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Denis Diderot.

Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky was born in a secluded part of Russia called Kamsko-Votkinsk on May 7th, 1840 far from city life. From the time he was very small, he heard the beautiful folk music of the Russian countryside playing all around him. Even after he grew up and moved to the great cities to study and write for classical orchestras, this music influenced his work.

Pyotr had piano lessons when he was a child but got a regular academic education and worked for the government before settling down to study music seriously at the age of twenty. He studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatory and went on to teach at the Moscow Conservatory by the time he was twenty-six. Pyotr wrote many textbooks for music students and he also served as music critic for a major newspaper. He was lucky enough to be recognized as a great composer in his own time as well as in the years since his death.

Pyotr Tchaikovsky’s music was known for its emotional and highly individual style. The music he loved so much also communicated strong emotion. But many people believe that Pyotr’s own unhappy life put the brooding sound in his music. Tchaikovsky wrote many symphonies, operas and concerti but only three ballet scores. These three, written in the last years of his life, just happen to be the three most popular ballets of all time: “Swan Lake”, “The Sleeping Beauty” and “The Nutcracker”.

- In 1887 he makes his first appearance as concert conductor at St. Petersburg in a program of his own works.
- In 1890 his sister dies.
- In 1892 “The Nutcracker” premieres and the music for the Grand Pas de Deux is dedicated to his sister.
- “The Nutcracker” was not a success when it first opened and little did Tchaikovsky know that someday his music and the ballet-holiday-tradition would be household favorites!
- Start listening to the music of this holiday season and you will find that the music from “The Nutcracker” is used everywhere! List some places where you hear music from “The Nutcracker”:
Choreography 1, 2, 3!

Michael Pink - Milwaukee Ballet’s Artistic Director & Choreographer of The Nutcracker

Michael Pink began his tenure as Artistic Director of the Milwaukee Ballet Company in December of 2002. Since that time he has established himself as a prominent member of the Milwaukee arts community, demonstrating his commitment to the future of dance through education and collaboration. His artistic vision for the Milwaukee Ballet is both exciting and challenging. Mr. Pink’s dramatic productions of Dracula, Esmeralda, Romeo & Juliet and Peter Pan have taken narrative dance drama to a new level of interpretation. His production of The Nutcracker has thrilled and delighted audiences.

A choreographer is the person who makes the dances. He or she takes their ideas and puts them together in movement and patterns to the music creating a total piece of art from start to finish. There have been many different choreographers of The Nutcracker over the years. You could even choreograph your own ballet! One of the best and most-loved parts of The Nutcracker is the snow scene. Michael Pink had to think about what it would be like to make dancers look and dance like snow. Let’s try this:

Can you think of 20 words to describe snow?

1. 11. 
2. 12. 
3. 13. 
5. 15. 
6. 16. 
7. 17. 
8. 18. 
9. 19. 
10. 20.
What would you make the snowflake costumes look like?  
Draw your concept for the costume here:
Now, using something else from nature, try to choreograph your own dance:

Get into a group of 4-6 people. Each of you will need a leaf from a tree. If you can’t find any leaves you can use scarves.

Each participant finds a special leaf. Hold the leaf in the air and let it fall to the ground several times, really watching the way the leaf falls.

Now each dancer will perform their own version of the leaf falling to the ground. Try to recreate how it falls, how it twists, turns flutters, swirls, floats, drops, sways, swings, circles, glides, slides and eventually comes to rest.

After watching each dancer’s interpretation of their leaf, each person chooses one movement from their original interpretation and teaches that movement to the rest of the group. Then, as a group, decide an order of all the steps and repeat them,

- ex: Movement 1
- Movement 1 and 2
- Movement 1, 2 then 3
- Mix them up: Movement 3, 1, 2
- Repeat, etc.

Once you have the body of your dance choreographed you need to create an exciting beginning to the dance that will catch an audience’s attention. Do you start in the same position, frozen on stage? Do you enter in lines? Do you enter at different times? Make a decision and rehearse the beginning and then go into the movements you decided on and rehearsed earlier. Now you need to figure out how to end your dance. Once you have done that, rehearse your entire dance. Work together until you all look the same and are precise and crisp in your movements.

If you decide to premiere your choreographic work for an audience, you will need to figure out the following questions first.

- What music will you use? Does the music fit with your movements? Do you need to change anything because of the music? (Make sure to rehearse with the music enough times to feel comfortable.)
- Will you wear costumes?
- What is the name of your dance?
- Who will your audience be?

Now that you are ready - go out and premiere your dance!
'Tis the Season to be Jolly!

In December, we greet each other by saying “Happy Holidays!” because there are several different holidays that people celebrate this time of year. In this section you will read about traditions in other parts of the world.

*Did you know that…*

…in some parts of **Germany**, children go door-to-door in pairs dressed as **angels** on Christmas. In each home where they stop, they assist the parents in giving gifts to the children of the family.

…the **Philippines** has the longest Christmas season in the world---December 16th through January 6th (that's three weeks!). Instead of Santa, the **Three Wise Men** bring **presents** to good children, who leave out **straw** (instead of milk and cookies) for the Wise Men's **camels** before going to bed.

…in **Ethiopia**, many people **celebrate** Christmas by staying awake all night to sing, dance and pray by **candlelight** in an underground church built 700 years ago.

…**Aunt Airie** is a gift-giving **fairy** of **France** who wears a **cape** and is always accompanied by a donkey. In this part of the world, children put out **shoes** instead of stockings for their treats.

…most of the ornaments, wreaths, lights and artificial trees in the world are made in **China**.

…**Australians** celebrate Christmas with a seafood **barbecue** at the **beach**. December is the middle of summer there, so the temperature can be over 100 degrees on Christmas!

These are just a few traditions, pick three more countries and find out what they do around the Christmas holiday? Do they even celebrate it? If so, what is unique about their celebrations?

What kinds of holiday traditions do you celebrate?

*Do you eat special foods?*

*Do you see people in your family who you don’t see all the time?*

*Do you travel somewhere else?*

*Do you decorate your house?*

*Do you sing special music?*
Cracked Nut

Oh no! The Rat King got a hold of the synopsis of *The Nutcracker* and ripped it apart. Now the story is out of order. Can you help put it back together? Figure out the correct order by numbering these events 1 through 6.

The Rat King appears with his army of mice and rats.

Karl and Marie are transformed into The Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier.

Drosselmeyer and his nephew Karl finish preparing the Nutcracker doll.

Drosselmeyer delights the children with his dancing clown and Shepherdess doll.

Clara, Fritz, Marie and Karl arrive in the magical land of toys and sweets.

Drosselmeyer introduces the children to the Snow Queen.
How well were you paying attention when you saw *The Nutcracker*? Read the sentences below and fill in the blanks with what happened in the ballet.

1.) Before leaving for the party, Karl almost forgets his ________ for Marie.

2.) Father Tannenbaum makes a big mistake at the party when he throws a ________ into the fireplace.

3.) When Clara and Marie are downstairs after the party, they get scared by something that looks like a ghost. It turns out to be ________ playing around.

4.) A big battle takes place between the toy soldiers and the mice. The _______ _______ is the leader of the mice and the ________ _______ leads the toy soldiers.

5.) The Snow Queen comes out of a ____________.

6.) The Tannenbaum children and Karl leave the land of snow on a ________ and head of to the Land of the Sweets.

7.) Drosselmeyer arrives in the Land of the Sweets riding on a ________.

8.) During the Shepherdess’s dance, something is wrong with one of the geese. In the end, it turns out that the goose just needed to lay an ________.

9.) There are ________ clown dolls that Fritz dances with.

10.) ________ _______ and ________ _______ are transformed into the Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier.
A Nutcracker Word Search

Find and circle the words on the right.

ANGELS
DROSSELMeyer
GEESE
MICE
RATKING
SOLDIER
TANNENBAUM
ARABIAN
CLOWNS
FLOWER
KARL
MOTHERGINGER
SHEPHERDESS
SPANISH
CHINESE
A Ballet Story
Map

Name of the Ballet: ____________________

Choreographer: _______________________

Composer: ____________________________

Setting: __________________________________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________

Main Characters: ____________________________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________

Main Problem: ______________________________________
_________________________________________________
_________________________________________________

Continue on next page
Solution: __________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Event One: _________________________________________________________

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Event Two: _________________________________________________________

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_________________________________________________________________

Event Three: _______________________________________________________

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_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Event Four: _________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________

Resolution: _________________________________________________________

_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
_________________________________________________________________
Answer Key

Cracked Nut

The Rat King appears with his army of mice and rats - 3
Karl and Marie are transformed into The Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier - 6
Drosselmeyer and his nephew Karl, finish preparing the Nutcracker doll - 1
Drosselmeyer delights the children with his dancing clown and Shepherdess doll - 2
Clara, Fritz, Marie and Karl arrive in the magical land of toys and sweets - 5
Drosselmeyer introduces the children to the Snow Queen - 4

Were you paying attention?

1.) Before leaving for the party, Karl almost forgets his PRESENT for Marie.
2.) Father Tannenbaum makes a big mistake at the party when he throws a RAT into the fireplace.
3.) When Clara and Marie are downstairs after the party, they get scared by what looks like a ghost. It turns out to be FRITZ playing around.
4.) A big battle takes place between the toy soldiers and the mice. The RAT KING is the leader of the mice and the NUTCRACKER leads the toy soldiers.
5.) The Snow Queen comes out of a BOOK.
6.) The Tannenbaum children and Karl leave the land of snow on a TRAIN and head off to the Land of the Sweets.
7.) Drosselmeyer arrives in the Land of the Sweets riding on a BEE.
8.) During the Shepherdess’s dance, something is wrong with one of the geese. In the end, it turns out that the goose just needed to lay an EGG.
9.) There are 3 clown dolls that Fritz dances with.
10.) MARIE and KARL are transformed into the Sugar Plum Fairy and Cavalier.
Appendix A: Being a Good Theatre Audience

Unlike actors on television, performers on the stage are aware of their audience and want very much to communicate their art to you, and feel your appreciation in turn. In fact, by the time you arrive at a theatre for a scheduled performance, many people (choreographers, composers, dancers, technicians, costume and lighting designers, etc.) have worked very hard to bring you their best efforts. In order to show respect for those efforts, every audience member must give the performance their full attention and avoid any behavior that interferes with anyone else doing the same. We have rules that help us accomplish this goal, and you should do your best to understand and follow them:

1. Always arrive at the theatre with plenty of time to find your seats and settle down into them. Late arrivals mean disruption for everyone else, including the performers.

2. No shoving or running in the lobby.

3. No cameras or video recorders. Flashes are dangerous for dancers and unapproved photos and videos violate copyright laws.

4. No hooting, whistling or yelling during the performance. The performance has begun when anyone on stage starts talking or dancing, or when the orchestra starts playing. You are welcome to show your appreciation for the performance with applause at the end of the ballet or sometimes at the end of a section or solo. You are also welcome to laugh if someone on stage is being intentionally funny.

5. No talking or whispering during the performance. You will have plenty of time to discuss your impressions at intermission or after the show.

6. No gum, candy or food in the theatre (it makes noise and sticky messes).

7. Use the bathroom before the show begins or at intermission, not during the performance.
Appendix B: Balletomania!

There are many ways to become a balletomane (a ballet fan or enthusiast) besides taking dance classes or wanting to be a ballerina or premier danseur yourself. Here are some suggestions for enjoying ballet:

Watching ballet on film - check with your local library to see what videos they offer. Regular video stores also offer musicals which sometimes have some great dancing in them (although not usually ballet.)

Read the stories the ballets are based on and listen to the music before you go to see the show - you will understand the whole ballet a lot more if you are not struggling to keep up with what the characters are doing. If the ballet does not have a plot, being familiar with the music will help you focus on the dancing more.

Keep a ballet scrapbook - clip and save articles, reviews and promotional ads from the newspaper. Collect and save all of your programs, ticket stubs and even autographs from your favorite dancers to add to your book. Sometimes, if you wait at the Stage Door after a performance, you can meet the dancers as they leave the theatre.

Write a review of the ballets you see - read the professional reviews in the papers first. Do you agree with them? Do you like things they forgot to mention? If you don’t agree with them, write your own review and try to describe what you saw and why you liked it.

Check out books in the library about ballet - there are a number of fictional and non-fictional books about ballet, being a dancer, the art of ballet and its stars.

Workshops - attend special workshops at your school or local theatres.

Look for ballet in art - several painters, sculptors and photographers use dance and dancers as their inspiration. For example Edward Degas painted dancers on stage and in the studio. Local artist Jason Fricke has done beautiful drawings of Milwaukee Ballet’s dancers and you can see them in the theatre boutique!

AND OF COURSE . . .

Going to the theatre - attend as many performances of Milwaukee Ballet and other local dance companies as you can. Check the entertainment section of your newspaper for listings of upcoming shows.
Einhorn Family Foundation
Gardner Foundation
Maihaugen Foundation
Charles D. Ortgiesen Foundation, Inc.
Jane Bradley Pettit Foundation
Gene & Ruth Posner Foundation
Greater Milwaukee Association of REALTORS Youth Foundation

WOMAN'S CLUB
of
WISCONSIN

United Performing Arts Fund

The Stein Angels Program
In Memory of Jack Stein

Greater Milwaukee Foundation

City of Milwaukee
Arts Board

Herzfeld Foundation

Partnership for the Arts & Humanities

The Stein Angels Program
In Memory of Jack Stein

United Performing Arts Fund

Greater Milwaukee Foundation

City of Milwaukee
Arts Board

Herzfeld Foundation

Partnership for the Arts & Humanities

The Stein Angels Program
In Memory of Jack Stein

United Performing Arts Fund
Photo by Petr Zahradnicek - Company Dancers Annia Hidalgo