

Kansas City Young Audiences

Teacher Program Guide

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Artist: aha! dance theatre

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Contact KCYA for more information on this and other programs.

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Performance Description

During this performance, aha! dance theatre will present to the students the role of the choreographer as a communicator.

Participants will step inside the decision-making process as they examine the choices the choreographer makes in composing a dance. These choices parallel choices made in music, such as theme and variation, unison, canon, repetition, and structure.

aha! dance theatre will also demonstrate the importance of placement on the stage, facings, relationships between dancers, cos-

tuming, use of music, and facial expressions in the dance.

aha! dance theatre's goal is to enable the students to be active viewers of a dance performance. The audience will have the opportunity to build an awareness and un-



derstanding of dance performances and develop their critical thinking skills.

aha! dance theatre will direct ques-

tions to the audience after each dance piece to ask for observations about the choreographer's choices. The performance leader will relate the student responses to the intent of the dance.

Educational Objectives and Standards

Students will:

- Explore modern dance and its history
- Discuss the choices the choreographer made in their dance

Dance:

- Understands dance as a way to create and communicate meaning
- Understands choreographic principles, processes, and structures

Special Points of Interest:

Modern dance began at the turn of the Twentieth century as a rebellion against classical ballet.

Special REQUIREMENTS:

Minimum 24' x 30' stage or gym space, wood floor preferred; stage area clean and clear of students 30 minutes before performance.

Artist Bio: aha! dance theatre

aha! dance theatre of Kansas City, Missouri, is a modern dance company with an adventurous spirit. The group's mission is to awaken the creative spirit in each of us through dance.

The company of six degreed professional dancers is led by Artistic Director Susan Rieger.

aha! has been recognized for its well-crafted choreography, dance improvisation,

site-specific work, and innovative collaborations with artists in other fields.

aha! brings a range of performance and educational opportunities to the community. The company holds two annual performances in major venues, provides a series of site-specific performances which are free, facilitates workshops for dancers and non-dancers, and also performs for children.



Susan Rieger

Vocabulary

Body Shapes: An interesting and interrelated arrangement of body parts of one dancer; the visible makeup or molding of the body parts of a single dancer.

Choreographer: One who creates movement for and organizes actions into dances.

Element: Any one of the three basic components of movement - space, time, and energy or force. (Body is sometimes included as a fourth element.)

Facing: The direction toward which the front of the body is positioned;

where one's face is directed.

Repetition: A principle of choreographic form based on using movements or phrases again in a work. Repetition adds closure because the audience feels familiar and more involved with repeated movements.

Theme: One or several movement phrases that fit together and are developed from the same idea or intent. Can also mean the basic idea of a whole dance. (Used interchangeably with the term motif.)

Unison: Movement exactly the same as other movements in a group.

Post-Performance Activities

1. View the PBS series, [Dancing in America](#) (ISBN0780013441.)
2. Research the lives and works of modern dancers such as Martha Graham, Alvin Ailey, and Merce Cunningham.
3. Tell a story using dance. Try to elicit specific emotions from the audience.
4. Attend a modern dance concert and look for elements and themes learned during the performance.



List of Resources

BOOKS

Ballet & Modern Dance:

A Concise History by Jack Anderson
Princeton Book Company Publishers;
2nd edition (September 1, 1992)
ISBN: 0871271729

Basic Concepts in Modern Dance:
A Creative Approach by Gay Cheney
Princeton Book Company Publishers;
3rd edition (March 1, 1989)
ISBN: 0916622762

VIDEO

Dancemaker (1998)
Director: Matthew Diamond
ASIN: 0767023447

An Evening with the Alvin Ailey
American Dance Theater (1986)
ASIN: B000055XM2