




WEST AUSTRALIAN
BALLET

GENESIS

Creative Learning Pack

Inspire your students through dance





**We acknowledge the traditional
custodians of the land upon which we
live and dance, the Whadjuck people
of the Noongar Nation, and pay our
respects to culture and Elders past
and present.**

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WELCOME EDUCATORS AND STUDENTS

We are so excited you will be joining us at one of West Australian Ballet's incredible school matinee performances. These performances are specifically designed to provide students with an immersive learning experience, diving into the world of dance and live performance. We can't wait to share our hard work with you all.

In 2024, we have three school matinee performances aimed to inspire students from Kindergarten to Year12. These include *Genesis*, *Romeo & Juliet*, and *The Sleeping Beauty*, all of which have something unique to offer young audiences.

Each performance is accompanied by this Creative Learning Pack to provide educators and students with further insights into dance as an art form, key elements of ballet, as well as aspects of the theatre and live performance.

We have also included performance specific details along with activities for both primary and secondary students.

Suggested activities can be adapted to suit the needs of your classroom. We would love to see what you create through exploring these activities. Whether it be writing, performance, or drawings, please send your creations to learning@waballet.com.au.

Symbols are used throughout this pack to direct you to key information, performance specific details and activities.



Indicates key information



Indicates an activity



Indicates information about the show

We are delighted to share the joy of dance with you and your students to experience.

Sincerely,
Natasha McCann
Head of Access and Outreach



THE HISTORY OF BALLET



Image Source: <https://thegoodlifeinfrance.com/louis-xiv-the-sun-king/>

Ballet as a form of dance began in the royal courts of Italy and France in the 1600's. Formal group dances from the royal courts developed into the art form we now know after *The Sun King*, King Louis XIV of France established the first ballet school, the Académie Royale de Danse, in Paris in 1661.

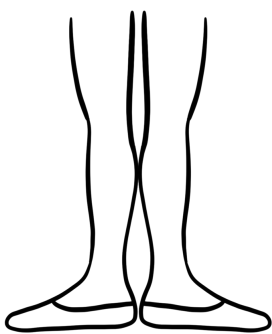
The word ballet originates from the Latin word 'ballare', which means 'to dance'. To this day, all of the steps in ballet have French names, meaning dancers across the globe all speak the same language of dance, and can take a ballet class anywhere and understand exactly what to do.

Ballet Positions

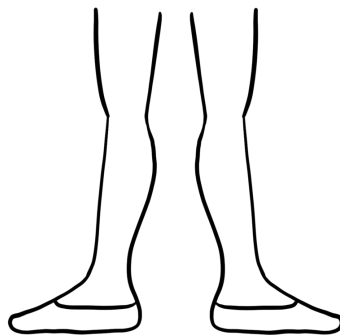
In ballet there are five basic positions of the feet and arms. The positions of the feet originated from fencing positions, and require the dancer to *turn out*, or rotate the entire leg, from the top of the thigh to the toes. If you look at a dancer standing in any of the five positions, you'll see their toes point in opposite directions.

Positions of the feet -

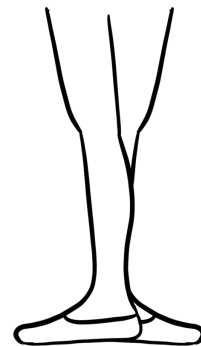
Below are the basic ballet positions of the feet. These begin and end phrases of dance.



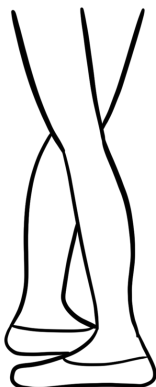
1st position



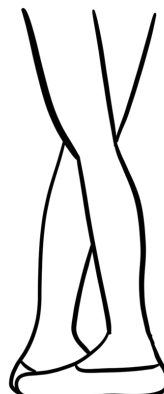
2nd position



3rd position



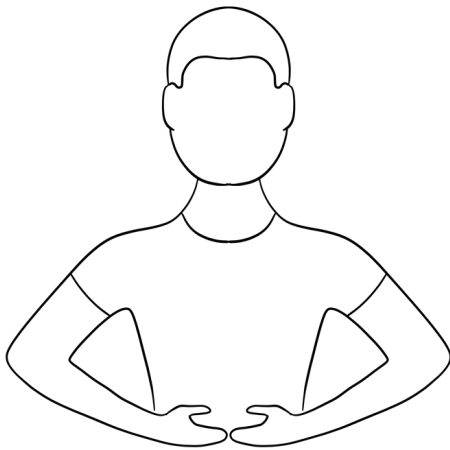
4th position



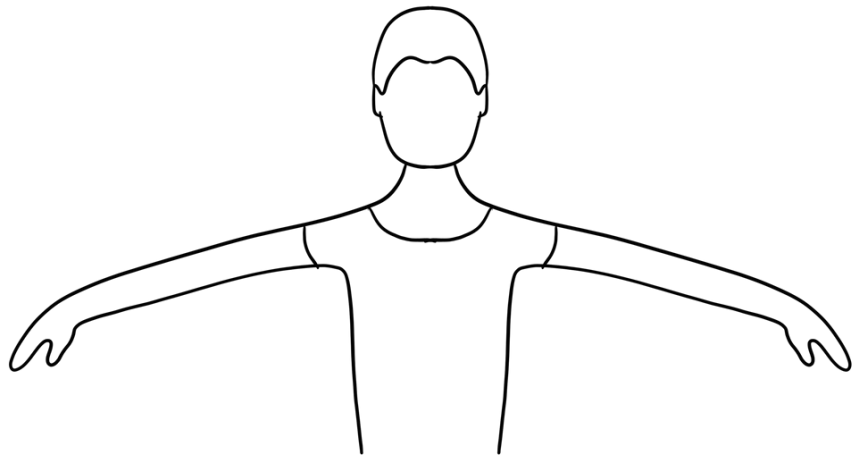
5th position

Positions of the arms -

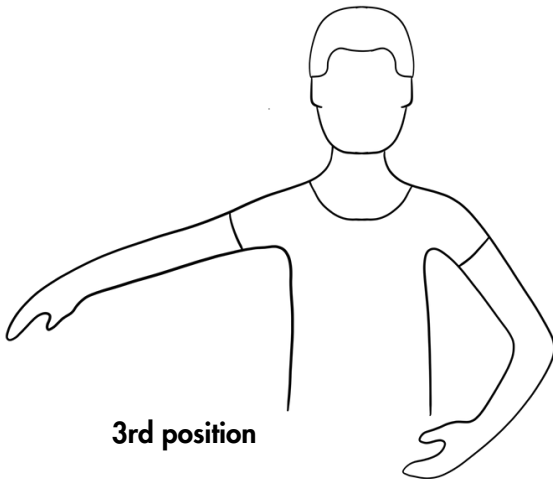
Like footwork, the basic arm positions (*port de bras*) are also numerically classified.



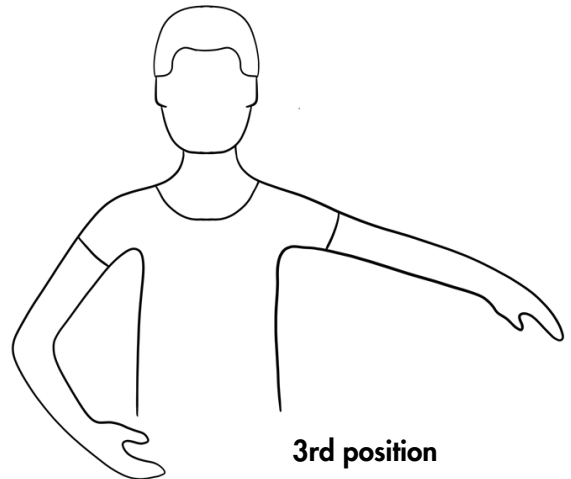
1st position



2nd position



3rd position

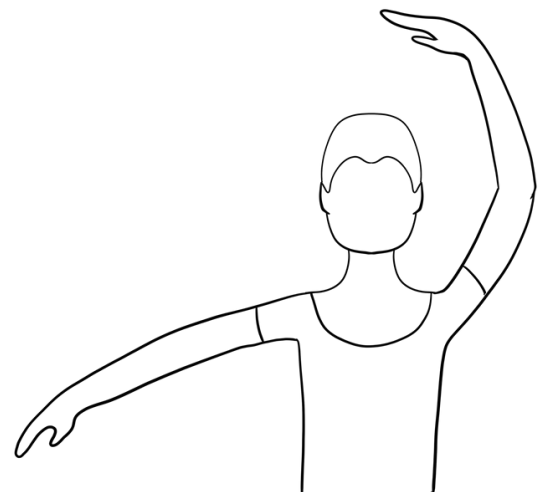
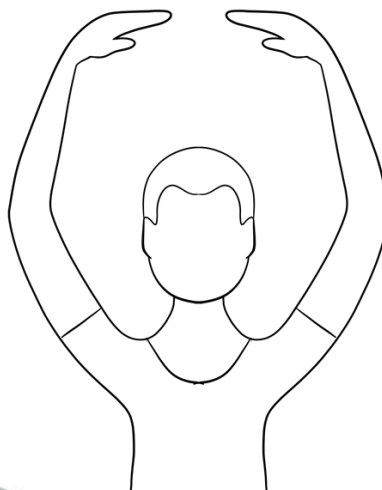


3rd position



4th position

5th position



4th position



BALLET GLOSSARY

Plié	To bend your knees.
Port de bras	Movement of the arms.
Tendu	To point or stretch the foot to the front, side or back.
Relevé	To rise to the ball of the feet.
Jeté	To leap from one foot to the other in which the front leg appears to have been thrown into the air.
Arabesque	A position of the body supported on one leg with the other leg extended behind, forming a right angle (or higher). Arms are held in various positions creating a long line from fingertips to toes.
Pirouette	To spin or turn; a rotation of the body on one foot.
Pas de deux	A dance for two people.
Principal	A dancer at the highest rank within a professional dance company
Soloist	A dancer below a principal, who performs most of the solo and minor roles in a ballet.
Corps de ballet	A group of dancers who work together as an ensemble; they form a background for the principal dancers and are the backbone of any ballet company.
Choreographer	A creative who invents movement and stylises a ballet or other dance and tells dancers how to perform them.
Choreography	The art of creating dances and the organisation of movement to form a pattern or shape.
Répétiteur	An accompanist, tutor, or coach of ballet dancers to assist with teaching choreography.



Photography credit - Clinton Bradbury



WEST AUSTRALIAN BALLET

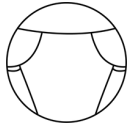
West Australian Ballet is the state's flagship ballet company and Australia's oldest continuous ballet company. Established in 1952 by Madame Kira Bousloff, West Australian Ballet presents up to 50 performances annually across Western Australia, reaching a total audience of over 100,000 people.

The company offers an extensive program of dance throughout the year, with five major seasons in Perth, regional touring throughout the state, choreographic workshops, and extensive education and community access programs.

West Australian Ballet is the only state dance company that has an official partnership with its state symphony orchestra; the West Australian Symphony Orchestra. In 2012 the company moved to the West Australian Ballet Centre, a purpose-built facility in Maylands.

2024 is the company's 72nd year in operation, as we continue to enrich lives through dance.





ABOUT THE PERFORMANCE

School matinee of

GENESIS

Thursday 18 July, 12 Midday

The West Australian Ballet Center, Maylands 6051.

Estimated running time: **1 hour with no intermission**

Featuring the Choreographic work of

Dayana Hardy Acuña

Charles Dashwood

Polly Hilton

Chihiro Nomura

Tom Umseher

Oscar Valdés

Jack Whiter

Set, Video and Costume Design by

Dancers of the West Australian Ballet Company

Lighting Design by

Dancers of the West Australian Ballet Company

Dramaturgy (artistic research) by

Dancers of the West Australian Ballet Company

Composers

TBC

Audience Warning:

Like all live theatre, this production includes bright and dark lighting states, and occasional loud noises. Please ensure you communicate these elements to your students and feel free to contact us for any specific queries.



ACTIVITIES: SECONDARY SCHOOL

Discussion Points- (ACADAR018), (ACADAR019), (ACADAR025)

The following is a list of discussion or writing prompts to assist your students in their understanding and critical analysis of a work.

Task: Ask students to investigate and provide a verbal presentation or written summary exploring each of the following points.

- Think of two or three words to describe your immediate response to the performance as a whole.
- What parts did you respond to the most and why?
- What were your thoughts and feelings when watching the performance? Did these change throughout the performance? Did you have a particular response to an excerpt or moment in the work? Was this emotional or physical?
- Did the work have a clear story or through line? If so, what was it and did others interpret the messaging in the same way?
- Describe the movements you saw in the performance. What was it about specific movements that caught your attention? Try to describe the language of movement using both verbal and physical descriptions.
- Describe the performers you saw. Which one or two stood out for you? What was it about their performance that you liked? (Physicality, performance quality, characterisation, engagement with the other dancers etc.) Did their performance help or hinder the larger ensemble sequences?
- Describe the use of props and set in the performance, if any. What impact did they have in presenting an idea or helping convey a theme?
- Describe the lighting, sound and other technical aspects. What was its purpose and how did this enhance or detract from the performance?
- Describe the costumes. Were they thematically appropriate for the work and the movement? Did they distract from, or contribute to the messaging of the piece?
- Describe the setting of the stage. How did it begin, transform and end? Describe the way the dancers used the performance area. How would the work be effected if it was performed in a different performance setting? I.e. Outdoors, site specific, or proscenium arch theatre.

The Creative Process

Dancers, actors and performers rehearse, or practice, a long time before presenting to an audience. Directors & Choreographers analyse, evaluate, refine, and document their work to communicate meaning. Artists create and recreate a work to arrive at a finished product that best presents their vision.

TASK: In a reflective essay critically consider how creative artists use self-reflection, feedback from others, and documentation to improve the quality of work they deliver.

How might this process be similar when presenting art as a live choreographic piece?

Consider the similarities and differences in the process of creating, whether it be moving, static, spoken or visual.

- For reference read Lisa Fehnles article describing her experience of witnessing the ballet rehearsal process.
- Follow the links below for reference of this process.

The choreographic process of West Australian Ballet Company: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uekw18WHg9E>

Van Gogh's Creative Process: <https://www.denverartmuseum.org/en/blog/sharing-van-goghs-creative-process>

Beyond the Stage': Revealing the Power of Practice

By Lisa Fehnle.

Though I am by no means a dancer, it is fair to say that I am an avid fan, having watched my fair share of performances over the years. It is for this reason that when I accepted a marketing internship with West Australian Ballet, I couldn't be more delighted. No longer was I just going to be an audience member but become part of the team responsible for bringing to life what I have for so long been enthralled and inspired by.

Planning, rehearsal, and presentation are essential parts of any stage production, and for WA Ballet this is no exception. I was fortunate enough to go beyond the stage and uncover what happens before and after the curtain call, having sat in on a few rehearsals with Western Australia's flagship ballet company.

Shows will undoubtedly shift and change as dancers try new emphases and cement physical moves. This really stood out to me in my behind-the-scenes experiences. It is one thing to see the final, polished version of a performance, it is another thing to witness it in its rawer state.

There is something so beautiful and strangely compelling about hearing the squeak and thud of dancers' feet, all harnessed in way that sent surges through me and had me nodding my head to the steady, reverberating rhythm. Unlike the grandness of an orchestral score, live piano sets the tone for the dancers, while also allowing their steps to be carefully observed and tweaked without the distraction of a noisy environment. Similarly, to see the ensemble dance in a studio, as opposed to the complex and detailed sets of a theatre, strips it back to get at the art form's heart and soul.

The other creative elements, such as the costumes, props, lighting, etc., additionally contribute to the meaning and overall experience. These elements are what bring to life and transform dance into a truly exciting, well-rounded story. I fully realised this when I attended a dress rehearsal, where the production comes alive as dancers get into character, sets are finalised, and the sound and lights meticulously adjusted. Cues from the stage manager, alongside words of encouragement and constructive feedback voiced by the directors are heard throughout, reflecting the attention to detail underlying every show.

By partaking in experiences traditionally reserved for dancers and other company crew, it is undeniable that what continues to make WA Ballet performances a success is the dedication and passion they inject into all their shows, even the ones without a crowd.

After all, it takes time to get a dance right, to create something truly memorable.

Responding | Dance Reflecting and Analysing (ACADAR018), (ACADAR025)

Choreographic Processes and Exploration of Movement

TASK: After viewing the performance **GENESIS** consider the dance elements of Body, Energy, Space and Time (BEST). In a group discussion or writing activity reflect upon;

Body: What actions were used?

Energy: What kinds of movement qualities did you see?, sharp, soft, smooth, percussive? Was there flow and connection of movements or was it interrupted and contained?

Space: Which directions did the dancers travel in?, what formations were seen?, name some shapes you saw the dancers make eg. twisted, circular, symmetrical, contrasting. Were the pathways curved or angular?

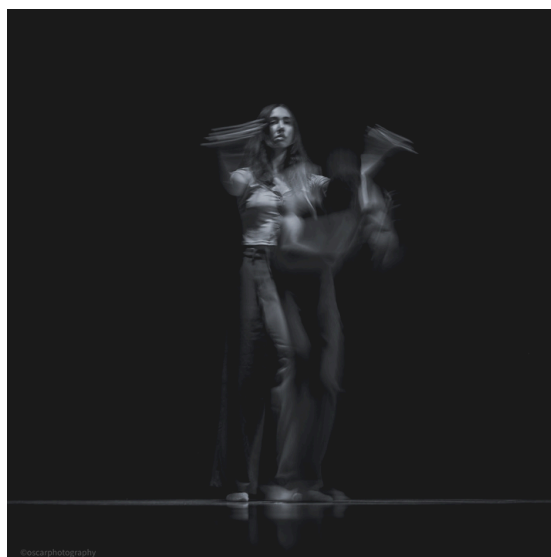
Time: What was the tempo of the music?, did the rhythm feel regular or irregular? Was there stillness? Were there accents placed on the movements?

- Consider how these elements contributed to the formation of the work.
- Consider which elements were most utilised and drawn upon to best present the themes and ideas expressed throughout the work.
- Consider classic and historic choreographic styles, do you believe they have influenced the work.

TASK:

In a group discussion or writing activity reflect upon any choreographic devices you think may have been used, researched or developed during the creative process and into the final performance.

- Consider unison, canon, motif, contrast repetition, fragmentation, embellishment, accumulation, reversal and retrograde.
- Consider why these devices may or may not have been incorporated into the work. Eg. Did this assist with story telling or were they stylistic or aesthetic choices?



Responding | Dance in Context-

(ACADAR018), (ACADAR019), (ACADAR025), (ACADAR026).

Research and Reflection

TASK: Select an excerpt or two of **GENESIS** to focus on. Research how current affairs, global happenings or pop culture references may have influenced artistic choices or themes presented in **GENESIS**.

Does it appear that lighting, performance space, music and costume choices were purposefully intended to reflect these influences?

Consider:

- Why do you think the choreographer has chosen this theme?
- What emotions did the work evoke?
- What viewpoint is the work presented from?
- What do you think the purpose of creating this piece is?
- What were some of the dance techniques used?
- How did the work make you feel?

TASK: Compare and contrast the differences between classical and historic styles of dance, with the modern quality of movement displayed in **GENESIS**.

Consider:

- Do different styles of dance convey different messaging? If so, how was this utilised?
- What research and development do you think the choreographer underwent when creating?
- Do you think the pieces were curated to show variety in themes, styles of dance and quality of movement?
- Does the Choreographers investigation and research show through?

Include descriptive references of each excerpt when giving examples and make sure to use dance terminology.



Photo credit - Clinton Bradbury.

Responding | Dance Reflecting and Analysing- (ACADAR018) (ACADAR025).

Writing a Review

With students, analyse a written review and assess its form and content. Select a dance review. A review of West Australian Ballet's 2024 production, **Ballet at the Quarry: Metamorphosis**, has been included overleaf for your use. Read through the review and briefly analyse it. While a review is essentially one person's opinion and therefore subjective, it should also note the following details:

- Who? The company, creatives (choreographer, composer) and characters.
- What? the story, look, music, feel, design, content.
- When? Time/date of performance.
- Where? Place of performance.
- How? Types of movement, arrangement on stage, use of props.
- Why? What is being communicated and why.

TASK: Ask students to write a review of **GENESIS**. Ensure that it includes the above details and a critical analysis of the production.

For additional support on "How to Write a Review" please see the video link on page 15.



TASK VARIATIONS

- Reviewing in the 21st Century

Ask the students to write an Instagram review consisting of 140 characters.

Students will need to select their words carefully and highlight what effected them the most.

or

Ask students to create and perform a scripted 30 second TikTok presentation to accompany images from the production. Ensure to include a tag line to use as a caption.

- The Role of the Reviewer

For advanced students, lead a discussion about what makes a good review and the role of the reviewer. How do reviews effect the artist, production, audience attendance and the development of the art form?



METAMORPHOSIS: BALLET AT THE QUARRY

West Australian Ballet

Quarry Amphitheatre, City Beach

Date reviewed: February 9, 2024

and

PERTH MOVES

STRUT Dance

State Theatre Centre of WA Courtyard

Date reviewed: February 10

Kicking off Perth Festival is the West Australian Ballet's "Metamorphosis: Ballet at the Quarry". This year, the West Australian Ballet is presenting four unconnected works of contemporary dance, with the overall show broken up by one interval. While there is no strong theme emerging from this quadruple bill program, the minimalist costume and lighting designs in each piece (by various designers) resulted in attention remaining, at all times, on the beauty of the human form rather than any concept or emotion.

Two of the works, *Wonderers* and *Extension to Boom*, are choreographed by George Williamson. While *Wonderers* is a short, moody piece consisting of both ensemble work and a pas de deux (on this night, by Candice Adea and Adam Alzaim), *Extension to Boom* is much more expansive, in both length and casting.

In *Wonderers*, six dancers are sporadically lit up by individual downlights (designed by Jason Fassl), accompanied by a sound-score of heartbeats and drumbeats (created by Edmund Shaw). The dancers remain fixed to the spot for some time, expressing mostly smooth, upper-body movement. Contrastingly, *Extension to Boom* consists of colourful costumes (by Jonathan Hindmarsh) and busy music (*Concerto for Two Pianos* by Bryce Dessner). Both works provide strong and fresh choreography but the frenzied music, fast-paced movement and multi-coloured costumes in *Extension to Boom* bordered on overwhelming at times. Nevertheless, the conclusion of this piece was striking and memorable, with lights and music cutting out in the middle of a climatic moment.

The headline performance, *Metamorphosis*, was the highlight of the evening. This piece by David Dawson also comprises both ensemble work and a pas de deux (on this night, by Dayana Hardy Acuna and Oscar Valdes). The choreography incorporates stillness, which provides balance and reprieve from more intense moments of bodies swirling around each other. The simple costume design by David Dawson and Eddie Grundy (white leotards or leggings) is effective in pulling the focus to the physique of the dancers, and the uniformity of the costumes highlight the pockets of synchronicity throughout this piece.

DANCE AUSTRALIA

Dayana Hardy Acuna and Oscar Valdes each presented Dawson's choreography in their own way, without compromising their partnering. Hardy Acuna's long extensions gave the pas de deux fluidity and composure, and Valdes' character and passion ensured he was equally memorable. Notably, Mayume Noguro, who featured in the ensemble of *Metamorphosis*, was a standout. Noguro danced with care and deliberateness, bringing personality, elegance and strength to her performance.

In 3 min 40, a short pas de deux choreographed by Gakuro Matsui, was pleasant but unremarkable. I appreciate the bravery of Matsui in sharing this work, being a reflection of his emotions during the pandemic, but the choreography felt a little tired, as did the storyline.

As always, the ensemble work throughout the night was strong. This was especially so in *Extension to Boom*, which demands musicality from the dancers. Further, the white uniforms used in *Metamorphosis* would have made mistakes abundantly noticeable, but the ensemble presented this piece with precision.

This year's season of "Ballet at the Quarry" showcases some demanding works of contemporary dance, but the vision for the overall production was unfortunately unclear. Each performance was polished; however, none provoked further thought or emotion, nor did they leave a lasting impression, leaving this year's season on the safer side of the creative scale. "Metamorphosis: Ballet at the Quarry" is a sound start to the year for the West Australian Ballet, and there is space to develop a greater sense of direction.

Also part of Perth Festival is *Perth Moves*, a 10-day program of free workshops open to the public, presented by STRUT Dance. With the classes set in the heart of Northbridge (in the Courtyard of the State Theatre Centre of WA), the program seems, so far, well attended by eager participants. I attended a waacking class by visiting French artist, TINE, who took the attendees through the basics of this style. Being late on a Saturday evening, the class felt vibrant and enthusiastic. Not only does the *Perth Moves* initiative deliver a strong variety of dance exposure to the public, it also educates and allows those less familiar with the dance world to dip in their toes. The classes range from line dancing, to krump, to yoga and meditation, and there are classes for those with limited mobility ("seated dance"), providing greater accessibility and inclusivity. The classes are not only informative, but they seem to bring people together through shared movement. It is a stroke of genius by STRUT Dance, and I look forward to this program remaining a fixture of Perth Festival in years to come.

- ALANA KILDEA





DIGITAL LEARNING RESOURCES

Digital creative learning resources to accompany the West Australian Ballet's school performance of *GENESIS* are now available on our website. Resources are aimed at primary and secondary school students and include synopsis and information sheets to download for your classroom.

The Creative Learning Resources webpage also includes behind the scenes information, design and production images, as well as video content to further support students learning experience when attending the performance.

To access the full range of digital creative learning resource's please click on the link below.

[DIGITAL LEARNING RESOURCES](#)



HOW TO WRITE A REVIEW VIDEO

This video, by Amy Wiseman, details how to write a review of a ballet performance. This is a valuable resource for students to reference and take inspiration from across all GENESIS Creative Learning Pack activities.

[VIDEO LINK HERE](#)

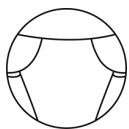


ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

West Australian Ballet, has worked closely with Telethon Kids Institute to create a series of online workshops that focus on utilising dance to improve young people's mental and physical health and wellbeing. A wide variety of movement-based workshop exercises are available. Use these videos to explore a range of health and wellbeing topics through dance.

These free classroom resources are available for a range of year groups and cover topics such as nutrition, mindfulness, self-esteem and many more. Simply click on the link below.

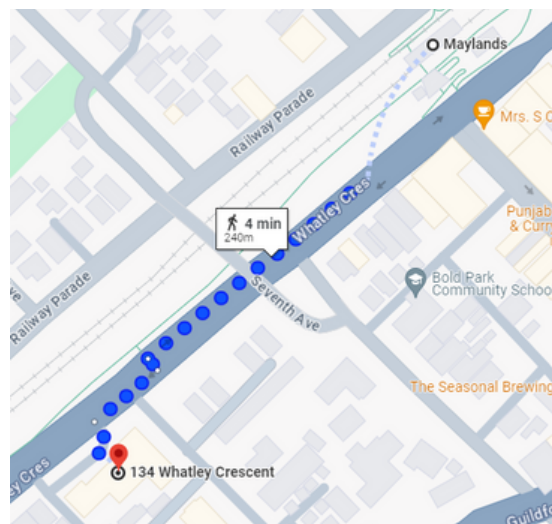
[DANCE AND WELLBEING RESOURCES](#)



YOUR TRIP TO THE WEST AUSTRALIAN BALLET CENTRE

**the West Australian Ballet Centre,
134 Whatley Crescent,
Maylands WA 6051.**


We are so excited to welcome you and your students to the centre for this performance. Read on for helpful hints on how you and your students can best enjoy your trip.



- **Travelling by car:** Limited parking is available at the West Australian Ballet Centre.
- **Travelling by bus:** Bus parking is available at the Instrumental Music School service. Please contact learning@waballet.com.au to organise prior to attending.
- **Travelling by public transport:** The closest train station is Maylands, situated on the Midland line.
- **Arrival Time** Please make sure you arrive at the venue with enough time to collect your tickets and find your seats. Arriving late and missing the start of a performance will diminish your students understanding of the ballet as well as disrupt others. In addition, most performances are 'lock outs', which means that late audience members will only be allowed in at predetermined times (for example, interval) or not at all.

Below are a few things to remind your students before attending:

- **Electronic devices** Please ensure all mobile phones and other electronic devices are turned off. These are disruptive to the performance and distracting to audience members and performers.
- **Photography** We don't allow patrons to take photos or use devices throughout the performance, but we encourage you to record your experience by taking pictures before and after the show and during the intervals. Don't forget to tag us if you post about your experience on social media.
- **Food and beverages** There are many different places to get something to eat or drink in Maylands, however, please be aware that only plastic bottled water is permitted in the auditorium. All other food and beverages must be consumed before entering.
- **How to find your seat** We ask you to please only sit in the seats allocated on your tickets. The front of house staff will read your ticket as you enter the venue and will help you find your seats if needed.
- **And most importantly** Clapping and cheering is the best way to applaud the performance and make the dancers feel special. Make sure you cheer as loudly as you can during the curtain call (at the end of the performance) to give the dancers a big thank you!



Created by
Access & Outreach - School Manager
Stee Andrews
for
2024 season of GENESIS
presented by
West Australian Ballet Company

2025 Performances for Schools - Booking Form



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Step 1 - Provide your contact details.

First Name	Surname	School
Postal Address		
Phone	Mobile (during excursions)	Email

Step 2 - Select your performance(s)

Schools' Matinees	Date/Time	No. of students at \$18 each	Year ie: Yrs 3-5	Subtotal Students	Teachers (10 students = 1 free teacher. Max. 4 adults for every 10 students)		Subtotal Teachers	Ticketing service/ delivery fee	TOTAL (Students + Teachers + \$8.95 Fee)
					Free	Paid \$35			
Performance Season 2	Tuesday 1 st April – 12pm West Australian Ballet Centre			\$			\$	\$8.95	\$
Performance Season 3	Tuesday 27 th May – 12pm His Majesty's Theatre			\$			\$	\$8.95	\$
Performance Season 5	Wednesday 26 th November – 12pm His Majesty's Theatre			\$			\$	\$8.95	\$
Performance Season 5	Wednesday 3 rd December – 12pm His Majesty's Theatre			\$			\$	\$8.95	\$
Prices includes GST.									TOTAL
									\$

Special seating requirements (e.g. wheelchair): _____

Step 3 - Lodgement of form and payment

Once you have completed this form please email it to learning@waballet.com.au. We will confirm we have received your booking via email and provide you with additional information. Approximately 8 weeks before the performance we will confirm your exact numbers and send you an invoice to be paid prior to the performance. If you have any further queries please email us at learning@waballet.com.au or call us on (08) 9214 0707