

# Kansas City Young Audiences

## Teacher Program Guide

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### Rain Forest

Artist: Jane Gotch

### Workshop Description

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Contact KCYA for  
more information on  
this and other  
programs.

816-531-4022  
[www.kcya.org](http://www.kcya.org)

In this workshop, Teaching Artist Jane Gotch illustrates the concepts pertinent to the rain forest through movement. Students will take away with them a greater awareness of some the plants and animals found in the rain forest and the interdependence of these creatures in the environment.

Jane begins the program with an introduction and demonstration of *Space Bubbles* and *levels*. Together, the participants create low, medium, and high *shapes*.

Next, the class explores the illustrations and characters in the book *Here is a Tropical Rain Forest* by Madeleine Dunphy.

Once the class has a good understanding of the various flora and fauna that co-exist in the rain forest, the students create their own shapes based on these characters:

the rain, bromeliads, a frog, eagle, etc. Jane leads the students to explore the *movement essence* of each character.

Combining the knowledge of the different creatures of the rain forest with elements of space and shape, Jane leads the dancers in stop-and-go shape and movement dance. The goal is to have the students create new definitions of movement so that they think beyond mere pantomime.

The workshop also challenges the memory of the students as they build a lengthening sequence of movement in a *This is the House that Jack Built* format. A progressive relaxation and a question-and-answer session wraps up the workshop and prepares the students to return to the classroom..

### Educational Objectives and Standards

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Students will:

- Create a dance that illustrates the interdependence of life in the rain forest.
- Be introduced to the basic elements of dance improvisation.
- Explore and create movement sequences that relate to the rain forest ecosystem.

Science:

- Knows plants and animals are alive and have characteristics that make them different from non-living matter

Dance

- Students use movement and dance as a means to communicate a feeling, idea, or story

#### Special Points of Interest:

Ms. Gotch offers other dance workshops through KCYA, including *Anansi the Spider* and *Simple Machines: Bodies at Work*.

#### Special REQUIREMENTS:

Gym or large cleared area, 20' x 20' necessary; floor space cleaned prior to the artist's arrival

# Artist Bio: Jane Gotch

Jane Gotch has been teaching movement to children since the age of 10. She has taught ballet, modern, tap, jazz, and creative movement to children of all ages locally and in Omaha, NE, Philadelphia, and the New York area.

She is also a certified trainer and pre-trainer of the **GYROTONIC®** and **GYROKINESIS®** system, which is an exercise and body rehabilitation system developed by a dancer which combines aspects of dance, tai

chi, yoga, martial arts, and swimming. She has taught this system around the world including New York, California, Israel, India, and now Kansas City.

She holds a BFA with honors in dance performance from the University of the Arts in Philadelphia. Jane's strength as a teacher is her ability, through movement, to ignite in her students, young and old, a confidence in themselves and their creativity which they can carry into all aspects of their life.



Jane Gotch

## Vocabulary

**Choreographer:** a person who creates dances

**Energy:** one of the three basic elements of dance, referring to the amount of effort used in an action

**Fauna:** the animal life in a particular region

**Flora:** plants considered as a group, especially the plants of a particular country, region, or time

**Rain forest:** a dense, evergreen forest occupying a tropical region with an annual rainfall of at least 2.5 meters

**Rhythm:** an organization of music or movement with respect to time

**Space:** one of the three basic elements of dance, it is the canvas in which dancers create movement; sub-elements used in reference to space are direction, level, design, occupied/unoccupied, and positive/negative

**Time:** one of the three basic elements of dance, it refers to the speed of a given action, how fast or slow; sub-elements used in reference to time include rhythm, tempo, beat, acceleration, deceleration, pulse, and syncopation.

## Post-Workshop Activities

1. Practice the movements learned in the workshop. Try to create new shapes inspired by other animals that make their habitat the rain forest.
2. Move the shapes through space using different locomotors. Try moving slowly or quickly.
3. Practice moving your animal at the same level as the one they move in in the rain forest. For example, *canopy dwellers* move at a high level, *understory dwellers* move at a medium level, and *forest dwellers* move at a low level.
4. Practice progressive relaxation, which is the sequential tightening and releasing of muscles.



## List of Resources

### BOOKS

Here Is the Tropical Rain Forest  
by Madeleine Dunphy  
Rebound by Sagebrush  
(October 1, 1999) ISBN: 0613051424

Does It Always Rain in the Rain Forest?:  
Questions and Answers About Tropical  
Rain Forests (Scholastic Question and  
Answer Series) by Melvin Berger,  
Gilda Berger, Michael Rothman  
Scholastic Reference  
(April 1, 2002) ISBN: 0439193834

Children Save the Rain Forest  
by Dorothy Hinshaw Patent,  
Dan L. Perlman Dutton Books  
(June 1, 1996) ISBN: 0525651632