

Appalachian State University's Office of Arts and Cultural Programs
presents

APPlause!

K-12 Performing Arts Series

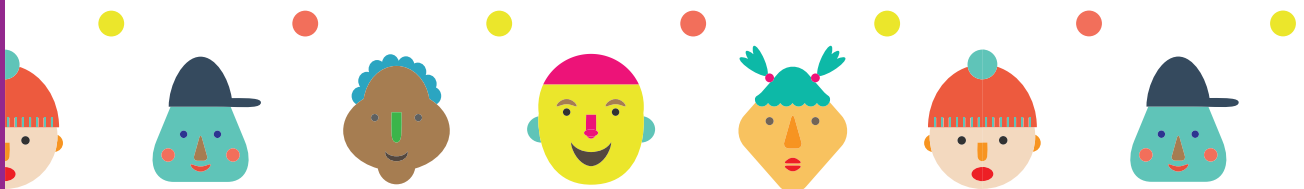
Thursday, November 3, 2016

North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble
Percussive Dance Review



As an integral part of the Performing Arts Series, APPlause! matinées offer 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 2016-2017 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.

Appalachian
STATE UNIVERSITY.



Before the performance...

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

- Arrive early enough to park, walk up to the Schaefer Center, 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 engaged in the performance so that the audience members around you can enjoy the show too.

PLEASE NOTE:

***THIS EVENT IS SCHEDULED TO LAST APPROX 60 MINUTES.**

10:00am – 11:00am

- Audience members arriving by car should plan to park in the Rivers Street Parking Deck. There is a small charge for parking. 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 pages that follow have been supplied by the
North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble
for teachers and their students.**



North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble

*A Guide
for Teachers*



January 2004

North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble

A Guide for Teachers

Greetings! The North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble (NCYTE, pronounced “insight”) welcomes this opportunity to share information with you that may enhance your students’ experience with our performance at your school. We realize that many have never seen a live tap performance (or even a filmed one), and the show may take them by surprise. Our performances include brief stories and information about a variety of styles of tap dancing. In these pages you will find additional materials that can be used to introduce tap dancing, answer some of the questions students may raise, and provide ideas for activities to channel what will hopefully be some enthusiastic post-performance interest in knowing more. The sections in this study guide include:

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A Brief History of Tap

Born in America from the same roots as jazz music, tap dance emerged in the mid-1800's from the fusion of African and European dance styles and rhythmic sensibilities. In minstrel shows, Caucasian performers darkened their faces with burnt cork and "acted black." By the 1890's, African-American performers were being advertised as "authentic Negroes," darkening up their own faces and imitating the Caucasian performers who had been imitating African-Americans.

Vaudeville--or variety shows--came from the minstrel shows and provided an explosion of live theatre. The typical show had an orchestra and a number of acts--singers, dancers, monologists, comics--and many led off with an animal act. The typical tap act was eight minutes long and often the performers played five shows a day. By the 1930s there were infinite possibilities: elegant "class" acts, comic and eccentric dancers, acrobatic dancers who flipped upside down off of most anything, and any number of acts which combined other skills such as hat tricks, cane tricks, and spinning plates and trays. The greatest vaudeville star, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, danced in a style which was upright, clearly European, yet always swinging.

Classic movies of the 1930s and '40s showcased the great Caucasian dancers of the day, while African-Americans were mostly excluded. The Nicholas Brothers, whose daring exploits in flash and acrobatic tap were always delivered with elegance, succeeded in spite of their skin color and broke many color lines. Fred Astaire brought choreographic genius to tap and set standards for filming dance. At this time, tap dance came down from its toes into a syncopated, more sophisticated musical style known as rhythm, or jazz, tap.



By the 1940s, tap dance moved in two important directions, onto the concert stage and into the small music clubs where bebop was brewing. Paul Draper fused ballet with tap, gave concerts for tap, piano, and harmonica, and was America's top concert attraction for most of a decade. Meanwhile in the jazz clubs, African-

American dancers were extending concepts for rhythm dancing in much the same way as their peers were stretching out musically. The late dancer James "Buster" Brown, for example, could sing along with most every jazz tune ever written.

By the 1960s, tap dance was in decline. The "bible" of tap dance, Jazz Dance by Marshall and Jean Stearns, ends with a "requiem for a dying art form." In the 1970s a tap renaissance began, powered largely by middle-aged Caucasian women who sought out the old African-American male masters. Brenda Bufalino, a protege of the late Charles "Honi" Coles, has mentored several generations of tap dancers, produced documentary footage on the great old timers, and pushed the choreographic limits of tap like no one since Astaire. By the late 1970s Gregory Hines' career was back on track and paved the way for a whole new generation of young African-American dancers, most notably Savion Glover.



Today the world is busting out with tap dancers. In Germany, Spain, Brazil, Australia and Japan there are fabulous dancers pursuing new avenues, each influenced by their own cultures and histories. In America, repertory companies like the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble help to build and maintain a repository of choreography new and old, and produce some of the finest dancers on the planet. As a mature, concert art form, tap dance may not be as visible to the public eye as it was in 1930's, but with the dedicated work of an international community, the legacies of the past pave the way for a future of unlimited creativity and artistic expression.

(Written by Josh Hilberman)

NCYTE History

Founded in 1983 by Gene Medler, NCYTE is a unique, non-profit company that represents all that is good about participation in the arts by young people. Ensemble members are drawn from a wide range of ethnic, religious and economic backgrounds and reflect North Carolina's diverse population. Selected by audition each year, these young ambassadors for our state have risen to an unprecedented level of performance skill that has been lauded around the nation and abroad. The company serves to:

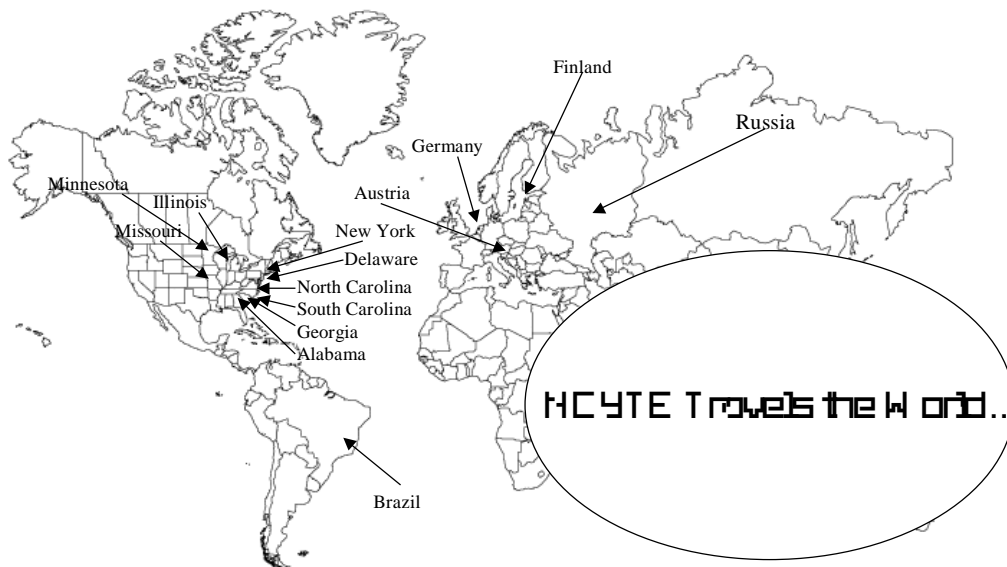
- ◆ entertain and inform audiences about the universal nature of percussive dancing
- ◆ preserve tap, an indigenous American dance form, and its cultural origins
- ◆ embrace the percussive dance forms of other cultures
- ◆ explore and support the cutting edge of contemporary choreography
- ◆ give company members the opportunity to perform and be recognized for their contribution to the quality of our lives

Members come from all over the state, but most of them live in the Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill area. NCYTE holds auditions every September, and all members are expected to audition each year. NCYTE members range in age from 8-18. Some have as little as 2 years of dance experience before joining the ensemble, while senior members may have 10 or more years of dancing classes and experience. Regular rehearsals are every Saturday afternoon in Chapel Hill, for about 3 hours. Additional rehearsals may be called in advance of some performances, and many members of the ensemble gather together on their own, to learn new dances or brush up on their steps.

In the spirit of learning and growing in technique and performance skills, everyone in NCYTE is expected to be enrolled in tap classes (at a program/school of their choice) in addition to their regular NCYTE rehearsals. Many members also take classes in ballet, jazz dance or modern dance. Periodically, NCYTE brings in professional tap dancers and instructors from around the world to conduct workshops for ensemble members and the larger dance community. Occasionally music and drama teachers provide workshops to NCYTE to enrich their understanding of how music and dance effectively come together on the stage.

NCYTE is linked with the global tap community, and the ensemble commissions choreography from across the nation and abroad. Contributions to the repertoire include works by Lane Alexander, Ira Bernstein, Brenda Bufalino, Michelle Dorrance, Savion Glover, James Green III, Josh Hilberman, Gene Medler, Michael Minery, Margaret Morrison, Jan and Eddie Owens, Zahi Patish and Danny Rachom, Ruth Pershing, Sam Weber and Steve Zee.

As you can see from the map below, the ensemble performs nationally and internationally. Performance venues range from retirement homes, schools and fairs to international festivals. NCYTE has been featured at Duke University with the Squirrel Nut Zippers and makes regular appearances at the St. Louis Tap Festival, and the Chicago Human Rhythm Project. Senior members of the company were part of the founding cast and touring company of *Common Ground* and have appeared in *Tap In* at the Town Hall Theater in New York City. NCYTE was featured in the PBS documentary *Juba! Master of Tap and Percussive Dance*. They have appeared at the New York City Tap Festival, the Vienna Tap Festival, Tap Encontro in Rio de Janeiro, Feet Beat Tap Festival in Helsinki, the International Tap Festival in Berlin and in Heidelberg, Germany. Most recently, NCYTE toured North Carolina in *Down Home with the Carolina Pops* (performing with a 60 piece orchestra) sponsored by *Our State Magazine*.



The same ensemble that received a standing ovation at the Town Hall Theater in New York City finds equal joy in performing for students at schools across the state and the country. Under the artistic direction of Gene Medler, the company's members understand and accept their responsibility for preserving tap dance, and they strive to share their love of this American art form with all their audiences.



NCYTE's artistic director, Gene Medler

Gene Medler is founder and director of the North Carolina Youth Tap Ensemble (NCYTE) and director of the North Carolina Rhythm Tap Festival. He teaches in the Department of Performing Arts at Elon University. Mr. Medler's previous teaching credits include Duke University and Meredith College. He is on the faculty at The Ballet School of Chapel Hill and has taught master classes at the tap festivals in the U.S. and worldwide.

Gene was an athlete for most of his life, playing baseball, basketball, and track in middle and high school and then fencing at the University of North Carolina. Between undergraduate and graduate school he got interested in acting which led to dance classes and ultimately tap dance class. Loving movement for its own sake and having always wanted to learn to play an instrument, tap dancing was the perfect art form for him. He was fortunate to be learning when many of the old masters were starting to teach again. Gene worked with masters like Clayton "Peg Leg" Bates, Charles "Honi" Coles, Cholly Atkins, Bunny Briggs, and contemporaries like Brenda Bufalino, Sam Weber and Savion Glover. His passion for tap dancing coupled with his desire to teach led to the creation of NCYTE.



Selected career highlights include:

- Appearance in Duke Ellington's *Nutcracker* at Page Auditorium, Duke University & Memorial Hall, UNC
- Appearance in Ellington's *David Danced*, Duke Chapel
- "Poor Butterfly" soft shoe choreo-graphed by Brenda Bufalino at Colorado Dance Festival
- *Appearance in Great Tap Reunion* (Boston), Charles 'Honi' Cole choreography
- Appearance with the Squirrel Nut Zippers
- Appearance with Brenda Bufalino, World Dance Festival New York City
- Grants from the Durham Arts Council, the North Carolina Arts Council and the Orange County Arts Commission
- Featured in *Dance Teacher Now* magazine
- Featured in *Southern Living* magazine
- Received the 1998 Indy Award for contribution to the arts from *Independent Magazine*
- Profiled in the September/October 2001 *Carolina Alumni Review*
- Named Tar Heel of the Week by the *News and Observer*
- Seen nationwide in PBS special, *Juba! Masters of Tap and Percussive Dance*

Discussion Topics

NCYTE performances are often followed by a question and answer period. The questions below are typical of the things students want to know about. You might find these helpful to guide your own discussion after the show.

Q. What kinds of shows does NCYTE perform, and where?

A. NCYTE performs regularly at school shows like the one performed today. The ensemble also performs at dance festivals both in the U.S. and overseas, local arts festivals, retirement homes, hospitals, concert series, fund-raising activities and seasonal events. Each year NCYTE has a show of their own at the Carolina Theatre in Durham, North Carolina.

Q. Where can someone learn to tap dance?

A. Classes are usually offered at dance studios that also teach ballet, jazz and modern dance. Sometimes the county parks and recreation program will offer dance classes. Any type of dance is potentially useful to someone who is interested in learning tap. It is also possible to learn on your own.

[note to teachers: In advance of the performance, you might familiarize yourself with local options for tap classes, so that you can mention these, as appropriate.]

Q. Why are there not as many boys in NCYTE as there are girls?

A. In this country, boys don't tend to take dance classes as often as girls do. This doesn't mean that boys aren't as good as girls are at dancing. It does mean that there are fewer boys who audition to be in NCYTE. If you think about it, it used to be that girls didn't do much with sports, but this has changed. NCYTE hopes that someday more boys will get involved in dance, and there will be more boys that audition and join the company.

Q. Who are some famous tap dancers?

A. Probably the most well-known tap dancer today is named Savion Glover. He has a dance company in New York City, and performs all over the world. When he was a kid, he appeared regularly on Sesame Street. Other well-known tap dancers include Gregory Hines, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Gene Kelly, Shirley Temple, Bill "Bojangles" Robinson (see additional resources page)



Q. Is there a difference between tap dancing, clogging and Irish dancing?

A. Percussive dance is inevitably tied to the music to which it is performed, and thus reflects the rhythms inherent in that music. The movement vocabulary and rhythms are different for each style because the music is different. Tap is, however, the most flexible, in part because tap dancing is done to the widest range of music.



NCYTE performance in Berlin, 2002

Q. What can you do with tap as a profession or career?

A. Some professional dancers who make their living from performing at dance shows, musicals, and other events. Most dancers probably also teach, either privately, or at schools, colleges or universities.

Q. What does a tap shoe consist of? How is it made?

A. Any good sturdy shoe can be made into a tap shoe by attaching taps, which are two metal pieces, one attached to the toe of the shoe and one attached to the heel. Different designs for these metal pieces make different sounds. Some shoes are specially designed for taps to be attached, but taps can be bought and attached to a wide variety of shoes with different types and heights of heels.



class Activities

Your students may be itching to do some rhythm activities after the performance, and we have a number of ideas that you might consider trying. Some are noisier than others, but we hope you'll not let that deter you. Although these activities could be done either before or after the show, in some cases we've indicated a recommendation.

Scat-singing

"Scat" singing can be done in a spoken tone or sung, rather than using lyrics. A few nonsense syllables replace all the words, but in the same rhythm as the words would have been sung. For example, "Row, row, row your boat," might become Shoo, Shoo, Shoo, Be Doo."

Choose a song that is known to the class. Younger grades might choose a nursery rhyme (e.g., Mary had a Little Lamb), while middle-school or high-schoolers might use an American folk song or patriotic song (e.g. Row Your Boat, My Country 'tis of Thee), or even a current popular song from the radio or movies that the kids know. Have them choose a few syllables that they'll use to scat the song, and write them on the board. Examples: Shoo, Be, Doo, Wah, Bop

Ask them to "sing" the song together, replacing the syllables in the original song with the agreed-upon scat syllables. They can use them in whatever combination of syllables they choose, but at first should keep the same rhythm as the original song. Then they can experiment with doubling up the rhythm, or adding sounds on the off-beat.

Point out that the tap dancers are making similar rhythmic sounds with their feet. There are a variety of sounds that can be made with the tap shoes, but they are more limited than speech. Some steps make a sliding sound, some have a hard slap, some are soft, etc.

Students could take this exercise a step further and experiment with making different types of rhythmic sounds with their feet.

Make your own tap shoes

Children who are keen to take tap dancing a step further could make their own tap shoes by gluing several pennies near the toe and heel of some old shoes (with parents' permission and help).

Dance Brainstorm and Crosswalk

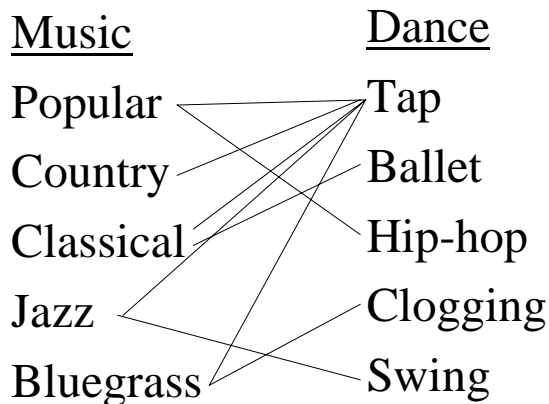
This is a good warm-up activity to take place before the show, if you have 10-15 minutes to spare. It also could be divided into two parts, with the brainstorming before the show, and the crosswalk afterwards. If you do the entire exercise before the performance, you can revisit it afterwards, to see if the students would like to make some modifications based on what they learned at the show.

Brainstorming: Ask the students to call out different types of music, and write these in one column on the board or flipchart. They may think of current popular distinctions (e.g. hip-hop, rap), and if so, you can suggest they also think of "older" styles of music to get a wider range (e.g. classical, blues).

Ask the students to next call out different styles of dance, and write these in another column to the right of the first one. Again, students may think initially of current dance styles, but encourage them to think more broadly.

Crosswalk: Ask the students to match up the types of music most associated with the types of dance, drawing lines between the two columns, as shown in the example below. You might give them an easy example first, such as classical music matched with ballet.

Example of Brainstorm Crosswalk



There are no right or wrong answers. Not all forms of music will be closely identified by your students with a particular form of dance, and some students might consider that any dance can be done with any music. NCYTE dances include music of many genres that some might not associate with tap (e.g. bluegrass, classical). The crosswalk exercise

may help students to recognize this, as well as point out that all types of music are fair game for a tap treatment.

Rhythms of Life

Rhythm is all around us every day, and tap dancers have taken some of their inspirations from the sounds they noticed as part of their everyday lives. Ask

the students to think about things in their world that have regular and irregular rhythms. A list below can help you get started, or keep things going if they get stuck. It is interesting to think about differences in rhythmic sounds in the city, as compared to the country, or indoor sounds compared to outdoor sounds.

Windshield wipers
Bird calls
Clock ticking

Dripping faucet
Cars honking
Phone ringing

Church bells
Hammer or saw
Oars on a rowboat

Body rhythms

The body can be used as an instrument to make many rhythmic sounds. An activity that is silly and fun, yet also instructive, is to let the children experiment with different ways to make these sounds. Many sounds can, of course, be made using the mouth, such as lip smacking, tongue clicking. Different sounds can be made by clapping the body in different ways. A hand thumped on the chest will sound different than a hand thumped against the thigh. Using the body as a percussive instrument is sometimes referred to as playing the “hambone” or “patting Juba.”

Start with having the children repeat back a rhythm that you clap with your hands, using their hands. Then ask them to repeat the same rhythm clapping against their leg, then their chest, to notice how the sounds of the rhythmic pattern are the same, but the tone is different.

Repeat this with mouth sounds (whooshing, whistling, purring through the lips). Instead of the teacher setting the rhythms, the children could take turns clapping or vocalizing a rhythm that the class then mimics.

Finally, an “improv jam” would allow kids to improvise their own body rhythms, one at a time, or as a group. They could repeat a set rhythm, using their own “instrument,” or everyone could devise their own rhythmic patterns that fit within a dominant beat that you provide by clapping your hands.

Tap dancers have a tradition of “challenging” each other to repeat a rhythmic pattern that one person sets. The person repeating the pattern then tries to return the challenge by changing the pattern and making it more difficult. If this listening exercise is working well, you might let them try a “challenge” with either yourself or some of the students leading off.

curriculum Integration

With a bit of planning (but spur-of-the-moment inspirations work, too), NCYTE's performance could serve to enrich your curriculum, particularly music, social studies, math, and physical education.

Involving the music teacher at your school could add an extra dimension to the performance. Tap dancing is a form of working with and creating music, and a bit of tap infusion could perhaps help make some of the points included in the school's curriculum. If you have an opportunity to involve your music or social studies teacher she/he will certainly have a number of ideas. If you're on your own, consider thinking about:

Music, Math

Rhythmic concepts: Tap is all about rhythm, and a number of basic rhythmic concepts, such as syncopation and marking time, can be easily identified in tap dancing. These concepts could be emphasized by asking students to practice demonstrating with their feet (hand claps are great, but why not consider stomps!). From a math perspective, rhythmic patterns can be used to demonstrate principals such as division, fractions and sets.

Music, Social Studies

Music types: A connection with the music curriculum as well as social studies could be found in considerations of the different types of music featured in your school's NCYTE performance (e.g. blues, classical, bluegrass, old-time, folk, Latin, jazz). These music traditions have historical perspectives and some have a specific geographic identification. Can the students recognize these types of music or the composers? Do they know the historical roots? (See the Dance Details section for more information.)

Physical Education

A number of physical education activities naturally include rhythm. Jumping rope can be done rhythmically. Students can try bouncing a ball to different rhythms, hopping, skipping, or just plain old experiment with making noise with their feet. Some of the body rhythm exercises on page 10 could be good to do in the physical education class.



details on Dances

NCYTE draws on a repertoire of over 24 dances in choosing a selection for school performances. Below is a bit of information on some of the dances that could be included in the performance at your school.

◆ **Slaughter on 10th Avenue**

Choreography: Carrie Barnett and Elena Steponaitis (2003)

Style: Rhythm

Music: *Slaughter on 10th Avenue* (Richard Rogers)

This dance is the most recent addition to the repertoire. It was choreographed by two senior members of NCYTE to be performed with the North Carolina Symphony Orchestra.

◆ **The Condos Brothers' Indian Routine**

Choreography: Steve and Nick Condos (1938)

Reconstruction and staging: Sam Weber (2003)

Music: *War Dance for Wooden Indians* (Raymond Scott)

The Condos Brothers was a flash tap act that relied on virtuoso tapping rather than acrobatics. The Condos brothers were among the most advanced tap dancers of their generation. This routine, which is legendary among tap dancers for its virtuosity, speed and difficulty, was featured in the 1938 20th Century Fox movie *Happy Landing* starring Sonja Henie and Don Ameche.

◆ **The Hunt**

Concept and Arrangement: Gene Medler

Choreography: Carrie Barnett, Rachel Kiel and Elena Steponaitis (2002)

Style: Rhythm

Music: *Allegro assai* from the "Hunt" String Quartet in B-flat Major, K. 458 (Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart)

This dance was choreographed by members of the ensemble and added to NCYTE's repertoire in 2002, to be performed with the Malarme Chamber Orchestra.

◆ **Body Beat**

Choreography: Zahi Patish and Danny Rachom (2001)

Style: Body Drumming, Vocalization, Hip-Hop

Music: *a cappella*

This dance was choreographed by members of *Sheketak* (Tel Aviv), an Israeli dance group that takes its name from Hebrew words for silence (sheket) and sound (tak). *Sheketak* dancers and instrumentalists combine body drumming, tap, hip-hop, vocalization, and live music into their internationally acclaimed performances.

◆ **Blue Rondo a la Turk**

Choreography: Sam Weber (2000)

Style: Rhythm

Music: *Blue Rondo a la Turk* (Dave Brubeck)

Blue Rondo a la Turk is based on the Turkish 9/8 meter, one of the Dave Brubeck quartet's most famous experiments with non-traditional meter (the most famous was *Take Five*). This dance began as a technique exercise for practicing even or unbroken rhythms. The choreography demands the dancers first tap the straight rhythms of the melody and then switch to a medium swing blues as three extra beats are added to each measure. After building to a frenzy of double-time rhythms and turns in the blues section, the piece returns to 9/8 for a dizzying finish. (Sam Weber)

◆ **Traditional Copasetic Soft Shoe**

Choreography: Brenda Bufalino (1999)

Style: Vernacular

Music: *Me and My Shadow* (Al Jolson and Dave Dreyer)

Serenade in Blue (Harry Warren and Mack Gordon)

The Copasetics Club was formed in 1949 by a group of legendary dancers to honor the memory of Bill "Bojangles" Robinson. Copasetic was a word favored by Mr. Robinson, being used to describe things that were perfect. The first part of this dance is a soft shoe, staged by Ms. Bufalino as it was performed by the Copasetics during the 1950s and 1960s. In the second part, Ms. Bufalino weaves together past and present, blending traditional soft-shoe steps she learned from the Copasetics into her own distinctive choreography.

◆ Isicathulo

Choreography: James Kelly Green III (1999)

Style: South African Gum Boot

Music: *a cappella*

First performed at missions when dancing was outlawed, this South African gum boot dance was a form of protest. Today it is very popular among mine workers. Usually performed by men, the dancers wear Wellington boots, black trousers, a colored vest, and a beret. The humming and shouts of the dancers accompany the stomping of their boots, while a guitarist plays a basic rhythm of a few chords with little pretense to melody.

◆ Jump, Monk

Choreography: Brenda Bufalino (1998)

Style: Polyrhythm

Music: *Jump, Monk* (Charles Mingus)

This composition is described by Mingus as a profile, not a complete picture, of Thelonious Monk, but one aspect of a complex personality. The eight-bar, many-voiced section that alternates with the melody mirrors the emotional, earthy quality found in both subject and composer, and this feeling is reflected in the movements of the dancers. The compositional techniques are also important. Along with given melodic figures, the composer creates form and mood by giving the musicians and dancers scales on which they can build their own figures. These figures must appear in certain places in the composition and maintain its mood.

◆ Step it Up and Go

Choreography: Ruth Pershing (1993)

Style: Piedmont Buck

Music: *Jitterbug Rag* (Blind Boy Fuller)

"This dance is based on the individual style of one buck dancer, John Dee Holeman, from Durham, North Carolina. The dance begins with the rhythm of hand slapping, which was often the only music for buck dancing. Tap-like steps then give way to longer patterns. The dancers trade steps in a call-and-response section, then split into two train cars using steps Mr. Holeman invented to imitate a steam train, with one person shoveling coal

in between. The trios at the end are like the intimate little challenges at house parties.” (Ruth Pershing)

◆ **My Own House Waltz**

Choreography: Ira Bernstein (1992)

Style: Traditional French Canadian Waltz Clog

Music: *My Own House Waltz*

My Own House Waltz is a French Canadian waltz clog, also known as Quebec’s waltz clog. As with the jig, this form of clog dancing stresses intricate footwork with a minimum of upper body movement.

◆ **St. Patrick’s Day in the Morning**

Choreography: Traditional steps arranged by Jan and Eddie Owens (1988)

Style: Traditional Irish Jig

Music: *St. Patrick’s Day in the Morning*

Tap is a unique form of dance created in America through the blending of traditions of immigrants from the British Isles and Africa. Almost three hundred years ago the Irish were performing a style they called step dancing. Step dancing is characterized by a stiff upper body, arms at the sides, head straight forward, and no smiles. St. Patrick’s Day in the Morning is an Irish jig. A jig is a particular combination of music and steps, and is the first dance taught to students in Ireland.

◆ **Cole’s Stroll & Shim Sham**

Choreography: Charles “Honi” Coles, Leonard Reed, and Willie Bryant (1950’s/1930’s)

Style: Vernacular

Music: *Take the A-Train* (Billy Strayhorn)

This dance consists of two traditional pieces of choreography. The first is the Cole’s Stroll, choreographed in the 1950s by Charles “Honi” Coles. The second part is called the Shim Sham, which was created in the 1930s by Leonard Reed and Willie Bryant. The Shim Sham is affectionately referred to as the tap dancers’ “national anthem.” The Cole’s Stroll is always danced to the Duke Ellington/Billy Strayhorn tune *Take the A-Train* and the introduction was and is: “If you can walk, you can dance...”

vocabulary



This vocabulary includes terms used in reference to aspects of dance, especially tap.

a cappella: performance of a tap dance without musical accompaniment

Ballet: a choreographed presentation of a story or theme performed to music by ballet dancers

Blues: a style of music using 12-bar phrasing, originating in the U.S. and closely associated with tap

Choreographer: one who plans out the specific steps and movements that dancers are to make

Clogging: a style of dancing common in the Appalachian U.S., most often danced to traditional bluegrass or mountain folk music.

Funk: an urban style of dancing, crossing jazz and hip-hop

Improvisation: made up on the spot; something danced without preparation or pre-determination of particular steps to follow

Jam session: dancers spending time together doing improvisation and working on dances, usually with no set objectives other than enjoyment

Jazz: both a style of music and associated style of dance.

Latin: a style of music and a style of dance, identified by rhythmic patterns traditionally associated with Latin America.

Modern dance: initially a rebellion against the rigid structure of ballet, stressing more emotion – how the movement felt rather than how it looked.

Percussive: to hit or shake in order to make sound

Rhythm tap: the style of tap dancing that stresses rhythmic patterns as a way to express oneself – to create interest, excitement and feeling

Scatting: repetition of rhythmic patterns substituting nonsense syllables for words

Softshoe: a tap style characterized by slower and smoother movements

Syncopation: accenting the weak beat in a musical phrase

Resources

Books:

Stearns, Marshall, The History of Jazz Dance, American Vernacular Dance.

Frank, Rusty, TAP!

Ames, Jerry and Jim Siegelman, The Book of Tap, Recovering America's Long Lost Dance.

Knowles, Mark, Tap Roots: The Early History of Tap Dancing.

Glover, Savion and Bruce Weber, My Life in Tap.

Popular films that include famous tap scenes:

The Little Colonel (1935) Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Shirley Temple

Singin' In The Rain (1952) Gene Kelly

Tap (1989) Gregory Hines, and a HOST of others

Top Hat (1935) Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers

White Nights (1985) Gregory Hines, Mikhail Baryshnikov

Stormy Weather (1943) Bill Robinson, Nicholas Brothers

Documentary films:

Fred Astaire: Puttin' on His Top Hat

No Maps on My Taps (SBN 1-55974-055-8)

Juba! The Masters of Tap & Percussive Dance

Exploring the World of Music. Vol.5 Rhythm (www.learner.org)

Dance Sense. Tape 3 – Tap. (www.ket.org)

About Tap (hosted by Gregory Hines. Direct Cinema, Ltd.)

Websites: www.ncyteonline.org; www.tapdance.org



Appalachian State University's Office of Arts and Cultural Programs
presents

APPlause!

K-12 Performing Arts Series

The performances are part of the APPlause! Series, presented by Appalachian State University's Office of Arts and Cultural Programs. Featuring local, regional and world-renowned professional artists, the mission of the program is to share university arts resources with the public, private and home school network across our region. Study guide materials connect every performance to the classroom curriculum. With the help of the university's College Access Partnership, school groups can enjoy lunch in an on-campus dining facility, take a campus tour, or observe a demonstration by an Appalachian State professor.

The APPlause! Series receives generous support
from the Clabough Foundation



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