

Singapore Arts Festival Resource Pack

Dance to Remember: Pina Bausch

This resource pack contains 1 lesson which lasts for 90 minutes.

Contents

Introduction	3
Preparation	4
Lesson Plan	5
Recommended resources	9
Annex 1	
Annex 2	

Introduction

Workshop - Dance to Remember: PINA BAUSCH (90 minutes)

Pina Bausch (27 July 1940 – 30 June 2009), a German choreographer and dancer, was the artistic director of the German company, Tanztheater Wuppertal. Tanztheater is a neo-expressionist form of German modern dance, which often portrayed the human body in violently emotional settings. Bausch began her training in Essen at the famous Folkwang School, where she met Kurt Jooss, choreographer of the internationally acclaimed “The Green Table.” She would later join Jooss’s new company – the Essen Folkwang Ballet, after having studied at the Julliard School in New York and danced for several American choreographers. As a choreographer, Bausch produced works that were theatrical and emotionally charged, such as *Café Muller* (1978), in which dancers stumble over tables and chairs as they move around the stage. She transformed the way that dancers performed on stage by covering it with soil in *Rite of Spring* (1975) and with flowers in *Neiken* (2005). Dancers and choreographers from across the world continue to draw inspiration from the way that Pina Bausch presented the complexities and subtleties of human relationships in her dances.

“I want to feel something, as a person. I don’t want to be bored,” Pina Bausch said about the way she watches other choreographers’ dances. Feelings are central to her works and she would often ask her dancers difficult questions to motivate them to dance with various emotions. This resource packet guides teachers in introducing their students to Bausch’s artistic concepts through interactive activities.

Preparation

Theme 1: Difficult Questions

1. Use Annex 1 to lead the students in Difficult Questions.

Theme 2: "I Want to Feel Something"

- 1) Write out various emotions on notecards for students to pick blindly from, eg. joy, excitement, anger, disappointment, nervousness, etc. There should be enough notecards so that each group of 2-3 students is able to pick one notecard.
- 2) Place the notecards in a box that can be handled by the students.
- 3) Pre-select a list of music that you deem appropriate to their age group.

Talk Back

- 1) Search for video clips of Pina Bausch's dances on the internet. Suggested weblinks are included as recommended resources.
- 2) Make the necessary technical arrangements for screening the video clips.

LESSON PLAN

Theme 1: Difficult Questions

Description: Dancers are not always told what movement to do. They are sometimes given difficult questions to solve in the form of free movement games, as with the dancers in Pina Bausch's company. In this activity, students experience movement games as a tool for creating original movement and will be asked some of the very same questions that Bausch had posed to her company.

Objective:

To introduce students to the artistic concepts of Pina Bausch

Outcome:

Students will be able to briefly introduce Pina Bausch to others

- 1) Use Annex 1 to lead the students in these movement games. If the group is large, students may work in small groups of 2-3.
- 2) Instruct the students to remember the movement that they will create in this activity.

Total: 30 min
6-7 min per
question

Use Annex 1

Theme 2: “I Want to Feel Something”

Description: Pina Bausch presented a myriad of human emotions onstage through the process of dance making. In this activity, students contextualize their movement exploration from Theme 1: Difficult Questions by giving the movement an emotional quality. They also gain a basic understanding of the different elements involved in making a dance.

Objectives:

- To engage students in a dance-making process of Pina Bausch
- To stimulate the creativity and sense of experimentation among the students

Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify key elements in a dance-making process
- Students will be able to create a short dance based on studies inspired by Pina Bausch

- 1) If the students are not already in groups, split them into groups of 2-3 each. 2 min
- 2) Have each group pick out an emotion notecard from the box that you had prepared. 3 min
- 3) Each group will make a dance based on two elements: movement that they created in Activity 2 and the emotion on their notecard. 20 min
- 4) In order to make the dance, each group will have to decide which movement from Theme 1: Difficult Questions best suits the emotion on their notecard. For example, “copy someone else’s tic” (1) can be used for nervousness and “how do you behave when you’ve lost something” (4) can be used for anger. Have the groups practice doing the movement according to the emotion. 10 min
- 5) Remind the students that there should be a clear beginning, middle and end to their dance. Beginning: Do they begin onstage or offstage? Middle: What movements are they doing and where in space are they doing the movement. End: Do they end the dance onstage or do they travel offstage? 10 min

- 6) Pick groups with contrasting emotions to perform their dances together. Play music from your pre-selected list to accompany the dances.

Total: 45 min
Use prepared
notecards and
pre-selected
music.

Talk Back

Description: Students view video clips of Pina Bausch's work to enhance their understanding of her artistic concepts and to make a connection between their experience with the activities and Bausch's own choreography.

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|---|-------|
| 1) Play the selected video clips for the students. | 5 min |
| 2) Invite them to describe what they see and feel from the video clips. Lead the students in a discussion about how the dances in the video clips relate to their experience participating in the activities from this packet. | 5 min |
| 3) Ask questions that relate to larger ideas of performance and spectatorship: Why do you think Pina Bausch makes dances this way? Why do the audience members go to such a performance? Do you think the dancers really feel the emotions they are portraying? | 5 min |

Total: 15 min.
Use pre-
selected video
clips.

Recommended Resources

Official Website for Tanztheater Wuppertal:

<http://www.pina-bausch.de/en/index.php>

Books Available at National Library Board:

Ballet & Modern Dance by Susan Au

Fifty Contemporary Choreographers by Martha Bremser & Lorna Sanders

Pina Bausch by Royd Climenhaga

Pina Bausch: Dance Theatre by Norbert Servos (reference only)

Videorecordings Available at National Library Board:

Orpheé und Eurydic (reference only)

Kontakthof (reference only)

Internet Links to Video Samples:

Excerpt of *Le Sacre Du Printemps* :

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KXVuVQuMvgA>

Excerpts of *Café Mueller*:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtqrqjERhkQ>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dNhE9XkhAA>

Internet Links to Articles and Interviews:

Pina Bausch Remembered – Los Angeles Times:

<http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/culturemonster/2009/07/pina-bausch-remembered.html>

Pina Bausch Articles and Videos – New York Times:

http://topics.nytimes.com/topics/reference/timestopics/people/b/pina_bausch/index.html

Singapore Arts Festival 2011

**Remembers Pina Bausch
With a performance of
Out of Context – For Pina
By les ballets C de la B / Alain Platel**

Official Website:

<http://www.lesballetscdela.be/#/en>

Annex 1

1	<p>“Copy someone else’s tic”</p> <p>Tic: A sudden and repetitive movement that involves discrete muscle groups, such as shoulder shrugging, blinking, wrinkling of the nose, crunching toes, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Describe what a tic isB. Ask students to think about tics that they have observed from family, friends, strangers, or characters on tv and in movies.C. Have the students replicate these tics individually or in their groups.D. Encourage them to learn from each other in order to create a string of tics.
2	<p>“Move your favorite body part”</p> <p>The favorite body part may be described as the part that they are most proud of. Parts such as the eyes have minimal movement and can be moved in tandem with the entire head.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Ask the students to close their eyes and think about the part of their bodies that they are most proud of.B. Guide the students in making a small dance with their favorite body part. The small dance includes tiny movement that an outsider may not be able to see.C. Instruct the students to increase the scale of their movement from tiny to medium, and finally to large.
3	<p>“Write your name with movement”</p> <p>Students can pick to “write” their first names or their full names.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Have the students “write” their names with any body part in the space or on the floor.B. Once again, students should be encouraged to vary the scale of their movement.C. Remind the students to try different body parts and even 2 or 3 parts concurrently.
4	<p>“How do you behave when you’ve lost something”</p> <p>The thing that the students imagine losing may be an object or a person.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Tell them that they have lost something important and encourage them to demonstrate how they would react.B. If more prompting is needed, have the students close their eyes and imagine themselves in a specific setting, such as in their rooms, at school or at a restaurant. How would they react to having lost something in such a setting?C. Allow the students room to explore their feelings and reactions.

Annex 2

FEEDBACK FORM

Thank you for using this resource pack.
Please give us your feedback.



Name : _____
Occupation : _____
Tel : _____
Email : _____

Name of Resource Pack			
Usefulness of the Resource Pack	Very applicable	Applicable	Not applicable
What did you enjoy most from this Resource Pack?			
Any suggestion on how to improve this Resource Pack?			

Thank you once again!