MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA
2011-2012 Young People’s Concerts

At the Ballet

THE MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA
Courtney Lewis, Conductor

Featuring:
Minnesota Dance Theatre

March 28th & 29th, 2012
10:00am and 11:35am each day

The Minnesota Orchestra gratefully acknowledges generous support from:
Dear Teachers;

Here are the curriculum materials for the Minnesota Orchestra Young People's Concert you are attending March 28-29, 2012, *At the Ballet*.

In addition to some great music, this concert marks some major historical milestones:

- Throughout the 2011-2012 season, we are celebrating 100 years of Minnesota Orchestra Young People’s Concerts. The first YP concert took place in November, 1911, and concerts for students have been an important part of Minnesota Orchestra programming ever since.
- To help celebrate the YP Centennial, the centerpiece of the *At the Ballet* concerts will be Stravinsky’s ballet masterpiece *Petrushka*, which had its first performance the same year as our first Young People’s Concert back in 1911.
- For these concerts, and to help celebrate both the centennial of our YP concerts and of *Petrushka*, we have engaged the Minnesota Dance Theatre to create and perform brand new choreography for the piece. MDT is celebrating a milestone of its own during the 2011-2012 season, since it has been 50 years since they formed. Among their first productions were the much loved *Nutcracker* performances with the Minnesota Orchestra, and while they are a flourishing independent company, we’re proud to celebrate these various historical milestones with them, and are happy that students will experience an amazing production of *Petrushka* as a result.

The concert opens with Tchaikovsky’s orchestration of two dance pieces by Mozart, a *Gigue* and *Minuet* originally written for piano. Minnesota Dance Theatre has choreographed this music, and will feature some of the youngest members of their company.

Also on the program is “The Death of Tybalt” from Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* suite. Originally written as ballet music, this piece is often performed by orchestra alone, which is how you will experience it at our concert.

We’re adding an exciting literary component to the concert, as we will project storyboard descriptions of the *Petrushka* story along with the music and the choreography.

We hope you enjoy the *At the Ballet* concert, and thanks for helping us celebrate 100 years of Young People’s Concerts by bringing students to Orchestra Hall this season!

Jim Bartsch  
Director of Education  
Minnesota Orchestra  
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MINNESOTA ORCHESTRA
2011-2012 Young People’s Concerts

At the Ballet

Concert Program

Peter Tchaikovsky
“Gigue” and “Minuet” from Mozartiana Suite #4.
with Minnesota Dance Theatre

Sergei Prokofiev
“Death of Tybalt” from Romeo and Juliet

Igor Stravinsky
Petrushka (1947 version)*
with Minnesota Dance Theatre
Original choreography by Justin Leaf

*By arrangement with Boosey and Hawkes, publisher and copyright owner.
The Minnesota Orchestra is now in its second century and led by Music Director Osmo Vänskä, ranks among America’s top symphonic ensembles, with a distinguished history of acclaimed performances in its home state and around the world, award-winning recordings, radio broadcasts and educational outreach programs, and a visionary commitment to building the orchestral repertoire of tomorrow.

The 98-member ensemble performs nearly 200 programs each year and its concerts are heard by live audiences of 400,000 annually. Its Friday night performances are broadcast live regionally by Minnesota Public Radio, and many programs are subsequently featured on American Public Media’s national programs, Symphony Cast and Performance Today.

In addition to traditional concerts, the Minnesota Orchestra connects with more than 85,000 music lovers annually through educational programs including Young People’s Concerts (YPs), Target Free Family Concerts and Kinder Konzerts. In the last decade more than half a million students have experienced a Minnesota Orchestra YP. Musicians also engage in such Minnesota Orchestra-sponsored initiatives as the Adopt-A-School program (founded in 1990), Side-by-Side rehearsals and concerts with young area musicians, and the UPbeat program, which establishes multi-year relationships with communities throughout the Twin Cities and around the state.
Courtney Lewis, conductor

Born in Belfast, Northern Ireland, Courtney Lewis has worked with orchestras and chamber ensembles from London to Venezuela, earning recognition as one of today’s top emerging conductors. He is founder and music director of Boston’s acclaimed Discovery Ensemble, a chamber orchestra with the unique mission of introducing inner-city school children to classical music while bringing new and unusual repertoire to established concert audiences. He recently completed his second season as Zander Fellow with the Boston Philharmonic Orchestra, a prestigious conducting apprenticeship under the ensemble’s music director, Benjamin Zander. In addition to his work with the Boston Philharmonic, he has assisted Zander with the London Philharmonia, Toronto Symphony, Saint Louis Symphony and Símon Bolivar Youth Orchestra of Venezuela.

In November 2008 Lewis made his major American orchestra debut with the Saint Louis Symphony Orchestra, leading a series of five concerts. He subsequently spent several weeks assisting conductors David Robertson, Marc Albrecht and Yan Pascal Tortelier. In recent seasons he has also worked with the BBC Philharmonic, Tulsa Symphony and Liverpool Mozart Orchestras, as well as smaller groups including the Nash Ensemble and Alban Berg Ensemble.

Lewis attended the University of Cambridge, where he studied composition with Robin Holloway and clarinet with Dame Thea King, graduating at the top of his year with starred first class honors. After completing a master’s degree with a focus on the late music of György Ligeti, he attended the Royal Northern College of Music, where his teachers included Sir Mark Elder and Clark Rundell.
The Minnesota Dance Theatre

In 1962 Loyce Houlton embarked on an artistic journey that would change the artistic landscape and have a lasting impact on the world of dance. Recognized as one of Minnesota's cultural treasures Minnesota Dance Theatre continues with its courageous vision to present dance with an eclectic international voice.

The mission of Minnesota Dance Theatre & the Dance Institute is to create masterful and provocative dance performances which entertain and inspire audiences, and to foster talent by providing a comprehensive classical and contemporary training curriculum focused on the technical and artistic demands of a professional dance career.

"Being aware of our changing environment without losing the richness of the past we can incorporate and integrate into our program the worthwhile moments of movement that can change the visible world of dance … the art we serve and love.”  Loyce Houlton

More: www.mndance.org

Through a commission by the Minnesota Orchestra, The Minnesota Dance Theatre’s Justin Leaf created brand new choreography for Stravinsky's Petrushka, which you will see in its debut at the At the Ballet Young People’s Concerts!
BALLETT BASICS

From wikipedia:

Ballet is a formalized kind of performance dance which originated in the Italian Renaissance courts of the 15th century, and which was further developed in France, Russia, and Britain as a concert dance form. The early portions preceded the invention of the proscenium stage and were presented in large chambers with most of the audience seated on tiers or galleries on three sides of the dancing floor. It has since become a highly technical form of dance with its own vocabulary. It is primarily performed with the accompaniment of classical music and has been influential as a form of dance globally. Ballet has been taught in ballet schools around the world, which use their own cultures and societies to inform the art. Ballet dance works (ballets) are choreographed and performed by trained artists, include mime and acting, and are set to music (usually orchestral but occasionally vocal). It is a poised style of dance that incorporates the foundational techniques for many other dance forms. This genre of dance is very hard to master and requires much practice. It is best known in the form of Late Romantic Ballet which preoccupies itself with the female dancer to the exclusion of almost all else, focusing on pointe work, flowing, precise acrobatic movements, and often presenting the dancers in the conventional short white French tutu. Later developments include expressionist ballet, Neoclassica ballet, and elements of Modern dance.
Amazon.com lists many books about ballet for children, including:

**Meredith Hamilton:** *A Child's Introduction to Ballet: The Stories, Music, and Magic of Classical Dance* (Book & CD). Basic information on Ballet, with stories of some of the great ballets, including Petrushka.

**National Ballet School of Canada:**

**The Ballet Book: The Young Performer's Guide to Classical Dance**

Description from Amazon.com:

“Grade 3-8. This comprehensive guide, written by a teacher at Canada's National Ballet School, helps youngsters who love ballet to understand the hard work and commitment involved in classical dance training.”

**Jane Rosenberg and Merrill Ashley:**

**Dance Me a Story: Twelve Tales from the Classic Ballets**

Description from Amazon.com:

“Grade 3-6. The plots of 12 well-known ballets are adequately told so that readers can follow the sequence of events and have an idea of the type of dance movement and music that characterize important moments.”
Peter Illich Tchaikovsky
Gigue and Minuet from Mozartiana, Suite #4.

Who wrote the music?

Peter Illich Tchaikovsky (chi-KOFF-skee) was born May 7, 1840 in a little village in Russia. His father was chief inspector of the mines and had 100 cossacks (soldiers) in his command. The Tchaikovsky home was the social center of the town.

Peter grew up with music. His mother played the piano, and even as a tiny child, Peter would climb on the piano stool and create little tunes. He also played the “orchestrion” which was a gift from his father. The orchestrion was like a music box that produced sounds of several instruments of the orchestra. It played music from Mozart’s *Don Giovanni,* and Tchaikovsky later credited the device for giving him his lifelong love of Mozart’s music.

Peter was a quick learner, both in music and in other subjects. He always had tunes in his head, and sometimes had trouble falling asleep as a result.

When he was old enough, Peter attended law school, following his father’s advice. He graduated at age 19 and began work in the Ministry of Justice. He studied music whenever he could. Eventually, he gave up law and became a student at the new conservatory of music. When he graduated, he was awarded a diploma and silver medal. His teacher recommended that he be given the post of Professor at the Moscow Conservatory of Music.

Later, his music attracted the attention of a very wealthy woman, Madame von Meck. She became his sponsor, providing him with enough money so that he could concentrate on composing. They grew to be great friends, but only through letters. The two apparently never met.

During his career, Tchaikovsky traveled a great deal. In 1891, he participated in a festival in New York City that opened Carnegie Hall.

For many years, Tchaikovsky’s music was played more than any other Russian composer. He wrote a great deal of music, which is known for beautiful melodies, exciting rhythms, and great variety in instrumental color.
What is this music about?

Tchaikovsky wrote four suites for orchestra, and the fourth is most commonly called “Mozartiana”. A suite is a collection of pieces, (just like a hotel suite is a collection of rooms). The piece was first performed in 1887, as a tribute to the 100th anniversary of the Mozart’s opera Don Giovanni. Tchaikovsky held Mozart in the highest regard, and especially loved Don Giovanni. An acquaintance of Tchaikovsky had purchased the original score for Mozart’s Don Giovanni, which Tchaikovsky saw during a visit to Paris in 1886. As he looked at the score, he said he felt he was “in the presence of divinity.”

Tchaikovsky wrote his Mozartiana suite as a tribute to his composer “idol.” He chose several Mozart pieces and reworked them using the sound of the orchestra of his day (the late 1800s).

At this concert, you will hear the first two pieces in Tchaikovsky’s suite:

A gigue (zheeg) based on Mozart’s Little Gigue for piano, and a Minuet, based on Mozart’s Minuet K.355.

The Minnesota Dance Theatre is creating new choreography for this music. This piece will be an example of how ballet can be created around a piece of music that was not necessarily written to be danced.

Preparing student to hear the music.

Listen to Mozart’s original pieces for piano:

Audio recordings of Mozart’s Gigue (K. 574) and Minuet (K.355) can be found on youtube, and you can downloaded and print the music for free:

Gigue:

Youtube video:
A recording by pianist Eileen Joyce from 1943
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6sASvtTNEDc

Music download:

Minuet:

A recording on youtube:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W20E_-S6U0c

Music download:
Familiarize students with the sound of both pieces in their original piano form. If you have an advanced piano student in your class, ask them to perform one or both pieces.

Describe, or discover with students, the characteristics of each piece:

The **Gigue** is lively folk dance, originating with the British “Jig”, and later imported to France where it is called the Gigue (zheeg). The Gigue is usually in a triple meter, (3/8, 6/8, 12/8, etc.), meaning each beat can be divided into three parts:

ONE two three

Or

ONE two three FOUR five six ONE two three FOUR five six

Mozart’s Gigue is in 6/8 meter.

Help students feel the two big beats per measure, and the division of each beat into three parts.

- Have students conduct in a simple DOWN - UP motion corresponding to the two main beats of each measure. Listen for how each beat is divided into three parts:

  ONE two three FOUR five six

  ONE two three FOUR five six

- Point out that Mozart’s gigue is has two halves, and that each are repeated:

  0:00-0:20: First half
  0.20-0:37 First half repeats
  0.37-1.01: Second half
  1:01-end: Second half repeats

  In the second half, at 0.46, the music is briefly in a minor key and becomes more *legato* (smooth sounding). If students are conducting, have them change their gesture at this point.

Play an example of an Irish Jig for comparison:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIfnbVPP3SM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wIfnbVPP3SM)
The Minuet is a French social dance in ¾ meter.

The Minuet usually also has a specific musical form, sometimes called the Minuet form. This form consists of a first part called the “A” section, which is repeated. Following this is a second part which contains new music (“B” section) followed by a return to the A section music, or a variation of it (written as “A Prime” or A’). The entire second part is then repeated.

Help students study the form of Mozart’s Minuet, using this listening map and the youtube recording listed above:

Part One: 0.00-1.06
   A section: 0.00-0.37
   A section repeats: 0.37-1.06

Part Two: 1.07-2:53
   B section: 1.07-1.28
   A’: 1.28-1.58
   Repeat of B-A’: 1.58-2.53

Create a roadmap for the Minuet, including the musical “repeat” sign, and have students follow along as you listen:

II: A :II II: B A’ :II
Art Project

To internalize the form of the piece, have students create an illustrated trail map that depicts this form.

Two hikers begin a walking trip. They walk in one area, return to the starting point and then repeat the loop. On a half sheet of paper, have students use their imagination and draw this “A” scene, and the trail that the hikers loop through twice. The scene can reflect the character of the first section in Mozart’s Minuet.

After this, the hikers enter “new” territory, that should be illustrated differently, perhaps reflecting the character of Mozart’s B section. After spending some time in this new territory, the hiker comes into an area that looks like similar to the original A scene, but is slightly different. As in the first half of the hike, they repeat this second loop.

Examples: The hikers walk a double loop in a wooded terrain (A), enter a dessert terrain briefly (B), and end their hike in a wooded terrain that is similar to the beginning of the hike (A).
Making Predictions

After students are familiar with Mozart’s original piano pieces, discuss that they will hear Tchaikovsky’s re-working of the music for full orchestra.

Discuss the ideas of “homage” and “tribute”:

Homage: “Respect or reverence paid or rendered.”

Tribute: “An act, statement, or gift that is intended to show gratitude, respect, or admiration.”

In music, “tribute” may be defined as: “relating to a group or musician that performs the music of a more famous one and imitates them in appearance and style, as a form of respect.”

Students may have attended a “Tribute Concert” performed in honor of another musician, or to mark an important historical event.

Explain that Tchaikovsky had great respect for Mozart, and re-wrote Mozart’s music for orchestra as a “tribute” or in “homage” to Mozart. Tchaikovsky’s piece was first performed at a kind of “Tribute Concert”, to mark the 100th anniversary of Mozart’s opera “Con Giovanni”.

Have students predict what they think Tchaikovsky’s orchestration will sound like.

- Which families of instruments would students choose for the Minuet or the Gigue?
- If the students were in charge of the Choreography Department at the Minnesota Dance Theater, how would they approach designing the choreography for this piece? Would they stage the Minuet, for example, in costumes from Mozart’s time, or costumes from Tchaikovsky’s time, or in modern costumes?
Sergei Prokofiev

“Death of Tybalt” from *Romeo and Juliet*

Who wrote the music?

Sergei Prokofiev (sehr-gay pro-ko-fee-ev) (1881-1953) was born in southern Russia before the Bolshevik Revolution. By the time he entered the St. Petersburg Conservatory at age thirteen, he had composed four operas, a symphony, two sonatas and many piano pieces. His music was considered very avant-garde (radical and modern) for his day, and is distinguished by strong rhythms, distinctive melodies, harmonic dissonance, and a percussive piano style. As a student, he liked to work with what he called "new and spicy harmonies."

Prokofiev left Russia in 1918 because he could not reconcile his creative work with the requirements of the Communist regime. He lived in Paris, France until 1932, then returned to the Soviet Union, agreeing to accept the restraints imposed by the Soviet government on its artists. A gifted composer, he was able to create complex music that retained simplicity of theme and style. His *Peter and the Wolf* is well-loved by children and adults alike, and his ballet music for *Romeo and Juliet* is also considered a masterpiece.
What is the music about?

Prokofiev’s *Romeo and Juliet* is a ballet based on Shakespeare’s play. Prokofiev completed the ballet music in 1935, originally for the Bolshoi Ballet, which apparently rejected it saying it was “undanceable.” During this time, Soviet artists were under extreme pressure and scrutiny from the government. Composers, including Prokofiev and his contemporary Shostakovich, had to be careful not to offend the tastes of the government by writing music that was viewed as too “modern”. Both the music and theater communities were nervous about mounting a full production of Prokofiev’s ballet, but the Suites that Prokofiev extracted from the ballet were performed both in the Soviet Union and in the United States. The full ballet was premiered in 1938.

The Death of Tybalt scene:

You may wish to review the story of *Romeo and Juliet* with your students.

Here is a synopsis from Wikipedia. (The portion relating to the duel and the death of Tybalt is underlined).

The play, set in Verona begins with a street brawl between Montague and Capulet supporters who are sworn enemies. The Prince of Verona intervenes and declares that further breach of the peace will be punishable by death. Later, Count Paris talks to Capulet about marrying his daughter, but Capulet is wary of the request because Juliet is only thirteen. Capulet asks Paris to wait another two years and invites him to attend a planned Capulet ball. Lady Capulet and Juliet's nurse try to persuade Juliet to accept Paris's courtship.

Meanwhile, Benvolio talks with his cousin Romeo, Montague's son, about Romeo's recent depression. Benvolio discovers that it stems from unrequited infatuation for a girl named Rosaline, one of Capulet's nieces. Persuaded by Benvolio and Mercutio, Romeo attends the ball at the Capulet house in hopes of meeting Rosaline. However, Romeo instead meets and falls in love with Juliet. After the ball, in what is now called the "balcony scene", Romeo sneaks into the Capulet orchard and overhears Juliet at her window vowing her love to him in spite of her family's hatred of the Montagues. Romeo makes himself known to her and they agree to be married. With the help of Friar Laurence, who hopes to reconcile the two families through their children's union, they are secretly married the next day.
Juliet's cousin Tybalt, incensed that Romeo had sneaked into the Capulet ball, challenges him to a duel. Romeo, now considering Tybalt his kinsman, refuses to fight. Mercutio is offended by Tybalt's insolence, as well as Romeo's "vile submission," and accepts the duel on Romeo's behalf. Mercutio is fatally wounded when Romeo attempts to break up the fight. Grief-stricken and wracked with guilt, Romeo confronts and slays Tybalt.

Montague argues that Romeo has justly executed Tybalt for the murder of Mercutio. The Prince, now having lost a kinsman in the warring families' feud, exiles Romeo from Verona and declares that if Romeo returns, "that hour is his last." Romeo secretly spends the night in Juliet's chamber, where they consummate their marriage. Capulet, misinterpreting Juliet's grief, agrees to marry her to Count Paris and threatens to disown her when she refuses to become Paris's "joyful bride." When she then pleads for the marriage to be delayed, her mother rejects her.

Juliet visits Friar Laurence for help, and he offers her a drug that will put her into a death-like coma for "two and forty hours." The Friar promises to send a messenger to inform Romeo of the plan, so that he can rejoin her when she awakens. On the night before the wedding, she takes the drug and, when discovered apparently dead, she is laid in the family crypt.

The messenger, however, does not reach Romeo and, instead, Romeo learns of Juliet's apparent death from his servant Balthasar. Heartbroken, Romeo buys poison from an apothecary and goes to the Capulet crypt. He encounters Paris who has come to mourn Juliet privately. Believing Romeo to be a vandal, Paris confronts him and, in the ensuing battle, Romeo kills Paris. Still believing Juliet to be dead, he drinks the poison. Juliet then awakens and, finding Romeo dead, stabs herself with his dagger. The feuding families and the Prince meet at the tomb to find all three dead. Friar Laurence recounts the story of the two "star-cross'd lovers". The families are reconciled by their children's deaths and agree to end their violent feud. The play ends with the Prince's elegy for the lovers: "For never was a story of more woe / Than this of Juliet and her Romeo."
Many people believe that the death of Tybalt is the climax of the play. When Romeo kills Tybalt, the feud between the two families becomes much more serious, and all of the tragic events in the rest of the play, from Romeo’s banishment to the death of Romeo and Juliet, take place as a result.

In composing music for this part of the story, Prokofiev had the opportunity and challenge to create a musical climax to match the climax in the story, and did so brilliantly.

**Strategy One: create stories**

Before relating the story of the piece, listen to the first minute or so of music. Ask students to describe the mood of the music, and create a “word bank” of their responses. After you have collected a word bank, suggest that students write a story background (scene, characters, etc) that could be suggested by the word bank. What kind of story might this music be about: a comedy, a tragedy, a fast moving drama, a beautiful love story? With repeated listening of this part of the music, ask students to incorporate the sharp sound effects that begin after about the 2 minute mark. (In the Romeo and Juliet ballet, these represent the sword thrusts of the duel, but save this detail for later.) As an aside, you may wish to point out that this music contains some very difficult parts for the violins, and you can share this excerpt from the violin part with students (next page). Violinists are often required to play this excerpt when they audition for an orchestra position.

The music changes dramatically at about 2:30, when there are 15 “blows” on the tympani and bass drum. This is one of the boldest moments in any piece of music, signifying that something very dramatic has happened.

The music that follows the 15 blows is very different from the music on the first half. Create a word bank that describes the music that follows the drum blasts, and you may wish to divide the two word banks with 15 bold lines representing the 15 blasts on the drums. Have students create a second half to their stories that they started, based on the “2nd half” word bank.
Violin excerpt from *The Death of Tybalt*:
Strategy Two: start with the story

Another approach to this music is to relate the story of *Romeo and Juliet*, especially the portion that includes the duel and the death of Tybalt, before listening to the music.

Discuss how the single death blow to Tybalt changes everything for the rest of the story. Discuss that Prokofiev created music that brilliantly depicts that “before” and “after” portions of the story. As you listen to the music for the first time, prepare students that they will hear one of the most dramatic before and after “dividing lines” in any piece of music ever written. Ask them to raise a hand when they hear this dividing line (the 15 drum blasts). With repeated listening, help students hear the other musical elements that relate to the story:

First half: the sword thrusts, the dueling men jumping out of the way to avoid them, the nervous energy of the music in general, almost “playful” quality of the music which may raise the question of whether anyone was really trying to kill anyone in the duel, or if the death of Tybalt was an “accident”.

////////////////

(15 drum blasts mark the turning point in the story)

Second half: long sustained melody in a minor key suggests a much more serious, tragic nature of the story, playful and nervous energy are gone.
Extensions:

Leonard Bernstein’s *West Side Story* is a modern (1960’s) re-setting of the *Romeo and Juliet* story. The rumble scene begins at 1:32:00, and Tony (Romeo) kills Bernardo (Tybalt) at 1:36:00.

Watch a full ballet performance of this part of the piece, featuring the great Rudolf Nureyev, at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQbQAwwwSnD8](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JQbQAwwwSnD8). Note that this music is from the complete ballet, and is somewhat different from the music in the Suite. The music that most closely resembles the Suite begins at about 6:50. You may wish to preview this clip and prepare students that this is a dance performance with traditional ballet-style costumes and movements.
We are very pleased to offer a fully choreographed production of Stravinsky’s ballet masterpiece *Petrushka*, and to be partnering with Minnesota Dance Theatre for this production. *Petrushka* was premiered in 1911, the same year as the first Minnesota Orchestra Young People’s Concert, so we are celebrating the Young People’s Concert centennial and the 100th birthday of *Petrushka* at the same time!

Minnesota Dance Theater marks its 50th anniversary this season as well.

The following pages include several ways to prepare students for the production of *Petrushka*:
Discover Igor Stravinsky, composer

Igor Stravinsky (1882-1971) was a Russian composer, pianist and conductor. He is one of the truly great composers of all time, and was named by *Time* magazine as one of the 100 most influential people of the 20th century.

He was born in Oranienbaum, a Russian village on the Gulf of Finland. His father was a famous opera singer, and Igor grew up listening to a great deal of music as a result. He began piano lessons at age 9, and found that he much preferred improvising his own music to learning the pieces he was assigned.

As a child, he loved the outdoors. In his autobiography, he wrote, “I loved best the violent Russian spring that seemed to begin in an hour and was like the whole earth cracking. That was the most wonderful event of every year of my childhood.”

Among Stravinsky’s most famous pieces are his three ballet scores, Firebird (1909), Petrushka (1911) and Rite of Spring (1913).

“The Firebird made Stravinsky famous overnight, and was revolutionary for that time because of its unusual instrumental combinations, irregular rhythms, unexpected meter changes...shocking harmonies and startling dynamic contrasts.”

*Gladys Tipton and Eleanor Tipton* “Adventures in Music, grade 5, volume 2”

Perhaps recalling his childhood love of the violent Russian spring, the music for *Rite of Spring* was so violent it actually caused a riot in the audience at its first performance.

Stravinsky eventually left his homeland, becoming a French citizen in 1934, and moving to America in 1939. He continued to compose in his home in California, and traveled the world conducting his own music with major symphony orchestras. He guest conducted the Minneapolis Symphony (now Minnesota Orchestra) in a concert of his own music in January, 1966.
Discover Stravinsky’s Ballet *Petrushka*

The second of Stravinsky’s three great ballets, *Petrushka*, was written in 1911 for Sergei Diagilev’s *Ballet Russes*. At its premiere in 1911, the title role was danced by the great Vaslav Nijinsky. Stravinsky’s ballets definitely had a sound that was new to many people. (As you become familiar with the music with your students, consider that Tchaikovsky’s *Nutcracker* had its first performance less than 20 years earlier.) When Diagalev and his company traveled to Vienna in 1913, the Vienna Philharmonic orchestra initially refused to play the music!

“Petrushka” is a character in Russian folk puppetry, with roots going back as far as the 17th century. Petrushkas were used as marionettes as well as hand puppets.

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Full synopsis of the traditional *Petrushka* story
from Wikipedia

The ballet opens on St. Petersburg’s Admiralty Square. In progress is the Shrovetide fair known as *Maslenitsa*, a Russian carnival before Lent, analogous to Mardi Gras. The people rejoice before the long fast.

Stravinsky’s orchestration and rapidly changing rhythms depict the hustle and bustle of the fair. An organ grinder and two dancing girls entertain the crowd to the popular French song *Une Jambe de Bois*. Drummers announce the appearance of the Charlatan (or Showman), who charms the captivated audience. Suddenly, the curtain rises on a tiny theater, as the Charlatan introduces the inert, lifeless puppet figures of Petrushka, a Ballerina and a Moor.

The Showman casts a magic spell with his flute. The puppets come to life, leap from their little stage and perform a vigorous Russian Dance among the astounded...
The second scene, after the performance, is set in Petrushka's Cell 'inside' the little theatre. The walls are painted in dark colors and decorated with stars, a half-moon and jagged icebergs or snow-capped mountains. With a resounding crash, the Showman kicks Petrushka into this barren cell. We see that Petrushka leads a dismal "life" behind the show curtains. Although Petrushka is a puppet he feels human emotions which include bitterness toward the Showman for his imprisonment as well as love for the beautiful Ballerina. All of this is sensitively described by Stravinsky's fantasia-like piano breaks. A frowning portrait of his jailer hangs above him as if to remind Petrushka that he is a mere puppet. The infuriated clown-puppet shakes his fists at the Showman's stern glare and tries to escape from his cell but fails.

The Ballerina then enters the room. Petrushka ineptly attempts to express his love for her but she rejects his pathetic, self-conscious advances and hastily departs. Petrushka collapses in a melancholic reverie.

In the third scene the audience learns that the Moor leads a much more comfortable "life" than Petrushka. The Moor's room is spacious and lavishly decorated and is painted in bright reds, greens and blues. Rabbits, palm trees and exotic flowers decorate the walls and floor. The Moor reclines on a divan and plays with a coconut, attempting to cut it with his scimitar. When he fails he believes that the coconut must be a god and proceeds to pray to it.

The Showman places the Ballerina in the Moor's room. The Ballerina is attracted to the Moor's handsome appearance. She plays a saucy tune on a toy trumpet and dances with the Moor.

Petrushka finally breaks free from his cell, and he interrupts the seduction of the Ballerina. Petrushka attacks the Moor but soon realizes he is too small and weak. The Moor beats Petrushka. The clown-puppet flees for his life, with the Moor chasing him, and escapes from the room.
The fourth and final scene returns to the carnival. Some time has passed; it is now early evening. The orchestra introduces a chain of colorful dances as a series of apparently unrelated characters come and go about the stage as snow begins to fall. The first and most prominent is the Wet-Nurses’ Dance, performed to the tune of the folk song "Down the Petersky Road". Then, a peasant appears with his dancing bear, followed in turn by a group of gypsies, coachmen and grooms and masqueraders.

As the merrymaking reaches its peak, a cry is heard from the puppet-theater. Petrushka suddenly runs across the scene, followed by the Moor in hot pursuit brandishing his sword, and the terrified Ballerina chasing after the Moor, fearful of what he might do. The crowd is horrified when the Moor catches up with Petrushka and slays him with a single stroke of his blade.

The police question the Showman. The Showman seeks to restore calm by holding the "corpse" above his head and shaking it to remind everyone that Petrushka is just a puppet. As night falls and the crowd disperses, the Showman leaves, carrying Petrushka's limp body. All of a sudden, Petrushka's ghost appears on the roof of the little theatre, his cry now in the form of angry defiance. Petrushka's spirit thumbs its nose at his tormentor from beyond the wood and straw of his carcass.

Now completely alone, the Showman is terrified to see the leering ghost of Petrushka. He runs away whilst allowing himself a single frightened glance over his shoulder. The scene is hushed, leaving the audience to wonder who is "real" and who is not!

Petrushka: costume design: civil servant disguised as a pig and worker disguised as a fox. 1957 design by Alexandre Nikolaevich Benois for the Igor Stravinsky scored production of Petrushka.
Connect the story and the music

Stravinsky’s *Petrushka* is an example of ballet music that clearly reflects the story.

We have prepared a YouTube video so you can see the storyboard titles while listening to the music. Log on at the Minnesota Orchestra website using username: youngpoeples and password: (emailed to you by Chris Johnson) to access the audio files on the website and you will also find the four YouTube videos of the four tableau (scenes) from *Petrushka*.

These same (or somewhat edited) titles will be projected above the orchestra and dancers during the *Petrushka* performance.

The storyboard titles are included at the end of this guide.

After familiarizing students with the story of *Petrushka*, begin to work through the music, one tableau at a time, while using the storyboard titles. You will notice that the music reflects the story in a very direct way.

Examples from the first tableau:

#2: The morning sun glitters on the flags which fly above the festival stalls and booths.
   *Cellos play a very high melody, with the sound of flags snapping in the wind.*

#4: Stamping their feet in the frosty air, the crowd bustles from booth to booth.
   *Lower instruments play a feet-stamping rhythm.*

#7: Steam rising from painted samovars (urns) mingles with the shouts of barkers.
   *The cymbal makes the sound of steam rising.*

#8: An organ grinder appears in the crowd…
   *Clarinets create the melody of the organ grinder.  Other instruments make the sound of the handle turning.*

#19: Drummers command attention…
   *Snare drums play an extended solo*

#23: The Magician brings the puppets to life by touching them with his flute…
   *Extended flute solo.*
Student activities:
Print the storyboard titles, and distribute them to students. As you play the music, ask the appropriate student to stand and read his/her title. (Follow along on the YouTube storyboard video so you can cue the students, in turn, to read their titles in order and at the right time.) If time permits, students can turn their particular storyboard into a visual artwork (decorating their storyboard title if it is placed in the center of a larger piece of paper), or a gesture (#4, stamping feet, for example) or other response. As you listen to the music, students, in turn, display or demonstrate their responses.

Additional background and resources

- In June, 2011, National Public Radio celebrated the 100\textsuperscript{th} anniversary of \textit{Petrushka} with this article:

  The story includes a youtube clip of a performance of the original choreography.

  From National Public Radio’s \textit{What Makes it Great} series, an audio clip introducing the unique soundscape of the opening of \textit{Petrushka}.

  - Leonard Bernstein devoted one of his Young People’s Concerts with the New York Philharmonic, to Igor Stravinsky, and particularly \textit{Petrushka}. The concert is available on youtube, in four parts. For part one, follow this link:

    http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbAL9l1hNsg

  The program features various pieces by Stravinsky, and concludes with a detailed musical examples and descriptions from \textit{Petrushka}. These clips would work very well in a classroom setting, either pre or post concert.
Re-setting the story

The materials and resources on the previous pages relate to a traditional version of *Petrushka*. Our production will feature a new take on the story. It is created by Justin Leaf, for these performances with the Minnesota Dance Theatre. ([www.justinleaf.com](http://www.justinleaf.com)).

As is often the case with new productions of existing works, the setting, location and sometimes even parts of the story are changed. *West Side Story*, for example, is a brilliant re-working of the Romeo and Juliet story. It follows the Romeo and Juliet story fairly closely, but is re-set in New York City centuries later, with corresponding characters.

Justin Leaf has decided to re-set the story of *Petrushka* from a festival in St Petersburg, Russia in the 1830s, taking it instead to a teenage slumber party in 1950's America. See his Artist Statement for details.

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**ARTIST STATEMENT**

by choreographer Justin Leaf

for Minnesota Dance Theatre production of “Petrushka”

The question of who is real and who is not…

The shared experience of what it means to be human…

The desire to experience authenticity beyond prescribed roles…

These are some of the themes that can be found in the original libretto for Petrushka, created by the composer Igor Stravinsky and the set designer Alexandre Benois in 1911.

Conceiving a new Petrushka for the Minnesota Dance Theatre to premiere at a Minnesota Orchestra Young People’s Concert in March of 2012, I explore how these themes are relevant today, and I create a new setting for the ballet that will resonate with today’s audiences.

Stravinsky and Benois were raised in Russia and were familiar with Russia’s version of the “Punch and Judy” show – with its pathetic Petrushka, dashing Moor, and demure ballerina.
They incorporated these iconic figures into the ballet as “puppets,” and then proceeded to reveal the outer and inner worlds of these puppets, exploring the theme of authenticity and human nature through this theatrical device.

In our present age, we have our own icons: flashy celebrities that have become the template from which gods of music and movies have been fashioned. In this new version of Petrushka, I take the audience back in time to the proliferation of our own celebrity era, to the 1950’s, when these celebrity images became ubiquitous by way of the television sets in homes across America.

These celebrities have achieved near-archetypal status: Marilyn Monroe, Elvis Presley, and James Dean – the bombshell, the stud, and the rebel. Yet, despite their glossy exteriors, each met with a tragic demise, ultimately revealing greater depths of human hardship than the glamorous veneer was allowed to reveal, and we are left to wonder if they were destroyed by the manipulation of some invisible puppeteer.

In the libretto for the original ballet, the puppet show occurs in the midst of Russia’s version of a Mardi Gras festival, a rowdy event on the eve of Lent. In this new version of the ballet, the setting is a raucous slumber party. Teenage girls come together for a party of boisterous games, pillow fights, and juvenile gossip. There is an edge to these girls; competition is the name of the game as they are a product of their culture.

The miniature theater that was used in the original ballet to house the puppet show is now a television set, an open frame through which the celebrity figures emerge and enact their predictable moves for the slumber party guests. The idolatry of the tittering teens drives the puppets further into their dance and leads us to consider that the true identity of the puppeteer may in fact be the audience, that it might even be us.

The slumber party soon melts away to reveal the behind-the-scenes scenes, the private lives of these puppets for a new age, with movement sourced from photographs of these famous figures and then informed by the emotional world of the individual behind the icon.

Rather than indicting these actual historical figures in a biographical account, I aim to create fictional representatives of the archetypes that have been derived from those people, now commonplace in the world of entertainment for the masses.
Our protagonist Petrushka is the James Dean-like character and the most willing to shed his image for a chance to be real, to be truly alive. The Ballerina doll is found in the Marilyn Monroe-like character. She flirts with the idea of shedding her exterior when alone with the rebel “Petrushka” but is inclined to stay hidden and retreats to the company of our Elvis character, the parallel to the Moor, who is content to remain tucked away, wrapped inside the thick shell of his own ego.

As the story of the ballet unfolds, it follows the basic action of the original libretto, but is now adapted for the new setting. Ultimately, the essential themes are revealed, those themes that make this story timeless, and especially timely now that the celebrity images are shaping cultural values. This idea is evident in the advent of social media, where everyone can create their own virtual image, and in the popularity of reality television, where real lives are exploited for entertainment, and in competitions for fame, where the next “American idol” may be found. And in this context, this new version of Petrushka surfaces and asks the question: what does it mean to be truly human, to be real?

That question was asked in the 1911 version of the ballet and now again one hundred years later. The original ballet was called a “ballet burlesque,” and this one could also be called that. Here we have the potential for a colorful world of comical play, but with a dark dimension, revealed not only in the hidden world of the puppets, but also in the competitive spirit of the teenage girls and their near-ghoulish thirst that perpetuates the cult of celebrity.

As the original choreographer Michel Fokine worked with a company of ballet dancers, so do I. And as with all of my choreographic works, I draw from a foundation of classical technique and merge it with new movement to develop a comprehensive vocabulary distinct to this particular dance. I pay attention to the respective attributes of these specific characters and allow their images to inform the movement.

Finding a new setting for Stravinsky’s masterful score, inspired by the original libretto, and responding to the temperament of our modern age, I develop this new version of Petrushka in the hopes that it will serve as a mirror to our own experiences. Even with one hundred years separating this new version from the original, the themes continue to resonate, but now in this new dimension.
Making predictions

You will see and hear a brilliantly creative version of *Petrushka* when you attend the Minnesota Orchestra’s *At the Ballet* Young People’s Concert. You may wish to fully prepare students on the traditional story of Petrushka and the connections with the music. You may also wish to talk about the concept of re-setting an existing story. If you attended the Minnesota Orchestra’s *Hansel and Gretel* or *Peter and the Wolf* Young People’s Concerts in the past, you have already experienced traditional stories that have been re-set to different eras.

Once students are familiar with the traditional *Petrushka* story, discuss how Justin Leaf is transporting the story to another time and place. Post concert, discuss how the three main characters (Petrushka, Ballerina and Moor) were depicted in this new version.
1. First Tableau:
The Mardi-Gras fair.
St. Petersburg, 1830.

2. The morning sun glitters on the flags which fly above festival stalls and booths. In the back is a “Living Theater”.

3. Peasants, gypsies and well-dressed gentry have gathered to celebrate the carnival.

4. Stamping their feet in the frosty air, the crowd bustles from booth to booth.

5. A small group of tipsy merrymakers weaves its way through the fairground.

6. Steam rising from painted samovars mingles with the shouts of barkers.

7. An old showman entertains the crowd, his long beard spilling forth from his booth.

8. An organ grinder appears in the crowd, accompanied by a street dancer.

9. The dancer summons the crowd, exhorting them to watch.

10. The street dancer dances, beating time on the triangle.

11. The organ-grinder shows off, playing the trumpet with his other hand.

12. Across the square, a hurdy-gurdy takes up a different tune, and a rival dancer performs.
13. The two dancers compete for attention: the crowd watches one, then the other, as if at a tennis match.

14. The rival dancers charge together, each pulling the other’s hair.

15. Magistrates break up the fight, and the dancers leave the square.

16. In the hubbub of the festival crowd rowdy peasants lead a traditional dance.

17. The showman attracts the crowd again. All is bustle and activity.

18. Drummers in front of the “Living Theater” command the attention of the crowd.

19. Suddenly the Magician appears.

20. The Magician advances into the square, mysterious and menacing.

21. Playing on his flute, the Magician enchants the spellbound crowd.

22. He signals the curtain to open, revealing three lifesize puppets: Petrushka, a Moor and a Ballerina.

23. The Magician brings the puppets to life by touching them with his flute ...

24. The Moor ...
The Ballerina ...
Petrushka.
25.
The puppets, suspended in their alcoves, move their feet to a lively Russian tune.

26.
The three puppets leave their perches, and dance in the street, to the amazement of the crowd.

27.
The puppets perform a dumb-show: shy Petrushka, the doll-like Ballerina, and the self-assured Moor.

28.
Petrushka approaches the Ballerina; she shuns him and draws away.

29.
The Moor embraces the Ballerina, while Petrushka watches yearningly.

30.
Petrushka interrupts in a jealous rage: the Moor chases him and knocks him down.

31.
At an imperious gesture from the Magician, the three puppets take a bow as the show comes to an end.
Second Tableau: Petrushka’s Cell.

The walls are covered with moons and stars.

A portrait of the Magician looms over all.

The door opens abruptly. Petrushka is kicked in by the Magician. He falls.

Petrushka weeps, and collapses on the floor.

Terrified by the image of the Magician, Petrushka tries to escape from his locked cell.

He curses his life as an ungainly Puppet, shaking his fist at the Magician’s portrait.

Petrushka dreams of the Ballerina, whose love he longs to win.

To cheer himself, he clumsily attempts to dance a Russian jig.

The Magician ushers in the Ballerina, wondering if a match could be made.

Excitedly, Petrushka breaks into a wild dance, hoping to impress her.

Frightened by his uncouth antics, the Ballerina flees from the room.
42.

Petrushka bangs his head
against the locked door,
and weeps in frustration.

43.

Petrushka tries once more to escape:

In vain.

He curses the Magician
for keeping him captive.

44.

Trapped in his barren cell,
Petrushka collapses in despair.
Third Tableau:

The Moor's Alcove.

Painted serpents and ferocious beasts glare through jungle foliage on the walls. The Moor lounges on a divan.

The Moor toys with a coconut. He tosses it in the air, catching it with his feet.

He shakes the coconut, and hears something inside.

The Moor draws his scimitar to kill the spirit within the coconut. He cannot break the shell.

In amazement, the Moor worships the spirit within the coconut. He bows down before this Mighty God.

The Magician ushers in the Ballerina, a toy trumpet in her hand.

To the Moor's delight, the doll dances, holding the trumpet mechanically to her lips.

The Moor jumps and twirls to impress her.

The Ballerina dances a slow waltz.

Unable to waltz, The Moor dances his own awkward dance step.
56. The Moor embraces the Ballerina.
    She pretends to be offended.

57. The puppets resume their dancing.

58. Taking the Ballerina by the waist,
    the Moor draws her towards the divan.

59. The Moor and the Ballerina hear a noise.

60. Petrushka, mad with jealousy,
    breaks in through the door.

61. The Moor jumps up,
    and chases Petrushka with his scimitar.
    The Ballerina faints.

62. The Moor shoves Petrushka from the room, and slams the door.
63.

Fourth Tableau:

The Mardi-Gras Fair.

That same evening.

64.

The festive mood grows
as the season of Lent draws closer.

65.

In the crisp air of dying winter
the crowd drives on the celebration.

66.

The nursemaids dance,
their movements tender and serene.

Snow starts to fall in the square.

67.

A peasant enters with a bear.
He plays his pipe,
and the bear walks on his hind legs.

69.

The peasant and his bear lumber off.

70.

The crowd clusters round a ribbon seller,
waving gaily-colored streamers in the air.

71.

A merchant bursts in with two gypsy girls.

72.

The gypsy girls break into a dance,
while the merchant plays the accordion.

73.

The merchant tosses up banknotes,
and the crowd scrambles
to grab them off the ground.

74.

The coachmen and stable boys
take over the square
with their spirited jig.

75.

The nursemaids join in the dance.
76. The coachmen and nursemaids dance together, filling the square with swirling color.

77. Masqueraders appear, dressed in fantastic costumes.

78. The “Devil” threatens the crowd, who draw back in mock terror. The “Devil” exults in his power.

79. Masquers dressed as goats and pigs perform a wild pantomime, led by the “Devil”.

80. The whole square erupts into dance.

81. Cries emerge from the little theater.

82. Petrushka dashes out, pursued by the Moor, whom the Ballerina tries to restrain.

83. The enraged Moor overtakes Petrushka and strikes him with his scimitar.

84. Petrushka falls, his skull broken.

85. The dying Petrushka trembles in the snow. A fascinated crowd surrounds him.

86. A policeman is sent to fetch the Magician, to charge him with Petrushka’s murder.

87. The Magician glides from the theater. He shakes the limp Petrushka, to show the crowd this is only a puppet.
88.
In bewilderment, the crowd disperses.
The Magician drags the lifeless puppet
towards the little theater.

89.
Above the theater,

Petrushka’s ghost appears,
mocking the Magician.

90.
The Magician scurries away in terror.

Petrushka thumbs his nose at him,
and at all who believe that he is not real.