

A photograph of three young women dressed in long, dark, period-style dresses. They are looking upwards with expressions of awe or fear. Red liquid, resembling blood, is smeared on their lips. The background is a dark teal color with a large, glowing white circle in the upper left, resembling a full moon.

# DRACULA

STUDENT MATINEE PACKET

# ABOUT BALLET ARKANSAS

Ballet Arkansas's roots can be traced to the Little Rock Civic Ballet, founded in 1966 by Lorraine and Donald C. Cranford. The organization was incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit corporation in 1979 with the dream to become the region's foremost professional ballet company. Over the course of its 44 year history, Ballet Arkansas's world-class programs and performances have touched the lives of nearly HALF-A-MILLION Arkansans.

Today, Ballet Arkansas is ranked among the Top 100 Ballet Companies in America, presenting the classics, masterworks of American dance, and premieres by some of the world's most daring dancemakers. The company is a regional leader in the presentation of innovative and inclusive dance programming and its K-12 education programs reach more than 10K each year.

Under the visionary leadership of Michael and Catherine Fothergill, the professional company is firmly committed to producing accessible and relatable programming for all Arkansans to enjoy. Student matinee performances are an important part of the effort.



# ETIQUETTE 101

## RULES FOR THE THEATER



Going to a ballet performance is an experience similar to going to a movie. The lights will dim before the performance begins, and the theater will remain dark for the duration of the performance - except during periods of Intermission. Audience members are expected to sit quietly while dancing is taking place, though applause is welcomed at the completion of each scene. Screaming, shouting, and whistling is discouraged and is distracting to performers and audience members.

Audience members are encouraged to dress in comfortable attire and the consumption of food, beverage, and chewing gum is prohibited within the auditorium. It is permissible to visit the restroom as needed, though it is important to do so quietly.

Because performance material is copyrighted, photography and video recording are strictly prohibited.

### RULES OF THE THEATER

- Avoid Distractions - turn off your phone and give the performers your full attention
- Open your Mind - immerse yourself in the sights and sounds of the performance, and arrive at your own conclusions
- Be a Curteous Participant - adhere to audience member policies at all times
- ENJOY THE SHOW!

# THE LIFE OF A

## PROFESSIONAL BALLET DANCER



Ballet Arkansas's company of 15 professional dancers are full-time, salaried employees that receive employment benefits and work a standard M-F work week. Many hold degrees from some of the nation's most prestigious university dance programs, and others come from some of the finest training institutions in America.

At the start of day, company members take a 1.5 hour ballet class to train and condition their bodies for the rigorous demands of the day's rehearsal. Thereafter they rehearse for the remainder of the work day. On average, it takes company members 25 hours of rehearsal to learn 1 hour of performance material. After material is learned or "staged," the company spends the remainder of the rehearsal period perfecting its performance of the material for your enjoyment. Though company members are artists, they are also professional athletes.

Not only must company members master the musical phrasing and physical execution of thousands of challenging dance steps within each production, but they must also be familiar with hundreds of light cues, changing line formations, and add characterizations to each scene. Hundreds of hours of rehearsal are required to produce any Ballet Arkansas production.

In 2020, InsuranceProviders.com and the U.S. Department of Labor ranked Dance as the most physically demanding job in the U.S. Due to the demanding nature of the job, many dancers retire from performing in their mid-thirties to pursue careers in other areas of the arts.



**A MULTIMEDIA INFUSED  
ADAPTATION OF A  
LEGENDARY NOVEL**



# VAMPIRES: A HISTORY LESSON

A vampire is a creature from folklore that subsists by feeding on the vital essence (generally in the form of blood) of the living. In European folklore, vampires are undead creatures that often visited loved ones and caused mischief or deaths in the neighbourhoods they inhabited while they were alive. They wore shrouds and were often described as bloated and of ruddy or dark countenance, markedly different from today's gaunt, pale vampire which dates from the early 19th century.

Vampiric entities have been recorded in cultures around the world; the term vampire was popularized in Western Europe after reports of an 18th-century mass hysteria of a pre-existing folk belief in the Balkans and Eastern Europe that in some cases resulted in corpses being staked and people being accused of vampirism. Local variants in Eastern Europe were also known by different names, such as shtriga in Albania, vrykolakas in Greece and strigoi in Romania.

In modern times, the vampire is generally held to be a fictitious entity, although belief in similar vampiric creatures such as the chupacabra still persists in some cultures. Early folk belief in vampires has sometimes been ascribed to the ignorance of the body's process of decomposition after death and how people in pre-industrial societies tried to rationalize this, creating the figure of the vampire to explain the mysteries of death. Porphyria was linked with legends of vampirism in 1985 and received much media exposure, but has since been largely discredited.

The charismatic and sophisticated vampire of modern fiction was born in 1819 with the publication of "The Vampyre" by the English writer John Polidori; the story was highly successful and arguably the most influential vampire work of the early 19th century. Bram Stoker's 1897 novel Dracula is remembered as the quintessential vampire novel and provided the basis of the modern vampire legend, even though it was published after fellow Irish author Joseph Sheridan Le Fanu's 1872 novel Carmilla. The success of this book spawned a distinctive vampire genre, still popular in the 21st century, with books, films, television shows, and video games. The vampire has since become a dominant figure in the horror genre.



# AUTHOR

Abraham Stoker (8 November 1847 – 20 April 1912) was an Irish author who is celebrated for his 1897 Gothic horror novel *Dracula*. During his lifetime, he was better known as the personal assistant of actor Sir Henry Irving and business manager of the Lyceum Theatre, which Irving owned. In his early years, Stoker worked as a theatre critic for an Irish newspaper and wrote stories as well as commentaries. He also enjoyed travelling, particularly to Cruden Bay where he set two of his novels. During another visit to the English coastal town of Whitby, Stoker drew inspiration for writing *Dracula*. He died on 20 April 1912 due to locomotor ataxia and was cremated in north London. Since his death, his magnum opus *Dracula* has become one of the most well-known works in English literature, and the novel has been adapted for numerous films, short stories, plays, and now ballets!



# COMPOSER

Though Ballet Arkansas's adaptation makes use of music from a variety of composers, the work of Poulenc is the most featured. Francis Jean Marcel Poulenc; 7 January 1899 – 30 January 1963) was a French composer and pianist. His compositions include songs, solo piano works, chamber music, choral pieces, operas, ballets, and orchestral concert music. Among the best-known are the piano suite *Trois mouvements perpétuels* (1919), the ballet *Les biches* (1923), the *Concert champêtre* (1928) for harpsichord and orchestra, the *Organ Concerto* (1938), the opera *Dialogues des Carmélites* (1957), and the *Gloria* (1959) for soprano, choir, and orchestra.

As the only son of a prosperous manufacturer, Poulenc was expected to follow his father into the family firm, and he was not allowed to enrol at a music college. Largely self-educated musically, he studied with the pianist Ricardo Viñes, who became his mentor after the composer's parents died. Poulenc also made the acquaintance of Erik Satie, under whose tutelage he became one of a group of young composers known collectively as *Les Six*. In his early works Poulenc became known for his high spirits and irreverence. During the 1930s a much more serious side to his nature emerged, particularly in the religious music he composed from 1936 onwards, which he alternated with his more light-hearted works.

In addition to his work as a composer, Poulenc was an accomplished pianist. He was particularly celebrated for his performing partnerships with the baritone Pierre Bernac (who also advised him in vocal writing) and the soprano Denise Duval. He toured in Europe and America with both of them, and made a number of recordings as a pianist. He was among the first composers to see the importance of the gramophone, and he recorded extensively from 1928 onwards.



# SCHOLASTIC OVERVIEW

Jonathan Harker, a newly qualified English solicitor, visits Count Dracula at his castle in the Carpathian Mountains to help the Count purchase a house near London. Ignoring the Count's warning, Harker wanders the castle and encounters three vampire women; Dracula rescues Harker and gives the women a small child bound inside a bag. Harker awakens in bed; soon after, Dracula leaves the castle, abandoning him to the women; Harker escapes with his life and ends up delirious in a Budapest hospital. Dracula takes a ship for England with boxes of earth from his castle. The captain's log narrates the crew's disappearance until he alone remains, bound to the helm to maintain course. An animal resembling a large dog is seen leaping ashore when the ship runs aground at Whitby.

Lucy Westenra's letter to her best friend, Harker's fiancée Mina Murray, describes her marriage proposals from Dr. John Seward, Quincey Morris, and Arthur Holmwood. Lucy accepts Holmwood's, but all remain friends. Mina joins her friend Lucy on holiday in Whitby. Lucy begins sleepwalking. After his ship lands there, Dracula stalks Lucy. Mina receives a letter about her missing fiancé's illness and goes to Budapest to nurse him. Lucy becomes very ill. Seward's old teacher, Professor Abraham Van Helsing, determines the nature of Lucy's condition, but refuses to disclose it. He diagnoses her with acute blood-loss. Van Helsing places garlic flowers around her room and makes her a necklace of them. Lucy's mother removes the garlic flowers, not knowing they repel vampires. While Seward and Van Helsing are absent, Lucy and her mother are terrified by a wolf and Mrs. Westenra dies of a heart attack; Lucy dies shortly thereafter. After her burial, newspapers report children being stalked in the night by a beautiful lady, and Van Helsing deduces it is Lucy. The four go to her tomb and see that she is a vampire. They stake her heart, behead her, and fill her mouth with garlic. Jonathan Harker and his now-wife Mina have returned, and they join the campaign against Dracula.

Everyone stays at Dr. Seward's asylum as the men begin to hunt Dracula. Van Helsing finally reveals that vampires can only rest on earth from their homeland. Dracula communicates with Seward's patient, Renfield, an insane man who eats vermin to absorb their life force. After Dracula learns of the group's plot against him, he uses Renfield to enter the asylum. He secretly attacks Mina three times, drinking her blood each time and forcing Mina to drink his blood on the final visit. She is cursed to become a vampire after her death unless Dracula is killed. As the men find Dracula's properties, they discover many earth boxes within. The vampire hunters open each of the boxes and seal wafers of sacramental bread inside them, rendering them useless to Dracula. They attempt to trap the Count in his Carfax Abbey house, but he escapes. They learn that Dracula is fleeing to his castle in Transylvania with his last box. Mina has a faint psychic connection to Dracula, which Van Helsing exploits via hypnosis to track Dracula's movements. Guided by Mina, they pursue him.

In Galatz, Romania, the hunters split up. Van Helsing and Mina go to Dracula's castle, where the professor destroys the vampire women. Jonathan Harker and Arthur Holmwood follow Dracula's boat on the river, while Quincey Morris and John Seward parallel them on land. After Dracula's box is finally loaded onto a wagon by Szgany men, the hunters converge and attack it. After routing the Szgany, Harker slashes Dracula's neck and Quincey stabs him in the heart. Dracula crumbles to dust, freeing Mina from her vampiric curse. Quincey is mortally wounded in the fight against the Szgany. He dies from his wounds, at peace with the knowledge that Mina is saved.

# COUNT DRACULA

A centuries-old vampire and Transylvanian nobleman, Count Dracula inhabits a crumbling castle in the Carpathian Mountains. Beneath a veneer of aristocratic charm, the count possesses a dark and evil soul. He can assume the form of an animal, control the weather, and he is stronger than twenty men. His powers are limited, however—for instance, he cannot enter a victim's home unless invited, cannot cross water unless carried, and is rendered powerless by daylight.

# MINA MURRAY

Jonathan Harker's fiancée. Mina is a practical young woman who works as a schoolmistress. Eventually victimized by Dracula herself, Mina is also the best friend of the count's first victim in the novel, Lucy Westenra. Mina is in many ways the heroine of the novel, embodying purity, innocence, and Christian faith—virtues she maintains despite her suffering at the vampire's hands. She is intelligent and resourceful, and her research leads Van Helsing's men to Castle Dracula.

# JONATHAN HARKER

A solicitor, or lawyer, whose firm sends him to Transylvania to conclude a real estate transaction with Dracula. Young and naïve, Harker quickly finds himself a prisoner in the castle and barely escapes with his life. He demonstrates a fierce curiosity to discover the true nature of his captor and a strong will to escape. Later, after becoming convinced that the count has moved to London, Harker emerges as a brave and fearless fighter.

# LUCY WESTENRA

Mina's best friend and an attractive, vivacious young woman. The first character in the novel to fall under Dracula's spell, Lucy becomes a vampire, which compromises her much-praised chastity and virtue, and banishes her soul from the promise of eternal rest. Determined that such an end is unfit for an English lady of Lucy's caliber, Van Helsing's crew hunts down the demon she has become and kills it, following the rituals of vampire slaying, and thus restoring Lucy's soul to her body and to heaven.

# R.M. RENFIELD

A patient at Dr. Seward's mental asylum. Various a strong behemoth and a refined gentleman, Renfield indulges a habit of consuming living creatures—flies, spiders, birds, and so on—which he believes provide him with strength, vitality, and life force.



# QUESTIONS

## TO ASK YOURSELF

1. What are the overarching themes of the Dracula?
2. Was the narrative of the story clearly portrayed within the production?
3. Did the performer's characterizations make sense?
4. How was movement use to depict the storyline?
5. Describe the happenings of your favorite scene?
6. What impact did the costumes, sets, and special effects have on your audience experience?
7. How might performers use principals of STEM during performance?
8. What words or emotions would you use to describe the choreography?
9. Discuss the geometric shapes present within the dance formations.
10. Who was your favorite character within the production and why?
11. How did the score make you feel and what was your favorite part?
12. Describe the sights and sounds of a filled auditorium.
13. Describe the theater technology you witnessed in the production.