GLOBAL ARTS:
Performances For Schools

Presents

Paul Taylor Dance Company

Thursday, November 13, 2008
University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Fine Arts Center Concert Hall at 10am

This Teacher Resource Guide is a product of the University Musical Society’s Youth Education Program. All photos are courtesy of the artists.

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Paul Taylor Dance Company
About the Performance

Who is Paul Taylor?
• Paul Taylor is acknowledged as one of the world’s foremost dancers and choreographers. He is an extremely talented artist who has changed the way we look at dance and ourselves. Mr. Taylor began dancing in 1952 at the age of 22 and began to choreograph dances of his own the following year. He has remained at the forefront of the international dance world, and continues to choreograph several new pieces each year.

What does a choreographer do?
• Choreography (also known as dance composition) is the “art of making visual structures in which movement occurs.” People who make these compositions are called choreographers. A choreographer creates a dance by arranging or directing the movements of the dancers. The choreographer must work closely with the dancers, the stage manager and musicians during rehearsals. Although mainly used in relation to dance, choreographers also work in various settings including fencing, gymnastics and ice skating.

What is the Paul Taylor Dance Company?
• The Paul Taylor Dance Company is a well-known American modern dance company. Mr. Taylor started his company in 1954, just two years after he started his dance training. Since that time, he has designed more than 100 dances for the stage. Now in its 50th year, the Paul Taylor Dance Company has traveled across the United States, Europe and the world.
About the Performance

What is Modern Dance?

- Modern dance is a phenomenon that started in the early 20th century, when individual dancers felt the need to break away from the traditional structure of ballet and create a form of dance based on more natural motions of the human body. There is no specific definition for what makes something modern dance, as the concept of “modern” was simply applied to the dancers of the time who had begun a rebellion against the strict discipline of classical ballet. Today we perceive modern dance as a discipline defined by the people who began this movement and their individual traditions and followings. Now a widely appreciated style of performance, modern dance began as, and continues to be, an experiment in new ways of moving.

What is the difference between modern dance and classical ballet?

- Ballet relies on an illusion of lightness and effortlessness, while modern dance relies on weight—dancers often fall all the way to the floor. While a ballet dancer must remain almost perfectly balanced, a modern dancer must be able to fall and slide safely. The ballet of the early 20th century relied on ornate costumes and scenery, but early modern dance was often performed on a bare stage in bare feet and a simple tunic.
Who is Paul Taylor?

**Background**
Paul Taylor was born in Wilkinsburg, Pennsylvania on July 29, 1930, and grew up in Washington DC. Originally Mr. Taylor found an outlet for his creative spirit in the world of visual arts. He attended Syracuse University with a swimming scholarship and intended to major in art. It was while at Syracuse in 1952 that he discovered dance. His athleticism combined with his creative energy and artistry created a perfect fit for the dance world. He changed his studies from art to dance and eventually moved on to study at the Juilliard School.

**Dancer and Choreographer**
In 1952, his performance at the American Dance Festival attracted the attention of choreographers Martha Graham, José Limón, Charles Weidman, and Doris Humphrey. In 1953, he made his debut with the Merce Cunningham Dance Company, performing his first dance composition. In 1954, he founded the Paul Taylor Dance Company to perform his own choreography. In 1955, he joined the Martha Graham Dance Company for a seven season run as a solo dancer. Between his work with the Martha Graham Company and his own company’s performances, Mr. Taylor quickly became a well known name in the modern dance world. In 1959, he danced with the New York City Ballet as a guest artist in George Balanchine’s Episodes.

In 1962, his own career as a choreographer had a real breakthrough with his landmark piece Aureole. This work assured Mr. Taylor’s place as a leading choreographer in the world of modern dance, and in 1966 the Paul Taylor Dance Foundation was established to raise funds to help bring Paul Taylor’s works to the largest audiences possible.

In 1975 Taylor was forced to hang up his dancing shoes and retire from the performance world due to a number of injuries. No longer able to perform himself, Mr. Taylor focused all of his efforts towards his choreography and his dance company. Mr. Taylor devoted himself fully to choreography, and classics poured forth: Esplanade... Cloven Kingdom... Airs... Arden Court... Lost, Found and Lost... Last Look... Roses... Musical Offering... Company B... Piazzolla Caldera...Promethean Fire... and dozens more. Celebrated for uncommon musicality, he has set dances to ragtime and reggae, tango and tin pan alley, time recordings and loon calls; turned elevator music and novelty tunes into high art; and found particularly cooperative collaborators in J.S. Bach and similar Baroque composers.

With such success and a call to share his talent, a smaller company, Taylor 2, was created in 1993. Taylor 2 exists as a company of six dancers who bring many of the choreographer’s masterworks to smaller audiences around the world. Taylor 2 teaches the Taylor-style in schools and workplaces and at community gatherings. The goal of Taylor 2 is to bring Paul Taylor’s works to schools and smaller venues that lack the resources or funds to bring in the full company.
The Company

Not Just Dancers...
Many people with different responsibilities work together to make up a dance company. These are just a few of the various jobs in the world of dance:

- **An Artistic Director** is the person who makes the artistic choices and decisions for a company. For example, which dancers to hire, which choreographers to use, and which dances should be performed on each program.
- **The Executive Director** supervises the marketing (advertising), development (fund-raising), public relations, human resources, special events, and education departments. The Executive Director is in charge of all the non-artistic issues.
- **The Choreographer** creates the dance steps to be performed with the selected music. In order to learn the moves and music, the dancers take classes from the Ballet Master and Mistress, who instruct them and direct rehearsals almost every day.
- Dancers often change costumes several times during a single performance. The **Costume Designer** works with the artistic director and choreographer to create clothing that fits the mood of each dance number.
- **A Wardrobe Supervisor** maintains the costumes and shoes by making sure that they are always in good condition and that the dancers can move freely and comfortably while wearing them.
- **The Production Stage Manager** has a variety of responsibilities: overseeing the building of sets and costumes, supervising the lighting and sound before and during each performance, and calling the dancers to their places before the curtain rises. On tour, the production stage manager discusses with each theater manager the lighting and special needs required for each dance.
- **A Lighting Designer** is needed to decide which lights are to be used to create the desired mood of the dance. Mood is created through the use of light and shadow, as well as color.
- **The Sound Engineer** is responsible for music during the performance. He or she makes sure the sound is easily heard by the dancers and audience members. When live musicians are not being used, the sound engineer is in charge of recording the music for rehearsals and performances.
- When a dance company performs on the stage, they hire **Stagehands** or crew members. The crew sets the scenery onstage or “flies it in” using pulleys. The crew also helps the dancers dress, launder and iron costumes, and runs the light board (a computer with all of the different lighting “looks” or cues in it). The show cannot go on without a crew. Many stagehands belong to a union, the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE).
- **House Managers** are in charge of the lobby during the show. They organize ushers, help audience members and make sure everything is running smoothly.
- **Ushers** are usually volunteers. They greet the audience, take tickets and show people to their seats.
The Day in the life Of a Dancer…

The members of a dance company usually have two schedules, one for their rehearsal days and the other for their performance days on tour. As you will see, the life of a dancer can be very exciting, but it is also very demanding, particularly during tours. Professional dancers have very little free time.

A Typical Rehearsal Day
- 8:00 a.m. Wake up
- 8:30 a.m. Have breakfast
- 10:00 a.m. Go to the studio and take ballet class
- NOON Rehearse (practice dances they will perform later)
- 2:00 p.m. Eat lunch
- 3:00 p.m. Rehearse the rest of the afternoon
- 5:30 p.m. Take a shower
- 6:00 p.m. Go home
- 7:00 p.m. Have dinner
- 11:00 p.m. Go to bed

A Typical Performance Day On Tour
- 8:00 a.m. Wake up in a hotel room
- 8:30 a.m. Eat breakfast
- 10:30 a.m. Meet in the hotel lobby to travel to the theatre
- 11:00 a.m. Get on the bus and drive to the theatre
- 11:30 a.m. Find the dressing rooms at the theatre
- 11:45 a.m. Unpack stage makeup for the performance and change into dance clothes for class
- NOON Take ballet class (at the theater)
- 1:30 p.m. Eat lunch
- 2:00 p.m. Walk through a spacing rehearsal so the dancers can get used to the size of the stage
- 3:00 p.m. Have a technical rehearsal, which is rehearsing the dances with music and lights
- 5:30 p.m. Eat a light dinner
- 6:30 p.m. Take a shower and put on stage makeup
- 7:30 p.m. Warm up muscles by stretching
- 8:00 p.m. Perform
- 10:00 p.m. Take a shower
- 10:30 p.m. Travel back to the hotel on the bus
- 11:00 p.m. Eat
- MIDNIGHT Go to bed
While watching the Performance

Suggestions for Watching the Performance
You don’t have to have any special training or experience to watch dance. You will be taking in information with all of your senses: eyes, ears, even your muscles. You may be fascinated with the physical activity you see, the music, the production elements (lighting, costumes and props) or with a “story” the dancers tell you. Your muscles may even react to the action with a kinetic response as you empathize with the movements on stage; tensing when the dancers leap or bracing as they perform a daring fall or a remarkable lift. It is very natural to want to get up and dance after watching an inspiring performance. Open your mind to the moment; concentrate and raise your awareness to the immediate moment in front of you. The members of the audience are as much a part of the performance as the dancers are!

As the lights lower and the music begins, take a deep breath and relax in your seat. You are beginning to watch motion, movement, shape, line, rhythm, tempo, color, space, time and energy...dance. Allow yourself to let go of any notion that you already know what dance means, or has to mean. Release the notion that you have to look at dance as if you were reading a book. If you watch dance with this type of open mind, you may experience an emotion, an image or a feeling that you may not be able to describe. You may not know why or where these reactions come from, but don’t worry. This is all a part of the magic of dance.

You may want to ask yourself some questions as you watch the performance:

• **What are the sensory properties in the dance?**
  What do you see? What do you hear? What are the dancers actually doing on the stage?

• **What are the technical properties in the dance?**
  What kind of space is being used? What are the shapes and designs being created? What kinds of energy, dynamics or motions are being used?

• **What are the emotional properties in the dance?**
  How does the movement on stage make you feel? How does the music make you feel? Do you think the music and movements work well together? Every piece of choreography has a reason for being. Dances may be celebrations, tell stories, define moods, interpret poems, express emotions, carve designs or even help you to visualize music. As you watch a dance, a story may occur to you because of your past experiences. However, not all dances relate to stories.

**Following the Performance**
• After the performance, feel free to discuss your thoughts with others. Please don’t be disturbed if others had a different reaction to the dance than yours. Take time to think about your personal images and thoughts. Was it enjoyable to watch? Did the dance remind you of experiences in your own life?
Lesson Plan
Time Space & Energy (K-12)

Objective
• For students to explore the three elements of dance: time, space and energy.

Materials
• Open space for movements
• Index cards
• Pencils

Activity
1. Review the three major elements of dance: time, space and energy. Give examples of each on the board. You may wish for students to add to this list.
   • TIME (How do you move in time? fast, slow)
   • SPACE (do you take up a lot of space or a little? Tall, thin, high, low, wide)
   • ENERGY (How do you carry out the movement? Happy, sad, bouncing, stomping, angry, frustrated, heavy-stepped, flowing, sharp, light-stepped)

2. Ask the students to act out the following activities. The correlating dance element is included in parentheses:
   walking happily (energy - bouncing)
   walking angrily (energy – stomping, scowling, crossed arms)
   walking while scared (energy – fear, choppy or nervous energy)
   crawling (space - low)
   reaching up to grab something on a high shelf (space – high, thin)
   fast jumping jacks (time – fast)
   wading through a deep pool of maple syrup (time – slow)
   hands out like an airplane (space – wide)
   walk like an elephant (space – wide; time – slow)
   move like a bee (time – fast; space – small)

3. Now ask students to write down one “time” example (i.e., fast or slow), one “space” example (high, low, wide, narrow, etc.) and one “energy” example (flowing, sharp, happy, sad) on an index card.

4. Students can trade cards with a partner and have the partner carry out the same procedures as before.
Before & After the Performance

Quick and Fun Ideas to use with the Paul Taylor Dance Company

1. **Working Together** - Write “Paul Taylor Dance Company” on the board. Divide students into groups and assign a short period of time. Each group must work together to think of as many words as possible that can be spelled with the letters in the phrase on the board.

2. **Scavenger Hunt** - After reviewing some of the writings and activities in this guide, divide the students into groups. Ask each to come up with a list of at least three things their peers should watch for at the performance (examples: ensembles, etc.). Collect each group’s list and compile them into a single piece of paper. See how many you find at the performance!

Pre-Performance Activities

1. **Discussion/Writing Prompt** - Paul Taylor works to keep modern dance alive. What traditions do you have in your own background that you would like to see continue? Why?

2. **Discussion/Writing Prompt** - Paul Taylor has made a commitment to educating the public about modern dance. What is something you could do to open up opportunities to others? Describe other Americans who have worked to provide opportunities for others.

3. **Building an Ensemble** - Divide students into groups. Ask one to start tapping a rhythm on his/her pantleg or desktop and ask the others to try to copy it. Ask each student in the group to take a turn as leader. What strategies do the “following” students use to keep up with the leader? Try this activity with movements!

4. **Locating a Place** - Using an online or printed map, ask students to locate Ann Arbor. What is the approximate distance between Amherst, MA and New York City?

Post-Performance Activities

1. **Discussion/Writing Prompt** - If you could change one thing about the performance, what would it be?

2. **Visualizing Favorite Moments - TV style** - Imagine that you are a television reporter who has been sent to see the Paul Taylor Dance Company. You can show a maximum of two minutes’ worth of the production to your television audience. What moments would you choose? Why?
Watching the Performance with a Keen Eye and Ear

Critique (writing or talking about dance) and evaluation of a dance performance is affected by the past experience, sensitivity, involvement and personal judgement of the writer. Writers try to be multi-dimensional in their responses by describing auditory and visual perceptions and feelings. When you evaluate a dance performance give your reasons for anything you liked or disliked.

Writing like a critic entails three processes: the description, interpretation and judgement of the particular piece(s) being analyzed. When a critic writes or talks about a dance performance, he or she considers four different aspects of the dance:

- **Choreographic Elements**
  This includes examining the overall form, use of space, rhythmic and timing factors, use of dynamics, style, music and movement.

- **Performance Elements**
  This includes evaluating the technical skill of the dancers, their projection of the characters they portray and their ability to communicate through movement.

- **Production Elements**
  The writer takes a close look at the costumes, lighting, props, sets and music used in each piece.

- **General Impact**
  Does the dance have clear intention? Is the impact of the performance felt by the audience?
NOTICE TO ALL TEACHERS AND CHAPERONES

- **PERFORMANCES BEGIN PROMPTLY AT 10AM**
  Many of our performances sell out. This means we can have up to 1,600 students to seat. Please help us by arriving **30 minutes** prior to the start of the performance. This will allow our ushers to get everyone seated and for you and your students to visit the rest rooms and get settled. It is important that we begin our performances on time so that all schools can meet their lunch and/or dismissal times.

- **PLEASE CHECK LOCATION OF PERFORMANCE WHEN MAKING YOUR BUS RESERVATION.**

- The staff of the Fine Arts Center needs your help! An increasing number of students are coming into the performance space with gum, food, beverages, cell phones and portable music players. **None of these items is allowed in the halls for performances.** Many of these items are stowed in backpacks and are not easily noticed. Our goal is to offer high quality performances for young people. In order to enhance the experience, we ask for your cooperation in preventing these items from entering the hall.

- For the comfort of all concerned, we ask that backpacks, lunches and other gear be left on the bus. Our long-standing policy of no cameras or tape recorders still is in effect.

*We hope that you and your students enjoy your theatre experience!*
PARKING AND DIRECTIONS FOR THE FINE ARTS CENTER’S  
CONCERT HALL and RAND THEATER

School Bus Parking: Students should be dropped-off at Haigis Mall off of Massachusetts Avenue. University Security will direct buses to an appropriate parking lot during the performance (typically by the football stadium). PLEASE BE SURE YOUR BUS DRIVER KNOWS THAT ALL PERFORMANCES LAST APPROXIMATELY 1 HOUR AND THEY SHOULD RETURN A FEW MINUTES BEFORE THE ANTICIPATED END TIME. If drivers are not with the buses, they may miss the radio call from security asking them to return for pick-up, resulting in unnecessary delays returning to your school.

Individual cars: If necessary, individuals may drop-off students with a chaperone at Haigis Mall (you will be directed by security to the mid-point turn of Haigis Mall – see map) prior to parking. We recommend parking in the Campus Center Parking Garage to avoid searching for a metered space. It is a five-minute walk to the Concert Hall. All other available parking during weekdays is at meters. Available lots and pricing (current as of 1/1/07) are listed below:

Parking in the Garage is available to our patrons at a discounted rate of $1. To receive this rate you MUST give the Garage attendant a parking pass. To receive your pass, please call our office to let us know that you will be arriving by car. Parking passes are sent with the invoices. Please call (413) 545-2116 if you didn’t receive one.

Parking meters are enforced Monday - Friday, 7AM - 5PM. Meter rates are $1.00 per hour.

Parking Garage – near Campus Center, across from the Mullins Center off Commonwealth Avenue
Lot 34 - Behind Visitors Center with 3, 5 & 10-hour meters available
Haigis Mall - 2 hour maximum on meters
Lot 62 - Adjacent to Fernald Hall with 3 hour maximum on meters, limited spaces available.

From the North: (Vermont, Greenfield) I-91 south to Route 116. Follow signs on 116 “To the University of Massachusetts.” Exit ramp leads to Massachusetts Avenue. Turn left (east) on to Massachusetts Avenue toward the campus. Continue through one light and watch for Lot 34 by the Visitors Center on your right and the entrance to Haigis Mall on your left.

From the South: (Springfield, Holyoke) I-91 north to Route 9. Turn right (east) on Route 9 over the Coolidge Bridge and through Hadley. Turn left (north) on Route 116 (across from Staples) heading toward campus. Turn right at first exit at “University of Massachusetts,” then bear right onto Massachusetts Avenue toward campus. Continue through one light and watch for Lot 34 by the Visitors Center on your right and the entrance to Haigis Mall on your left.

From the West: (Northampton, Pittsfield) Route 9 east through Northampton and over Coolidge Bridge. Follow remaining directions under “From the South”.

From the East: (Belchertown, Ludlow) North on Routes 21, 181 or 202 to Route 9 into Amherst. Right on to North Pleasant Street (main downtown intersection), north through center of town. Turn left at Triangle Street (Bertucci’s Restaurant on your right), rejoining North Pleasant Street. To reach Lot 34 and Haigis Mall continue on main road, which becomes Massachusetts Avenue. Haigis Mall will be on your right, Lot 34 on your left.
For Concert Hall, Rand Theater and Bowker Auditorium – Patrons traveling by car are encouraged to park in the parking garage. Discounted parking is available in the garage for $1. A parking permit is required for discounted parking in the garage. Please call the Arts & Educational Programs Office if you require permits at (413) 545-2116. All other parking on campus is at available meters at the rate of $1 per hour. Parking is enforced Monday – Friday, 7AM – 5 PM.

Buses will drop-off students as indicated on map. Buses will be given parking instructions by Campus Security.
Evacuation Procedures

In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation of the building, procedures are in place to ensure that the audience can exit safely.

Sections 4, 5, 6
Exit through the lobby.

Sections 1, 2, 3 & Pit
Exit toward stage.

Note: Interior house conditions may necessitate alternate exit routes.

Mezzanine
1, 2, 3
Exit rear through lobby.

Balconies
1, 2 exit toward stage, up two flights and down interior fire escape