



SPRUCE PEAK ARTS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE FLYNN CENTER PRESENT



LE CIRQUE ESPRIT

WELCOME TO THE 2018-2019 STUDENT MATINEE SEASON!

TODAY'S SCHOLARS AND RESEARCHERS SAY CREATIVITY IS THE TOP SKILL OUR KIDS WILL NEED WHEN THEY ENTER THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE, SO WE SALUTE YOU FOR VALUING THE EDUCATIONAL AND INSPIRATIONAL POWER OF LIVE PERFORMANCE. BY USING THIS STUDY GUIDE YOU ARE TAKING AN EVEN GREATER STEP TOWARD IMPLEMENTING THE ARTS AS A VITAL AND INSPIRING EDUCATIONAL TOOL.

WE HOPE YOU FIND THIS GUIDE USEFUL AND THAT IT DEEPENS YOUR STUDENTS' CONNECTION TO THE MATERIAL. IF WE CAN HELP IN ANY WAY, PLEASE CONTACT SMS@FLYNNCENTER.ORG.

ENJOY THE SHOW! -Education Staff

AN IMMENSE THANK YOU...

PERFORMANCES AT SPRUCE PEAK ARE SUPPORTED BY THE SPRUCE PEAK ARTS COMMUNITY & EDUCATION FUND, THE ARNOLD G. AND MARTHA M. LANGBO FOUNDATION, THE LINTILHAC FOUNDATION, THE GEORGE W. MERGENS FOUNDATION, AND THE WINDHAM FOUNDATION. ADDITIONAL FUNDING FROM THE SPRUCE PEAK LIGHTS FESTIVAL SPONSORS: THE BAIRD FAMILY, JILL BOARDMAN AND FAMILY, DAVID CLANCY, DAWN & KEVIN D'ARCY, THE DESTEFANO FAMILY, THE LAQUERRE-FRANKLIN FAMILY, THE GAINES FAMILY, THE GREEN FAMILY, LAUREN & JACK HANDRAHAN, KRISTI & EVAN LOVELL, HEATHER & BILL MAFFIE, THE OHLER FAMILY, SEBASTIEN PARADIS, THE PATCH FAMILY, THE RHINESMITH FAMILY, GRAND SLAM TENNIS TOUR, CARLOS & ALLISON SERRANO-ZEVALLOS, TYLER SAVAGE, PATTI MARTIN SPENCE, SIDNEY STARK, NANCY & BILL STEERS, AND KEN TAYLOR.

THANK YOU TO THE FLYNN MATINEE 2018-2019 UNDERWRITERS:

NORTHFIELD SAVINGS BANK, CHAMPLAIN INVESTMENT PARTNERS, LLC, BARI AND PETER DREISSIGACKER, EVERYBODY BELONGS AT THE FLYNN FUND, FORD FOUNDATION, FORREST AND FRANCES LATTNER FOUNDATION, SURDNA FOUNDATION, TD CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, VERMONT ARTS COUNCIL, EVERYBODY BELONGS ARTS INITIATIVE OF BURLINGTON TOWN CENTER/DEVONWOOD, VERMONT COMMUNITY FOUNDATION, NEW ENGLAND FOUNDATION FOR THE ARTS, NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS.. ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FROM THE BRUCE J. ANDERSON FOUNDATION & THE WALTER CERF COMMUNITY FUND.

LE CIRQUE ESPRIT

In February, 2005, Richard Grimes and cordis embarked on a creative exploration into sight and sound with the award-winning production, Kaleidoscopika. The first generation of their foray into a multi-disciplinary event saw cordis' extensive live show combined with the complimentary aesthetic of Lehrer Dance Company out of Buffalo, NY; initially Angela Buccini augmented that show as a circus soloist. The combination of stunning aerial work and cordis' dramatic soundscapes quickly demanded the inception of an equally steller technical production - one which focused specifically on the resonant and dissonant relationships that lurk between the worlds of circus and sound. In 2012, just such a world was created when Technical Director, Matthew Cowan, came onboard to co-produce Kaleidoscopika: The Art of Unfolding for Meridith Hankenson and The ACTS Agency.

In 2017, after a decade of artistic exploration and evolution, cordis and Matt Cowan aligned creative forces with the famed Boston Circus Guild, and Le Cirque Esprit was born. This powerful new production has quickly established a unique identity in American circus by framing the pioneering contemporary music of cordis under The Boston Circus Guild's spectacular tapestry of lights, acrobatics, and aerial work. The result is a one-of-a-kind event Billboard Magazine describes as "sparkling moments that defy classification."

ACROBATICS Good acrobats must be able to cartwheel, flip, twist, turn and balance. They must also have strong muscles. Some acrobats can contort their bodies, twisting their arms and legs into places they don't normally go, like putting their feet behind their head! Acrobats are very flexible and strong and often get their start by doing gymnastics.

AERIAL WORK These performers, known as aerialists, do many of the same things an acrobat does, but they do them while hanging above the stage. Depending on their training and the style of the performance, aerialists perform on trapeze, rings, ropes, lengths of fabric known as silks and other apparatus

LIVE MUSIC Le Cirque Esprit has live musicians on stage playing directly beneath the performers. Pay attention to how the musicians and acrobats work together to create an overall artistic experience.



WHAT IS "CIRQUE?"

The term refers to a style of performance that incorporates circus arts from all over the world such as clowning, acrobatics, mime, trapeze, contortionism, stunts, and more and then adds a layer of theatricality not usually seen in a standard circus performance. "Adding theatricality" means the use of costumes, sound, lighting, and perhaps even some plot or storyline. The performances are entertaining and inventive. The various art forms are blended together to create one seamless, energetic, and dramatic experience for the audience.

MOVEMENT MEMORIES

Invite each student to choose one particular movement from the show that stands out in their memory. Remind them of the different types of moves they saw and ask for volunteers to demonstrate the movements as best they remember them. As each volunteer performs a movement, invite everyone to create their own interpretation of that same movement and perform these pieces simultaneously. (Hint: use the lights in your room to cue the start and end of the "performances.") Ask the students what made these movements memorable.



HUMAN SCULPTURES

Acrobats use strength, flexibility and balance to create an astonishing assortment of shapes with their bodies. In this activity, students will explore making sculptures with their bodies — both singly and in pairs.

- Ask students to spread out in an open space. Each person should find their own personal space bubble.
- Ask students to imagine that they are like clay and can mold their bodies into different shapes like triangles, circles, and squares or into objects like tables, flowers, ladders, etc.
- Ask students to experiment with using high, medium and low levels as they make shapes with their bodies.
- Encourage them to try to use their entire bodies when making their shapes. If students need direction, you may call out different shapes (geometric shapes, letters, numbers, objects, etc.) for them to try to make with their bodies.
- Next, ask students to work in pairs to continue to try to make different shapes and object sculptures.
- When students are done experimenting in pairs, provide time for reflection about the difference between making shapes by yourself or with others.
- To conclude, encourage students to look for shapes that the acrobats make with their bodies during the performance.

Follow-up Questions:

- What skills do you need to make different shapes or sculptures with your body?
- How did making shapes by yourself differ from making shapes with a partner?
- What sort of shapes do you think you will see the circus performers make with their bodies during the performance?
- Watch for how they work together. How do they support each other? How do they communicate? How important do you think teamwork skills are in order to put on a performance and be part of a company like Cirque Mechanics?
- What skills do you think these performers need to have and develop in order to perfect these feats?
- How long do you think these performers have to train and practice?

EXPLORING MOTION AND MACHINES

Motion is important in our everyday lives. Even if you are standing still, the earth is moving around the sun and the sun is moving around our galaxy. There are many examples of motion in Le Cirque Esprit. There is motion in the acrobatics—leaping, spinning, jumping— and in the scenery and props, especially the mechanical horse! Sir Isaac Newton was an English physicist, mathematician and astronomer. He wrote a long essay, published in 1687, defining three laws of motion. These laws are evident in Cirque Esprit’s performance, and also in our everyday lives.

- First Law: An object at rest remains at rest unless acted upon by an outside force. Nothing begins moving or stops by itself—initiating movement requires a force, like friction, wind or gravity.
- Second Law: The rate of change in momentum of a body is proportional to the applied force and takes place in the direction in which the force acts. The smaller an object, the less force you need to make it move, and an object will always move in the direction toward which the force is directed.
- Third Law: For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. If you’re pushing on something, there is resistance to its moving, even if you don’t feel it.

Discussion Questions

- Where do you see simple machines in your everyday life? What kinds of work do they do? How would life be different if we did not have these machines?
- Where in the show were you aware of one or more of Newton’s laws of motion at work?
- Name all the simple machines you saw in the show.



MOVEMENT AND MACHINE ACTIVITY

Using moves inspired by both simple machines and the body’s ability to move, have each student explore repetitive movements and sounds, as if he or she were a piece of a machine. A movement should use multiple parts of the body and be easily repeated and sustainable. The accompanying sound can be anything that complements the movement choice.

After experimenting, have students determine what will be their movement and sound for the game. As a group, ask students to start doing their movement and sound (this part may be a little loud!). Gently move students—now parts of a machine—together to create a machine whose individual parts are moving in ways that inform each other. Once the machine parts are all in place, have students freeze and look around at the machine they just built. Identify different points of cause and effect in the motions, for example “When Allie moves that way, it makes Titus move this way.” Next, have them start up the machine again, this time slightly altering the individual movements to better connect to each other. Begin by identifying a starting point and having each student observe the movement of others before choosing their alterations. Emphasize that this is about what the machine as a whole needs, not what one individual feels like doing. Brainstorm what the machine might be making.

Repeat, with students selecting a new movement and sound. Try having one or two students arrange the moving parts to create the larger machine.

EXTEND: With students sitting on the floor, leave some open floor space for working. Invite one student to step into the open space and do a machine-inspired movement and sound. Add the rest of the class into the machine, one student at a time. Challenge the students who are watching to come up with their motions and sounds based on what is already in the machine. Once all the parts are in place, explore speeding the machine up and slowing it down. In what ways do you see cause and effect changing from one student to another? Are some moves repeated more than others? Why?

ACTIVITIES

EXPLORE THE IMPACT OF MUSIC

In Le Cirque Esprit, there are musicians on stage providing accompaniment to the exceptional antics! To illustrate the role of music and how it impacts mood, storytelling, and the creative environment, try the following activities.

Responding Physically to Music

Get the entire class up and away from their desks. Play a piece of music and ask everyone to move or dance how the music makes them feel. Does it make you want to sneak? Look for something? Skip? Does it make you feel sleepy? Angry? Scared? After a minute or so, play a different piece of music with a vastly different mood. Switch at least one more time.

Musical Underscore

Choose a fairy tale or familiar story. Ask for a volunteer to tell the story aloud to the class. Then, ask for another volunteer to retell the story (You could also have students share a personal memory and retell it themselves with musical accompaniment).

This time, tell them you are going to play music while they tell the story, and ask them to try to tell the story with the same mood or feeling as the music. Begin with a happy, upbeat piece of music. When the story is complete, ask students what changed about the telling and how did this change impact the story. Do this once more with an intense, darker piece of music and another volunteer. Reflect as a class how this telling felt different.

Discuss generally how music can impact the feel of a story and change our understanding of the story. When you attend the performance, encourage your students to pay attention to the music, and remember how the music created different moods within the piece. If you're doing this after the performance, ask students if they can identify parts of the performance where the music helped them understand what was happening.



THEME, MUSIC, & MOVEMENT

Many things inspire choreographers to create dances. Often the music is the inspiration.

Sometimes the choreographer is inspired by a story or a visual image. Generally there is an overarching theme to which all the parts of the dance relate.

Ask students to look at a work of visual art to imagine how that image could inspire the creation of a dance.

- What shapes, colors or objects do you see?
- How does this image make you feel?
- What action words (verbs) do you see in this image?
- How is movement implied in the line, shape or subject of the image?
- What seems to be the central idea or theme of the work as a whole?

Ask students to think about themes and ideas while they find their own space in the room that will allow a freedom of movement. Select and play a piece of music that relates to the tone of the visual art work. Ask students to start moving appropriately through space. Have them think about the image and how it could inform their movement. Now, ask each student

to settle on one movement that they feel represents their feeling about the image. Have them repeat this movement continuously until it feels fluid and focused.

Direct students to work in groups of four to learn each individual movement, and collaborate on a combination of the movements to create a dance phrase. Students can work together to refine the transitions between each movement. Share and analyze each phrase as a whole class by asking the following questions:

- What shapes and images were seen during each group's performance?
- What emotions were present in any of the dance phrases?
- Was it clear to see what inspired each group's performance?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

As you watch the show:

- Watch for how the acrobats and performers work together. How do they support each other? How do they communicate? How important do you think teamwork skills are in order to put on a performance and be part of a company like this?
- Observe the different clothing worn throughout the show. How did the clothing help to express the ideas or moods of each act?
- While you're watching, listen to the music that accompanies the different acts. Did the music make you feel a certain way? Did you notice the energy of the performers shift with the changes in music? How did the live music enhance or change the performance for you?

After you see the show:

- What skills do you think these performers need to have and develop in order to perfect these feats?
- How long do you think these performers have to train and practice?
- Think about moments in your life where you might feel struggle or joy. If you were going to create a routine, acrobatic or movement-based, to depict a challenging moment in your life, how would you choose to show this? How would you represent a joyful moment with acrobatics or movement?



WORDS COME ALIVE:

ARTS INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES

PROVIDING THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACTIVELY EXPLORE THE WORLD OF THE SHOW HELPS STUDENTS BECOME MORE ENGAGED AND CONNECTED AUDIENCE MEMBERS, THINKING ABOUT ARTISTS' CHOICES AND APPROACHING THE PERFORMANCE WITH ENHANCED CURIOSITY. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR ARTS INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES:

- [CLICK HERE](#)
- CALL 652-4548
- EMAIL LAUREN AT SCHOOLPROGRAMS@FLYNNCENTER.ORG



BALANCING PART I

Ask your students to stand up and then ask them where their centers of gravity are. Next challenge them to stand on one foot and ask if their centers of gravity have changed. Challenge them further by asking them to move their arms in different ways as they stand on one foot.

Ask students:

- ***What changes did you notice in your center of gravity when you stood on one foot?***
- ***How did your balance change when you moved your arms?***
- ***Did you have to work different muscles to keep from falling over?***

BALANCING PART II

First ask students to stand on a pillow in a safe, open, soft area. Ask them to balance on one foot, and then to experiment with their balance by holding different objects as they stand on one foot.

Ask students:

- ***How does each of these objects affect your sense of balance?***
- ***How does standing on the pillow, rather than the floor, change things?***

MOVING THROUGH SPACE

In groups of three or more, ask students to create a balanced structure with their bodies using the least number of contact points on the floor. Each player should be connected with the whole structure. Have each group try the above balance exercises in their groups of three or more. See if one student can balance two of his/her classmates? Challenge the structures to move across the room without losing balance.

Ask students:

- ***What new challenges arise when you begin to put the balanced shapes into motion?***
- ***What adjustments did you need to make as you moved across the room?***
- ***Did the balance points shift from static pose to moving pose?***



BALANCING DUETS PART I

Have the students divide into pairs. In each pair, ask one student to hold a large book in his/her hands. Ask the other student to gently try to disturb the first student's balance. Now have the first student hold the book in different way (e.g. balance the book on his/her head, shoulder, foot, etc.) and have the second student again try to gently disturb the first student's balance. Once the first student has tried a few different positions, have the students switch roles.

Ask students:

- ***Which positions made it easier to keep your balance and the balance of the book? Why?***

BALANCE DUETS PART II

Ask two volunteers, one smaller, and one bigger, to hold each other's wrists and to put one foot together and pull against one another, trying to share balance. If they need help, encourage the smaller person to be lower and further out in space, using both the head and hand out to the side. The larger person must stay taller or higher.

Now divide the students into pairs and ask them all to try the exercise. After they have had some time to practice, they can begin to play with forming interesting balanced shapes.

Ask students:

- ***How did you shift your center of gravity in order to keep you and your partner balanced?***

BALANCE DUETS PART III

Divide the class into pairs and suggest that each pair moves from one shape to another, shifting their balance points as they create different shapes with their bodies. Play some soft music to help their concentration as they create different shapes balancing in space. Challenge them to use different parts of their bodies to create the weight and counterweight of each balanced shape.

Ask students:

- ***What adjustments did you need to make in order to continuously shift balance points?***
- ***How did you and your partner communicate and work together to keep from falling?***
- ***Were you each taking on the same amount of weight in each shape or did one person support more weight in some poses?***



WORDS COME ALIVE:

ARTS INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES

PROVIDING THE OPPORTUNITY TO ACTIVELY EXPLORE THE WORLD OF THE SHOW HELPS STUDENTS BECOME MORE ENGAGED AND CONNECTED AUDIENCE MEMBERS, THINKING ABOUT ARTISTS' CHOICES AND APPROACHING THE PERFORMANCE WITH ENHANCED CURIOSITY.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OUR ARTS INTEGRATION ACTIVITIES:

- [CLICK HERE](#)
- CALL 652-4548
- EMAIL LAUREN AT [SCHOOLPROGRAMS@FLYNNCENTER.ORG](mailto:schoolprograms@flynncenter.org)

WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU AT THE THEATER!

ETIQUETTE FOR LIVE PERFORMANCES: THE ESSENTIALS

- LISTEN, EXPERIENCE, IMAGINE, DISCOVER, LEARN!
- GIVE YOUR ENERGY AND ATTENTION TO THE PERFORMERS.
- PLEASE DO NOT EAT OR DRINK IN THE THEATER.
- TALK ONLY BEFORE AND AFTER THE PERFORMANCE.
- TURN OFF WIRELESS DEVICES.
- NO PHOTOS, VIDEOS, TEXTING, OR LISTENING TO MUSIC.

*These are guidelines... We understand that some students may need to experience the performance in their own way, and we are here to support all students and their unique needs.

TEACHERS, A COUPLE OF REMINDERS:

- SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH US! USE THE [FEEDBACK LINKS](#), OR SHARE YOUR STUDENTS' ARTWORK, WRITING, RESPONSES. WE LOVE TO HEAR HOW EXPERIENCES AT THE FLYNN IMPACT OUR AUDIENCES.
- EXPLORE OTHER [STUDENT MATINEES](#) AT THE FLYNN THIS SEASON. WE STILL HAVE SEATS IN SOME SHOWS AND WE'D LOVE TO HELP YOU OR OTHER TEACHERS AT YOUR SCHOOL ENLIVEN LEARNING WITH AN ENGAGING ARTS EXPERIENCE!



EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

THE COMMON CORE BROADENS THE DEFINITION OF A "TEXT," VIEWING PERFORMANCE AS A FORM OF TEXT, SO YOUR STUDENTS ARE EXPERIENCING AND INTERACTING WITH A TEXT WHEN THEY ATTEND A FLYNN SHOW.

SEEING LIVE PERFORMANCE PROVIDES RICH OPPORTUNITIES TO WRITE REFLECTIONS, NARRATIVES, ARGUMENTS, AND MORE. BY WRITING RESPONSES AND/OR USING THE FLYNN STUDY GUIDES, ALL PERFORMANCES CAN BE LINKED TO COMMON CORE:

CC ELA: W 1-10

STUDENT MATINEES SUPPORT THE FOLLOWING NATIONAL CORE ARTS STANDARDS:

CREATING: ANCHOR #1, PERFORMING: ANCHOR #6, RESPONDING: ANCHOR #7, #8, #9, AND CONNECTING: ANCHOR #10 AND #11.

YOU CAN USE THIS PERFORMANCE AND STUDY GUIDE TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING COMMON CORE STANDARDS:

CC ELA: RL 1, 2, 7, SL 1-4, RST 1, 2

NEXT GEN: ETS1.A-C, PS2.A & B, PS3.C

WE APPRECIATE AND VALUE YOUR FEEDBACK

- CLICK [HERE](#) TO EVALUATE OUR STUDY GUIDES.
- CLICK [HERE](#) FOR TEACHER FEEDBACK FORMS FOR THE PERFORMANCE.
- CLICK [HERE](#) FOR STUDENT FEEDBACK FORMS FOR THE PERFORMANCE.
- CLICK [HERE](#) FOR PARENT FORMS TO HELP PARENTS ENGAGE WITH THEIR CHILDREN AROUND THE SHOW.

THIS GUIDE WAS WRITTEN & COMPILED BY THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT AT THE FLYNN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS WITH INSPIRATION FROM THE LE CIRQUE ESPRIT WEBSITE. PERMISSION IS GRANTED FOR TEACHERS, PARENTS, AND STUDENTS WHO ARE COMING TO FLYNN SHOWS TO COPY & DISTRIBUTE THIS GUIDE FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY.