



## Study Guide



As an integral part of the Performing Arts Series, APPlause! offers a variety of performances at venues across the Appalachian State University campus that feature university-based artists as well as local, regional and world-renowned professional artists. These affordable performances offer access to a wide variety of art disciplines for K-12 students. The series also offers the opportunity for students from the Reich College of Education to view a field trip in action without having to leave campus.

Among the 2013-2014 series performers, you will find those who will also be featured in the [Performing Arts Series](#) along with professional artists chosen specifically for our student audience as well as performances by campus groups. All shows in the 2013-2014 series are performed at the newly renovated Schaefer Center for the Performing Arts.

Before you arrive. . .



Familiarize your students with what it means to be a great audience member by introducing these theatre etiquette basics:

- Arrive early enough to find your seats and settle in before the show begins (20-30 minutes).
- Remember to turn your electronic devices OFF so they do not disturb the performers or other audience members.
- Remember to sit appropriately and to stay quiet so that the audience members around you can enjoy the show too.
- Show appreciation to the performers by applauding and reacting to funny or impressive feats.



**PLEASE NOTE:** All audience members arriving by car should plan to park in the Rivers Street Parking Deck. There is a small charge for parking in the deck. Buses should plan to park along Rivers Street – Please indicate to the Parking and Traffic Officer when you plan to move your bus (i.e. right after the show, or after lunch) so that they can help keep everyone safe.

Adults meeting a school group at the show will be asked to sign in at the lobby and wait to be escorted to their group by a security guard.

The following study guide is used with permission by River North Dance Chicago.

***Street Beat***  
**Performed by River North Dance Company**

Chicago-based River North Dance Company was founded in 1989 by several of the city's well-known dancers and choreographers for the purpose of cultivating and promoting Chicago's unique wealth of jazz dance talent. Under the leadership of Artistic Directors Sherry Zunker Dow and Frank Chaves, RNDC remains committed to taking jazz dance to new creative heights through concert performances locally and across the U.S. The company continues its commitment to the audiences of tomorrow by performing *Street Beat*, which strives to instill an appreciation and love of jazz dance to school-age audiences by demonstrating the development of popular jazz dance from the 20s to the present in a social, historical and artistic context. In 1993, River North Dance Company was the subject of an Emmy-winning television special, "Reality of a Dreamer," which has been aired 12 times in Chicago and nine times nationally. As a result, River North Dance Company has been seen by over one million viewers across the United States.

*Street Beat* is a fast-paced, fun jazz dance retrospective that demonstrates how the social climates and events of the day affected jazz dance throughout the 20th century. Beginning with the Roaring 20s, each decade is brought to life with a fully costumed dance number. The entire performance is narrated with information about the major events of the day, the fashions, and the key historical figures.

Dance is affected by the music and fashions that are popular in any given era. This study guide provides this information and explains its impact. Because music and fashion are affected by the social and political atmosphere, we will give you that information as well.

More than anything else, *Street Beat* will be the most energetic, entertaining, and informative dance performance your students have ever seen. With 14 talented dancers, lively music and period costumes, it is an event they will never forget.

**River North Dance Company**  
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## GLOSSARY

**amateur:** a person who studies an art, a game, or a sport for the love of it, and not for any monetary payment.

**athlete:** any person who trains vigorously in physical exercise. This active person will be strong, coordinated, flexible, and powerful.

**ballet:** a type of dance usually performed to classical music. It was invented more than 400 years ago. It is defined by a very elaborate, formal technique which stresses a very upright position of the body, turned out legs, and precise positions of the arms and head. Many classical ballets are stories from mythology and fairy tales. Some of the most famous ballets are *Swan Lake*, *Sleeping Beauty*, and *The Nutcracker*.

**ballroom dance:** a formal dance for couples. It is a social dance done by a man and a woman who hold hands and touch shoulders. Traditional ballroom dances are the Waltz, Tango, and Rhumba.

**Broadway:** a street in New York City where many theaters are located. The theaters in this area are thought to produce the most important plays and most popular musicals in the United States.

**century:** a time period of 100 years. *Street Beat* contains information about dances that have happened during the 20<sup>th</sup> century that began with the year 1901. The first dance is from the 1920s. The 21<sup>st</sup> century began in 2001!

**choreograph / choreographer:** to make up dances. A *choreographer* is the person who thinks of an idea, finds the music, and invents movements and floor patterns that will make up the dance.

**combine / combination:** to connect or to join things. In dance, we combine individual steps so they fit together like puzzle pieces, with no breaks between them. A *combination* is a series of steps and movements.

**company:** a group of people who work for the same business. A *dance company* employs dancers, artistic staff, administrative staff, and technicians. (See *job descriptions*) All of the work done by the employees is directed toward the company's performances.

**composer:** a person who writes music by inventing new ways to put musical notes and rhythms together.

**concert:** a planned arrangement of music or dance. Audience members (people like you, your parents, friends and teachers) buy tickets, go to a theatre or concert hall to watch or listen to a performance. A good dance concert is very carefully planned with lights, costumes, music, and interesting, exciting movement.

**contemporary:** current; in the style of today. Some people use *contemporary* as another name for *modern dance*. We will not use it that way. So that there is no confusion, we will use it only to mean current or at this time.

**costume:** the clothes that performers wear. *Costumes* are selected very carefully and add to the mood and style of the performance. Sometimes they are bought in stores; sometimes they are made from scratch.

**dance:** movements of the body done rhythmically and usually to music. A *dance* is a complete routine with planned steps and movements. It is a series of combinations. *To dance* is the act of moving in this rhythmic way.

**dance class:** a place where dancers learn new steps and movements. This is also a place to practice and perfect these steps. A professional dancer also uses a *dance class* to warm-up before rehearsals or performances, and to improve strength and stamina.

**decade:** a time period of ten years. *Street Beat* will demonstrate a popular dance from each *decade* starting with the 1920s.

**duet:** a performance by two people in music or dance.

**entertainment:** something that is fun and likable. Going to movies, watching or playing sports, and reading are all popular forms of *entertainment*.

**fashion:** the many styles of clothing that people wear. A style is determined by the colors, materials, and shape of each piece and how they are worn together. Each decade has its own style and fashion.

**flexibility:** the ability to stretch your muscles. To test your *flexibility*, sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of you and reach forward as far as you can. If you can touch your shinbone, you have normal *flexibility*. If you can touch your toes, you have very good *flexibility*, and if you can reach forward past your toes and touch your forehead to your knees, you have extraordinary *flexibility*! *Flexibility* is just one of the abilities a professional dancer must have. (See athlete)

**formations:** the specific patterns that a group of people make. Dancers work very hard to stay in the specific *formations* that the choreographer asks them to make. Each dance includes many *formations*, and the dancers have to remember where they belong in each one. Look for the following *formations* during the performance:

triangle	straight line	"V" shape
circle	zig-zag or staggered lines	"X" shape
oval	parallel lines	diamond shape
parallelograms	diagonal line	semi-circle

**isolation:** in dance, this refers to moving only one body part at a time. It is especially important in jazz dancing to have the ability to *isolate* body movements. In class, dancers practice only moving their heads, shoulders, rib cages, and hips. Advanced jazz dancers will be able to do long isolation combinations and must make them look clean and easy.

**jazz dance:** a type of dance invented in the United States around 1920. *Jazz dance* combines body isolations with the musical rhythms invented during the "jazz age." (See *The 1920s*) Jazz dance is influenced by the music and moves of each generation and continues to change today. Both jazz dance and jazz music have been influenced by swing from the 1940s, rock and roll from the 1950s, groove from the 1960s, disco from the 1970s, break dancing from the 1980s, and hip-hop and rap in the 1990s.

**lighting:** a tool used to help artists create a specific mood. Special lights can be placed above the stage, on the side, or in front to help the dancers and/or stage look a specific way to the audience.

**modern dance:** was originally begun in opposition to ballet. Ballet has very strict rules of movement, and precise, sometimes unnatural, body positions. Modern dancers rebelled and began to move organically (naturally). Characteristics of *modern dance* are twisting and bending torso movements, flexed hands and feet, and rolls and spins on the floor. *Modern dance* emphasizes intellectual choreography while ballet emphasizes beauty and jazz emphasizes emotion. Modern dancers often improvise (make movements up as they go) and are free to all movement possibilities. This also allows *modern dances* to be performed to anything from

Study Guide – RNDC

complete silence to a classical symphony to sound effects that aren't really music in the traditional sense.

**musical theater / musicals:** a play that uses words, music and dance to tell its story. This type of play is called a *musical*. Some of the most famous *musicals* are *Oklahoma!*, *West Side Story*, and *Cats*.

**partner / partnering:** in dance, this refers to the person you dance with. *Partnering* is a kind of dancing when two people move together and relate to each other. Most of the time, *partnering* includes one *partner* lifting, catching, or turning the other *partner*. Sometimes the *partners* take turns lifting and catching each other. Dance *partners* can be a man and a woman, two men, or two women.

**perform:** in the dictionary, to *perform* something simply means to do it, but when a dancer *performs*, he/she does a well-rehearsed, carefully planned dance on stage in front of an audience.

**practice:** to do something over and over again; to review it many times. A dance *practice* is called a rehearsal.

**producer:** the person responsible for raising money and supervising the business matters of presenting a show, whether it be a dance concert, TV show, opera, or movie. A dance *producer* (often called a *presenter*) raises money to rent the stage, the lights, and the special floor covering dancers need to perform well. He/she also pays for all the advertising and oversees the ticket sales. Finally, the *producer* must pay the dance company's performance fee, which helps to pay the dancers' salaries. Sometimes, the dance company will *produce* or *present* its own shows.

**professional dancer:** a dancer who gets paid to perform in dance concerts. To be good enough to earn a living as a dancer, a person must maintain a very high level of skill and practice, practice, practice! River North Dance Company members are all professional dancers.

**slang:** a word or expression used in common language but not considered standard English. For example, the following *slang* words and phrases have been used to mean something is great: "the cat's meow" and "the bee's knees" (1920s); "cool" and "keen" (1950s); "groovy" (1960s); "far out" and "hot" (1970s); "bad" and "totally def" (1980s); and "awesome" (1990s).

**society:** a community of people with similar interests and/or backgrounds is called a *society*. These people can be associated for political, patriotic, scientific, or religious purposes.

**social dancing:** dancing that the average person can do. A social dance is done for fun and is enjoyed by anyone who likes to dance.

**solo:** a performance by one person in music or dance.

**style:** a special way of expressing personality by speaking, moving, or dressing in a way that distinguishes a person or group of people from others.

**tap dance:** a type of dance distinguished by the sounds the dancers make with their feet. They wear specialized shoes that have metal "taps" on the tips and heels that make the noises you hear. This type of dance requires a very good sense of rhythm. Tap is a true American art form that developed by combining traditional African dance rhythms with folk dances from Ireland and England.

**technique:** describes not only a method or style of dance, but the ability with which it is performed. For example, in order to perform a split leap, you need to jump into the air with your legs kicked out in opposite directions. To do it with good *technique*, however, means to jump into the air with your legs in opposite directions with your knees straight, toes pointed, hips turned out, stomach pulled in, chest lifted high, arms held in a specific position, fingers slightly separated and neck relaxed. Having good *technique* means that you do a step correctly.

**trio:** a performance by three people in music or dance.



## GAMES

### BEFORE THE SHOW

#### Cross Match Puzzle

Before the show, make handouts of the RNDC job descriptions. Discuss all the different jobs that go into dance performances. Talk about the variety of talents required and how people with different expertise are all needed to make everything work well. Have the students think about the talents, skills and interests that they have, and which jobs match their abilities. After the discussion (or after the performance) give them the Cross Match Puzzle and see how much they understand and remember. This can lead into a discussion about other "performances" and the many different people needed; i.e. basketball games, rock concerts, or political rallies.

### AFTER THE PERFORMANCE

#### Discussion

After the performance, have a discussion about the number of people and jobs it took to create the show. Then, give them the list of the RNDC jobs. Find out if they can guess what these jobs are all about. With some help from you, discuss all of the different types of jobs that they could have someday! Then, give them the Cross Match Puzzle so that they can apply what they have learned to the game.

#### Drawings

Ask your students to draw a simple picture from each decade they saw in the show. They can draw the actual dancers or maybe just the costume or costumes from each era.

#### *Variations*

- Give them a whole page of paper on which to draw each decade.
- Have them write something they learned about each decade in the appropriate frame.
- Have your students draw just one picture of their favorite decade. Have them write something they learned about that decade on the page with the picture.

#### School Newspaper

Have your students write a **review** of the dance performance. The review should include who performed, when and where. It should describe what was shown and, most importantly, how the performance affected them and how it made them feel. The students should consider what the performers tried to accomplish, and if they were successful.

- Talk about criticism and how it can be helpful or hurtful depending how opinions are presented. This can lead to a discussion about responsible journalism, and how the media can affect the people they talk about and the people who read or see their coverage.
- Have a student **interview** one of the dancers after the performance. Have a list of prepared questions, but and also encourage on-the-spot inquires. If necessary, we can arrange a phone interview with a dancer.

This list of questions will get you started:

When and where did you start dancing?

When did you become a professional dancer?

What is a typical day like?

Do you do anything except perform with RNDC?

What will you do after you stop performing?

### **Photography**

Have a **student photographer** take non-flash pictures during performance. Make sure you discuss with the artistic director the best place for them to shoot from so as not to interfere with the performance or the audience's enjoyment. **FLASH CAMERAS MAY NOT BE USED.** A flash during a performance is dangerous to the performers and disruptive to the dancers and the audience.

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS FOR A DANCE COMPANY

1. The **artistic director** makes all of the artistic decisions concerning the company. He/she decides who should choreograph new dances and what those dances should be about. He/she then determines which dances will be performed, and in what order. He/she also chooses which company members should perform each dance. The artistic director also makes decisions about who to hire and who to fire. Often, artistic directors also teach company class, rehearse the company and choreograph dances for the repertoire. (The repertoire consists of all the dances that River North performs.) Sometimes this person also does some administrative work like recruiting board members. But the artistic director's job is always, first and foremost, to oversee artistic decisions. RNDC has two artistic directors who share the duties, Sherry Zunker Dow and Frank Chaves.
2. Sara Ayers is River North's **rehearsal director**. This means that when Sherry and Frank are unavailable, Sara is in charge. Sara is also responsible for teaching all the repertoire to the new members of the company.
3. We also have a **ballet mistress**. She teaches company ballet class and is our resident expert on ballet.
4. The dancers you see on stage are **company members**. They are the professional jazz dancers that Sherry and Frank have hired to perform. They are among the best in their field! They all have extensive dance training and come from many different states. They are required to take company class and stay in good mental and physical shape. Their workday consists of class, followed by rehearsal where they practice the dances they have been selected to perform.
5. RNDC has **apprentices** who are talented dancers who still need more training before they are ready to be professional dancers. Sherry and Frank look for dancers who might someday be ready to dance professionally with RNDC. Apprentices are required to take company class and learn the repertoire that RNDC performs. If the artistic directors feel the apprentices are ready, sometimes they get to perform with the company!
7. **Choreographers** are people who create dances. They decide which music to use, what the dance is about, and, the most difficult job, creating the movement. A good choreographer will try to create new movements that have never been seen before. They have to teach these movements and help the dancers through the learning process. Once the company knows the dance, the choreographer usually rehearses the company until he/she feels the dancers are ready to perform it well. RNDC has hired many choreographers since the beginning of the company in 1989. Both Sherry and Frank have choreographed, as have Randy Duncan, Sam Watson, and RNDC dancers Harrison McEldowney and Jeffery Hancock .
8. The **general manager** of RNDC is Joan Gress Stevens. She is in charge of coordinating all of the administrative work involved with the company. She oversees payroll and accounting, legal issues, bookings, tour dates, board meetings, advertising and marketing, ticket sales, public relations, and most importantly, fundraising and grant writing.
9. River North Dance Company also has an **assistant to the general manager** and an **administrative assistant**. Both of them assist with the details of all of the tasks the general manager oversees, in addition to answering the phones, computer entry, and filing..

10. The **board of directors** is a group of people whose job is to raise money and develop an audience for the company. Even though they are a group of volunteers, legally, they oversee and manage the company. They work to make contacts in the corporate community, and each year they host a benefit that raises a large sum of money for the company.

11. An **agent** is responsible for finding places for the company to perform. RNDC is represented by Siegel Artist Management. The agency contacts presenters (see glossary, *producers*) who will present RNDC to their audience members. This agency represents many performing arts companies, and helps the presenters to decide which company would be best for their audiences.

12. RNDC works with a number of **costume designers** to create interesting and beautiful costumes for stage. Part of the challenge is to create clothes that look great on stage, but are still appropriate for dance. They must be cut with durable yet flexible material so they won't rip or restrict the dancers' movement. At the same time, they must still reveal the dancers' muscles and technique. They must also be appropriate for each number. They must contribute to the mood of the dance the choreographer has created.

13. Dance companies also need to work with **lighting designers**. They pick the color of each light and decide when the light should change. In any given piece, there are approximately 15 different colors of light, and the position and brightness of the lights changes many times. The theatres where we perform have computers that control the lights. With the push of just one button, a lighting designer can change the entire appearance of the stage lighting, and create a whole new mood. He/she must work closely with the choreographer and costume designer to make sure that the costumes look good under the colors of light he/she chooses, and to make certain the lights match the mood the choreographer wants to achieve.

14. Our **stage manager** is responsible for making sure the shows run smoothly. He/she travels with the company, and makes sure that the stage, dressing rooms and backstage areas are ready for the dancers to use. He/she schedules the load-ins (bringing costumes, lights and flooring into the theater) and "strikes" (taking it all away). During the show, he/she calls all the lighting and sound cues and always make sure the dancers are ready to go for each number.

## CROSS MATCH

Directions: Match the following terms with their definitions below. Use each of the terms only once.

**Artistic Director**  
**Ballet Mistress**  
**Choreographers**  
**Board of Director**  
**Lighting Designer**

**Rehearsal Assistant**  
**Company Members**  
**Executive Director**  
**Agent**

**Stage Manager**  
**Apprentices**  
**Administrative Assistant**  
**Costume Designer**

- A. \_\_\_\_\_ is responsible for directing rehearsals when necessary. He/she must also have knowledge of all the repertoire so he/she can teach it to any new dancers.
- B. \_\_\_\_\_ performs the office work like answering phones, computer entry and filing.
- C. \_\_\_\_\_ is in charge all performance details. He/she works backstage to make sure the dancers are ready for each piece and calls all of the lighting and sound cues.
- D. \_\_\_\_\_ is in charge of all major artistic decisions. He/she organizes all teachers, choreographers, decides on the program order, and determines the dancer contracts.
- E. \_\_\_\_\_ is a team of volunteers for are responsible for raising money and overseeing the entire company.
- F. \_\_\_\_\_ is employed by the company to arrange bookings. He/she is in charge of coordinating performance dates, theaters, and the performing fee.
- G. \_\_\_\_\_ are dancers who are now training with the company and one day hope to be company members.
- H. \_\_\_\_\_ is in charge of the administrative aspects of the company, including the grant writing, but also, accounting, tour dates, and all legal affairs.
- I. \_\_\_\_\_ are people who make up dances. They find ways to combine music, movement, and mood to create dance pieces.
- J. \_\_\_\_\_ develop the interesting and beautiful clothes that the dancers wear on stage.
- K. \_\_\_\_\_ is one of the company's main teachers. He/she teaches the classical ballet class.
- L. \_\_\_\_\_ creates the atmosphere or mood on stage. He/she does this by using color and other special effects such as fog or smoke.
- M. \_\_\_\_\_ are the dancers whose job it is to take class, rehearse and perform. They are the special people you get to see dance on stage.

## CROSS MATCH ANSWERS

- A. Rehearsal Assistant
- B. Administrative Assistant
- C. Stage Manager
- D. Artistic Director
- E. Board of Directors
- F. Agent
- G. Apprentices
- H. Executive Director
- I. Choreographer
- J. Costume Designer
- K. Ballet Mistress
- L. Lighting Designer
- M. Company Members

<b>20s-Charleston</b>	<b>30s-Ballroom</b>
<b>40s-Jitterbug</b>	<b>50s-Rock &amp; Roll</b>
<b>60s Groovy</b>	<b>70s Disco</b>

<b>80s-MTV</b>	<b>90s-What dances do you do?</b>



## WORD SEARCH

Broadway	Chicago	Choreography	Class
Concert	Costume	Dance	Disco
Duet	Jazz	Jitterbug	Legs
Music	Perform	Pop	Professional
Rehearsal	Solo	Style	Technique

G	U	B	R	E	T	T	I	J	E	C	R
R	S	Y	R	L	U	I	A	M	H	H	E
E	Y	A	S	Y	E	Z	U	I	T	O	H
C	S	A	S	T	Z	T	C	H	I	R	E
N	N	O	A	S	S	A	I	H	T	E	A
A	G	N	L	O	G	Z	S	E	R	O	R
D	I	S	C	O	Z	Z	U	L	E	G	S
A	N	G	S	H	F	D	M	P	C	R	A
P	R	O	F	E	S	S	I	O	N	A	L
A	Z	M	R	O	F	R	E	P	O	P	P
T	E	C	H	N	I	Q	U	E	C	H	I
N	P	O	B	R	O	A	D	W	A	Y	Z

## THE GENERATION JUMBLE

Directions: Match the key phrase with the decade where it was introduced or most important. Use each word or phrase only once.

<p><b>Illegal alcohol</b>  <b>Michael Jackson on MTV</b>  <b>Disco</b>  <b>Jitterbug</b>  <b>Baby Boom</b>  <b>Flappers</b>  <b>Great Depression</b>  <b>Ballroom dancing</b>  <b>Women in the workforce</b>  <b>"Don't Worry Be Happy"</b>  <b>Women's Rights Movement</b></p>	<p><b>War against Japan and Germany (WWII)</b>  <b>President Ronald Reagan</b>  <b>Sesame Street</b>  <b>Elvis Presley</b>  <b>Women Voters</b>  <b>The Beatles</b>  <b>Growth of U.S. Space Program</b>  <b>Martin Luther King, Jr.</b>  <b>Television became popular entertainment</b>  <b>Jesse Owens</b></p>
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20s

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30s

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40s

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50s

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60s

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70s

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80s

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**THE GENERATION JUMBLE ANSWERS****20s**

Illegal alcohol  
Women voters  
Flappers

**30s**

Great Depression  
Jesse Owens  
Ballroom dancing

**40s**

War against Japan and Germany  
Women in workforce  
Jitterbug

**50s**

Baby Boom  
Television became popular entertainment  
Elvis Presley

**60s**

Martin Luther King, Jr.  
The Beatles  
Growth of the U.S. space program

**70s**

Women's Rights Movements  
Sesame Street  
Disco

**80s**

President Ronald Reagan  
"Don't Worry Be Happy"  
Michael Jackson on MTV

## THE PERFORMANCE

*Street Beat* opens with the River North Dance Company demonstrating the athletics of a typical jazz class. To the beat of contemporary instrumental music, the full Company will take turns jumping, turning, and kicking. The dancers will show the amount of flexibility, strength, coordination, and stamina it takes to be a professional dancer. A man and woman from the company will then demonstrate the basics of partnering. This section closes with the dancers demonstrating a full jazz combination. Having to remember all of the steps in a certain order, doing them with correct form and making it all look easy is the work of a dancer.

## THE 1920s

Our first dance is a view of life and entertainment in the 1920s. The United States saw many changes in the 20s. World War I had ended, industry was booming, and people were feeling optimistic.

There were several important amendments to the Constitution passed around the 1920s. The 18th amendment made it illegal to buy, sell, or use alcohol. In some ways, this made it more popular. You had to go to a secret place called a "speakeasy" to get alcohol. Some people thought this was exciting and went to these "underground" nightclubs often. By the late 20s, the government decided the law wasn't working and made alcohol legal again. The 19th Amendment stated that no one may be denied the right to vote based on their gender. This gave women the right to vote for the very first time.

Women's fashions were also changing in the 20s. Women were used to wearing long sleeves, high collars, long skirts and tight corsets around their waists. They threw all of that out for short skirts, bare arms, and low necklines. They also took off those tight corsets! This allowed them much more freedom of movement which showed in their wild dancing.

A new kind of music called Jazz was born in the 20s. Louie Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Duke Ellington and many others brought African-American rhythms and a freedom to music that had never been heard before.

This new jazz music got people excited and got them dancing faster than ever before. Some of the dance steps invented were called Crazy Legs and the Charleston. When women did these steps they were sometimes called "flappers" because their clunky shoes made a flapping sound when they did these wild dances.

## THE 1930s

The 1930s began with the United States ensnared in the Great Depression. In 1929, there was a crash in the stock market, and many investors lost nearly all of their money. Companies that expanded too much in the 20s now had to fire many of their workers. The farming industry was also in bad shape. Continuous droughts and wind storms made farming impossible for many years in some parts of the country. Record numbers of people were out of work and without a source of income. Americans put their faith in Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and he was elected to the presidency four times. He served more terms than any other U.S. president. Now, presidents are limited to two four-year terms.

Tensions were starting in other parts of the world as well. Adolf Hitler wanted to control Europe, but he was largely ignored by most people. He showed the world his arrogance and ignorance during the 1933 Summer Olympics in Berlin. The United States had done quite well at the games, especially Jesse Owens, who won four gold medals in Track and Field. Hitler was shaking hands with all of the gold medal winners, but refused to shake hands with Mr. Owens simply because he was an African-American. In fact, he refused to shake the hand of any of the nine black medalists. This began to open our eyes to Hitler, and we kept a close watch on him for the rest of the decade.

With the great pressures at home and abroad, people turned to entertainment for escape. Radio was king, with popular musicians like Cab Calloway, Fats Waller, and Benny Goodman on the airwaves. Silent movies were being replaced by "Talkies" and these movies were gaining in popularity very quickly. In 1935, a double feature (two movies shown back-to-back) cost only a nickel! The movie stars were always beautiful, and the stories had happy endings which gave people hope. Movie stars like Gene Kelly, Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers were not only talented actors, but great dancers, too. Ballroom dancing was integrated into movies as a way to develop relationships and to add glamour and romance. Tap dancing was gaining in popularity, and Shirley Temple and Bill Robinson tapped their way across the "silver screen."

## THE 1940s

When the 1940s began, the world was at war. The U.S. declared war on Japan in 1941 after they bombed Pearl Harbor. We then declared war on Germany to fight Hitler and his Nazi army. Going to war affected the country in many ways. It boosted the economy, and united Americans against a common enemy.

With many young men off fighting the war, jobs needed to be filled. Women and other minority groups entered the work force in large numbers. They were finally given the chance to work and make a decent wage thanks, in part, to First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt who pushed for their rights. There is an interesting side note about some of these new workers. When women went to the factory or farm jobs wearing skirts (the only acceptable clothing to wear at the time), their skirts would get caught in the machinery. This hazard finally made pants acceptable, and even fashionable, for ladies to wear. This is a great example of how social change affects fashions.

Movies and sports were the biggest forms of entertainment during the 40s. Judy Garland, Bing Crosby, and Bob Hope were all huge movie stars. Joe DiMaggio, Joe Lewis and the great Jackie Robinson were the country's sports heroes. Although television was introduced in the 1930s, it was slowly becoming more affordable. Some radio shows changed their format over to TV, but many went off the air completely. Radio personalities Milton Berle and Jackie Gleason now became big TV stars. "Howdy Doody" was television's most popular children's show.

Another way for people to have fun was to go dancing at big ballrooms and night clubs. The Copacabana, the Palladium, New York City's Cotton Club, and Chicago's Aragon Ballroom featured fantastic big bands playing swing music. Tommy Dorsey and Glen Miller were two of the best known big band leaders. The Savoy Ballroom in Harlem holds a special place in history. Although people were dancing all over the country, the Savoy Ballroom was where it was all being invented. Jitterbug, Swing, and Lindy Hop were the steps and the styles that were the rage.

Our Jitterbug dance is like one you might have seen at the Savoy Ballroom. Imagine enlisted men getting ready to go to war, and young ladies practicing and learning the latest swing steps. As Benny Goodman plays in the background, they meet, flirt, and dance.

## THE 1950s

When the 1950s started, the soldiers had come home from the war and many women left their jobs to stay at home with their husbands and start families. There were so many people having babies at this time it's been called the "Baby Boom." The Baby Boomers are people who were born between 1944-1950. They are the largest age group of people alive today.

The presidents in the 50s were Harry Truman and Dwight D. Eisenhower. President Eisenhower was considered by many to be a hero for his leadership as a General in WWII.

Something called the "Cold War" started in this era. The United States and the Soviet Union were very suspicious of each other, and the threat of a war hung in the air. People were so scared of the growing military technology and the atomic bomb that they actually built bomb shelters in their back yards.

Racial segregation was widespread in the 50s. Restaurants, buses, schools, and many public facilities had still had separate areas for "whites" and "coloreds." African-American social leaders were outraged by this and other inequalities. This was the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement.

Television had taken over as the most popular form of home entertainment. Comedy shows like "I Love Lucy" starring Lucille Ball and "Your Show of Shows" with Sid Caesar were popular, as were westerns like "Bonanza" and "Gunsmoke." Game shows were popular, too. A scandal erupted when Americans discovered that the game show "Twenty-One" was "fixed," and gave selected contestants the answers so they would win.

Music was changing with the invention of Rock and Roll. Artists like Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and, of course, Elvis Presley took the country by storm. When Elvis performed on the top-rated Ed Sullivan Show, he was censored. They only showed him from the waist up because they thought he moved his hips too much. Of course, many people liked the way he sang and danced, which is why his music is still popular today.

## THE 1960s

The tone of the 1960s was set by the assassination of president John F. Kennedy in 1963. The American people began to question and then rebel against almost every part of American life. They questioned the government and most of its decisions. They realized civil rights abuses need not be tolerated. They rebelled against the norms in fashion, music, sexuality, and family life. Freedom is what everyone wanted.

When the government sent troops into Vietnam, people marched to protest that decision. This would have never happened twenty years earlier, when America went to WWII. This shows how openly Americans questioned the government in the 60s and how free they felt to rebel.

When society wouldn't provide equal rights to all Americans, people rioted. The activists, mostly African-Americans, risked their jobs, their property, and even their lives to speak up. Some who spoke up the most did lose their lives. Martin Luther King, Jr. proposed a peaceful but strong way to achieve equal rights for all Americans. He worked hard all of his life, and we learned a great deal from him. Unfortunately, we didn't learn all that we could, because he was killed in April 1968 in Memphis, TN. Other important names in the civil rights movement are Thurgood Marshall, Robert Kennedy, Rosa Parks, and Medgar Evers.

People's feelings are often reflected in music and other art forms. In the 1960s the feelings of change, peace, and freedom entered into popular songs. Some musicians like Jimi Hendrix and Bob Dylan sang about the anger and frustration people felt, while the Beach Boys sang fun, lively songs so that people could stop thinking of their problems. The Beatles and the Rolling Stones did both.

The dancing in the sixties was much more free than it had ever been before. For the first time, social dancing wasn't necessarily done by couples. You could dance by yourself, and do whatever steps you wanted. The catch-word of the decade--freedom--had incorporated itself into dance.



## THE 1970s

The next dance we're going to show you is from the 1970s. The 1970s continued the era of change that had begun in the 60s. The leaders of the civil rights movement had inspired women to liberate and free themselves from social injustice. The Women's Rights Movement involved many fights, including equal pay for equal work.

The mistrust of government continued in the 70s with the Watergate scandal. President Richard Nixon resigned in disgrace when he couldn't hide from his administration's cover-up of the office burglary of the Democratic National Headquarters.

The lives of African-Americans were being represented on TV for the first time. "The Jeffersons" and "Good Times" were two shows that made it big. Other popular shows from the 70s were "All in the Family" and "Charlie's Angels." Two different shows that started in the 70s are still on the air, "Sesame Street" and "Saturday Night Live."

Of course, disco was the big news in music. The movie "Saturday Night Fever" starring John Travolta inspired it all. America started doing the Hustle, the Bump, and the Bus Stop. Popular disco musicians were Donna Summer, the Bee Gees and the Village People.

Disco fashion was unlike any other. Platform shoes and hip hugger pants were all the rage for both men and women. Men also wore polyester leisure suits with wide belts and gold chains. Women sometimes wore silky dresses and blouses with neck chokers. Our dancers will also be wearing the popular bell bottoms, pant suits, and wild colored pants and shirts.

## THE 1980s

Ronald Reagan became president in 1980 and a new era began. President Reagan held office for 8 years and implemented "Reaganomics," an economic plan that included the "trickle down theory." This meant that the government would encourage economic growth, and that prosperity would flow down to the less advantaged. Another policy of the Reagan Administration was to approve a high budget for a strong national defense and military buildup.

Many people think that the U.S. helped bring about the fall of communism in Eastern Europe which marked the end of the "Cold War" (see "The 1950s"). This was the major world event in the 1980s. The communists in the Soviet Union lost power and the country split into many smaller countries. The fall of communism spread into other parts of Europe, as well, most notably in Germany, which was divided into two parts, communist East Germany and democratic West Germany. The capitol, Berlin, was on the borderline and was divided by an enormous wall, and anyone trying to cross from East to West was shot on-sight by the 24-hour guards. The Berlin Wall came down in 1989, and people were now able to travel freely.

Back at home, Americans were happy and proud of their accomplishments, although there was a small but growing feeling of discontentment. The national debt was on the rise as were problems like homelessness and environmental neglect. Like always, art and entertainment reflected the way we felt. Musicians like Tracy Chapman sang about the troubles people observed, while Bobby McFerrin expressed another attitude with "Don't Worry Be Happy," which embodied another philosophy some people adopted.

American cinema was bringing in more money than ever. Steven Spielberg and George Lucas successfully worked separately and together to make box office mega-hits, including the *Star Wars* trilogy, the *Indiana Jones* movies, and the ever popular *E.T.* The other enormous entertainment business in the U.S. was the music video business. The continued spread of cable television and the emergence of MTV gave artists like Cyndi Lauper, Lionel Richie, Madonna, and Michael Jackson even more exposure than they already had. With this important visual development, musicians needed to consider how they looked when they sang as much as how they sounded. Cyndi Lauper adopted a "punk"-influenced style, dyeing her hair wild colors, and wearing mismatched, outrageous clothes. Michael Jackson developed his now-famous dance style. Break-dancing was popular throughout the decade, and Jackson took parts of this fad and used it to create his own trademark moves.

## THE 1990s

The century is ending as it began, with major changes in technology. Computers, the Internet, video cameras, cash machines and cellular telephones are changing the way people work, communicate and play. From your own home computer you can “talk” to someone as far away as Africa, or chat with someone right around the corner! You can place a bid on an on-line auction, and you can get door-to-door directions from your house to your cousin’s house three states away. The computer, and specifically, the Internet, has drastically changed the way we research, shop, organize, create and connect. Our reliance on computers has led to problems as well. When the calendar changes from ’99 to ’00, there is a fear that some computers will not “understand” the change, and they will “think” we have gone back in time to 1900 instead of forward to 2000! This potential problem has been called the “Y2K Bug.” We will see what happens on New Year’s Day, 2000!

George Bush, Ronald Reagan’s Vice President, was elected President in 1988. One of the most challenging times during his presidency was his decision to send our troops to the Middle East when Iraq invaded the country of Kuwait. Operation Desert Storm, also called the Gulf War, was a success and gave Bush the highest approval rating of his term in office.

Another major world event occurred in 1991 when the USSR officially dissolved into independent countries. The era marked by fear of Communism had effectively ended.

In 1991 in California, four white policemen were videotaped beating Rodney King, an African-American who was stopped for a traffic violation. The officers were tried and found “not guilty” by an all white jury, and race riots erupted in Los Angeles. The LA Riots were the worst scene of civil unrest in this century. Still today, discrimination based on race and religion continues to be one of America’s most challenging and destructive problems.

The American people elected Bill Clinton to be President in 1992. President Clinton had many personal and political problems during his time in the White House, but he was re-elected to second term in 1996. While many Americans feel he has been an effective leader, others are disappointed in him and his personal behavior. Time will tell how history judges the last American President of the 20th century.

Hip-hop emerged from urban African-American culture and filtered into the mainstream in the 1990s. “Hip-hop” refers to music, poetry, fashion, graffiti art, language, community and dance. Hip-hop music combines electronic synthesizers, drum machines, and digital sampling (overlapping or manipulating music and other sounds). The best-known type of hip-hop music is rap. In rap, the performer speaks poetry over the music instead of singing all of the words. Hip-hop dancing started with “breaking” or break-dancing in the 1980s. It has since evolved into something different, with pedestrian-type movements including stomping and skipping, isolations (moving one body part at a time), and athletic aerial tricks. By the middle of the 1990s, hip-hop surpassed country-western as America’s best-selling music.

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### **Magazines**

I would recommend any "Dance Magazine." It's a monthly publication devoted to the highest standards in writing and photography. Contact Dance Magazine at 33 W. 60th Street, NY, NY 10023; (212) 245-9050; Fax-(212) 956-6487.

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*Bob Fosse*. 1990.

*The Nicholas Brothers*. 1995.

\**Dancing*. 1993. This is a wonderful eight part series depicting all of the different aspects of dance. Each part is one hour.

1. The Power of Dance
2. The Lord of the Dance
3. Sex and Social Dance
4. Dance at the Court
5. New Worlds New Forms
6. Dance Centerstage
7. Individual and Tradition
8. Dancing in One World

\* ***Highly Recommended***