Welcome

We believe that live performance actively supports the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). As the arts also require complex thinking skills, learning by doing and an innovative interpretation of theme, mood and drama, these common elements are strategically aligned to the progressive learning required of today’s students.

The Mondavi Center Arts Education department’s School Matinees embody the Mondavi Center’s mission to “present a rich program of diverse artists and thinkers in public performance and as the basis for education and engagement programs on our campus and in our region”.

About Dance Theatre of Harlem

Dance Theatre of Harlem brings more than 40 years of creative expression to every performance. The company has grown into a multi-cultural dance organization with an extraordinary legacy of providing opportunities for artistic excellence. The company has garnered critical acclaim for history-making productions across an eclectic repertoire, and its current rebirth has seen an infusion of new work from remarkable choreographers.

Nurtured by the optimism of the Civil Rights Era, Arthur Mitchell and Karel Shook founded the Dance Theatre of Harlem in 1969. The school began with classes taught in a garage in Harlem, the community in New York City where Arthur Mitchell grew up. The school’s curriculum was designed to give the children of Harlem the same opportunities Mitchell had as a teenager. Dance Theatre of Harlem flourished, and the nucleus of a professional company was born. On January 8, 1971, the company made its official debut at the Guggenheim Museum in New York City.

As a professional dance company and a school, the continued expansion of Dance Theatre of Harlem into a multicultural institution has attracted thousands of professional dancers and students from around the world. It was the first American ballet company to tour and perform in Russia.

The company’s tour to South Africa in 1992 gave birth to the Dancing Through Barriers® program and their reputation as a traveling university was formally institutionalized. Since then, the Dancing Through Barriers® program has become a cornerstone in the company’s educational programming.

In 2009, Dance Theatre of Harlem celebrated its 40th anniversary. Virginia Johnson was named Artistic Director, and Arthur Mitchell became Artistic Director Emeritus. Virginia Johnson was a founding member of the company and its principal ballerina for nearly 30 years performing demanding roles throughout the company’s repertoire to great acclaim both nationally and internationally.

Virginia Johnson wanted to dance classical ballet instead of contemporary or ethnic forms—the genres more available at the time to African American dancers. She became Dance Theatre of Harlem’s principal soloist in 1974.

LEARN MORE:
http://www.dancetheatreofharlem.org/
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bl1glhTSIOY
Think About It

Dear Students,

1. Did the ballet seem to convey stories, moods or emotions?
2. Think about the dancers’ movements onstage. What moves were smooth and graceful, or strong and powerful?
3. What did you like best about the performance and why? Was it what you expected?

Attending the Theater

What is expected of student audiences at the matinee:
• To facilitate starting the performance on time, get a drink of water and use the restroom before entering the seating area
• Enter the auditorium quietly and take your seats immediately (note that all matinees have reserved seating)
• Show courtesy to the artist and other guests at all times
• Demonstrate appreciation for the artist’s work by applauding
• Refrain from making unnecessary noise or movements
• Please eat lunch before or after the performance. Food is not allowed in the theater
• Use information learned from the pre-matinee discussion to enhance the performance experience
• Please do not photograph or record the artists

What your students can expect of their experience at the Mondavi Center:

A theater is a charged space, full of energy and anticipation. When the house lights (the lights that illuminate the audience seating) go down, the excitement level goes up! Theaters are designed so that the voices of the singers and actors and the music of the musicians can be heard. But this also means that any sound in the audience: whispering, speaking and moving about, can be heard by other audience members and by the performers. Distractions like these upset everyone’s concentration and can spoil a performance.

The performers on stage show respect for their art form and for the audience by doing their very best work. By watching attentively the audience shows respect for the performers. Appreciation can be shown in many different ways, depending upon the art form and the culture(s) of the people in the audience. For instance, while the audience at a dance performance may sit quietly, other types of performances may invite audience participation.

Applause is the best way for audience members to share their enthusiasm and to show their appreciation for the performers. Applaud at the end of a performance! Sometimes the audience will clap during a performance, as after a featured solo. Audience members may feel like laughing if the action on stage is funny, crying if the action is sad, or sighing if something is seen or heard that is beautiful.

Mondavi Center Arts Education

Arts Education provides CueSheets for all performances in the Mondavi Center 2016-17 School Matinee Series. They are intended to help teachers prepare their students for the school matinee that they will attend at Mondavi Center, UC Davis.

MC Fun Facts:

- The outside walls of the Mondavi Center are made from sandstone from India that is 1.8 billion years old.
- What look like fossils in the sandstone tiles, are really iron and manganese crystal dendrites.
- The building sits on 200 pillars to keep the sounds and vibrations of the freeway and trains from being heard or felt inside the theater.
- The ceiling curtains in Jackson Hall weigh 2,200 pounds each.

Support provided by Mondavi Center Arts Education