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Delfos Dance

CUANDO LOS DISFRACES SE CUELGAN
WHEN THE DISGUISES ARE HUNG UP

In celebration of the Bicentennial of the Mexican Independence Movement, as well as the Centennial of the Mexican Revolution, Delfos Dance Company joins us from Mazatlan, Mexico. They are recognized as one of the most important contemporary dance companies in Latin America.

What is contemporary dance?

Contemporary dance is a performance genre that combines classical dance, such as ballet, with modern dance from the 20th century. Contemporary dance is unique in many ways. The **choreographers** can create a dance which shows emotion and mood, as opposed to a structured set of dance steps. Contemporary dancers are also distinctive in that they will **punctuate** their movements and use gravity to abruptly fall to the floor, instead of maintaining the upright, elevated position that many ballet dancers have.

Delfos Dance Company believes that dancing should convey an emotion to the audience. The theme of this upcoming performance is “When the Disguises are Hung Up.” Throughout the performance the dancers will put on various disguises, including elaborate costumes, constricting jackets, and masks. The founder of Delfos, Claudia Lavista, believes that “masks are fun objects that we use to hide behind or to pretend to be someone else. Sometimes they can be useful tools so no one can recognize us. But masks end up deteriorating and are never part of our true essence. Our personal nature will always be much more beautiful than any mask or disguise.”

Vocabulary

Look up the following words with a partner. Write their definitions as they pertain to dance.



- unison
- choreographer
- mood
- punctuation



AUDIENCE ETIQUETTE

THE DANCERS PUT IN COUNTLESS HOURS TO PREPARE THEIR PERFORMANCE, SO IT IS YOUR JOB TO SHOW RESPECT FOR THEIR EFFORTS. HERE ARE A FEW TIPS:

- PAY ATTENTION TO ANY ANNOUNCEMENTS BEFORE THE PERFORMANCE.
- DO NOT SPEAK ON THE PHONE OR TO YOUR FRIENDS DURING THE PERFORMANCE.
- REMAIN IN YOUR SEAT FOR THE ENTIRE PERFORMANCE.
- DO NOT PUT YOUR FEET UP ON THE SEATS IN FRONT OF YOU.
- APPLAUD ONCE THE PERFORMANCE IS OVER, BUT NOT DURING THE DANCING.
- DO NOT WHISTLE OR SCREAM AT PERFORMERS, EXCEPT FOR A “BRAVO!”



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What should I listen for in the performance?

The music throughout the dance takes many shapes and forms. Sometimes it is squeaky and eerie sounding, while at other times it will follow a smooth melody with stringed instruments. The music creates the **mood** for the dance. What kind of music do you listen to if you're in a light-hearted **mood**?

How about an angry or confused **mood**?

What should I watch for in the performance?

The dancers begin the performance with flesh-colored costumes. Though this may seem humorous or even a bit awkward, why do you think a dancer would choose to wear a flesh-colored costume?

Why would dancers sometimes move together in **unison** and sometimes move separately?

Twice during the performance, the female dancer pulls the male dancer as if he were a puppet on a string. Why do you think this is significant? What does this show you about how the female dancer is feeling?

Towards the end of the performance the the dancers put shoes on their hands, almost as if they are animals. Thinking about the purpose of shoes, what do you think it means that the dancers put them on their hands?

AFTER READING THIS POEM CAREFULLY, THINK OF

A TIME IN YOUR LIFE WHEN YOU FELT AS IF YOU WERE HIDING BEHIND A MASK.

WHY IS IT EASY TO HIDE BEHIND A MASK BUT HARD TO BE YOUR TRUE SELF?

WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DO YOU OFTEN HIDE BEHIND, SUCH AS FRIENDS, SPORTS, MAKE-UP, OR POSSESSIONS?

IF YOU WERE TO PUT MOVEMENT (DANCING OR ACTING) WITH THIS POEM, WHAT WOULD YOU DO? HOW WOULD YOU EXPRESS THE EMOTIONS WITHIN THE POEM?



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PLEASE HEAR WHAT I'M NOT SAYING

BY CHARLES C. FINN, 1966

DON'T BE FOOLED BY ME.
DON'T BE FOOLED BY THE
FACE I WEAR.
FOR I WEAR A MASK, A
THOUSAND MASKS,
MASKS THAT I'M AFRAID TO
TAKE OFF,
AND NONE OF THEM IS ME...

I GIVE YOU THE IMPRESSION
THAT I'M SECURE,
THAT ALL IS SUNNY AND
UNRUFFLED WITH ME, WITHIN
AS WELL AS WITHOUT,
THAT CONFIDENCE IS MY
NAME AND COOLNESS MY
GAME,
THAT THE WATER'S CALM AND
I'M IN COMMAND
AND THAT I NEED NO ONE,
BUT DON'T BELIEVE ME.

MY SURFACE MAY SEEM
SMOOTH BUT MY SURFACE IS
MY MASK...
BENEATH LIES CONFUSION,
AND FEAR, AND ALONENESS.
BUT I HIDE THIS. I DON'T
WANT ANYBODY TO KNOW IT...