



[THE GOLDEN RULE FOR GOOD THEATER BEHAVIOR]

Theater behavior falls somewhere in between that expected for a church and a movie theater. If you wouldn't do it in one of the above, don't do it here.

The Golden Rule is a concept that was recognized as early as 1780 BCE, and simply states the idea that all human beings should treat each other how they would like to be treated. The concept of the golden rule has been adapted for many specific situations, and one of those situations is the performing arts arena. More detailed rules can be found at www.pasa-online.org

Follow these and you will have a wonderful experience at the theater.



Backstage Pass

STUDENT GUIDE FOR DAYTIME PERFORMANCES



Supported by a grant from the Louisiana Division of the Arts, Office of Cultural Development, Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism in cooperation with the Louisiana State Arts Council as administered by the Acadiana Arts Council.

MOMIX BOTANICA

STUDENT PERFORMANCE

WEDNESDAY
OCTOBER 20
10:30 AM

AT THE HEYMANN PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

EVENING PERFORMANCE

TUESDAY
OCTOBER 19
7:30 PM

PERFORMING ARTS SOCIETY OF ACADIANA

WITH
CapitalOne
PRESENT

Momix Botanica

Performance Terminology 101

You'll want to be able to talk the talk...performance talk, that is. The terms below are used by professionals to describe some of the types of movement, the styles of music and performance, and the theatrical elements you will see during MOMIX's performance of Botanica. Being familiar with these will allow you to accurately describe and evaluate what you see on the stage.

BODILY MOTIONS

ABDUCTION: Abduction of a joint moves a bone away from the midline of the body.

ADDUCTION: Adduction of a joint moves a bone toward the midline of the body.

FLEXION: Flexion of a joint is to bend it or decrease the angle between the bones of the joint.

EXTENSION: Extension of a joint is generally to straighten it.

HYPEREXTENSION: Hyperextension is extreme extension of a joint or the spine.

LATERAL: Movement away from the median plane or longitudinal center of the body.

ROTATION: Movement around a central axis.

PLIÉ: bent or bending; coordinated flexion at the hip and knee joints and dorsiflexion at the ankle joint.

MUSICAL AND PERFORMANCE STYLE

ACCENT: In music, accent refers to a stress or an emphasis on a musical event. Accents can be created by changes in loudness, by extreme pitches and by rhythmic placement.

METER: Sets of beats grouped together according to a consistent accent pattern.

MUSICALITY: 1) The ability of a dancer to move responsibly to music. 2) Independent of music, the ability of a dancer to move with nuanced coherency where all movement materials are given specific physical and dynamic expression in and of themselves and in relationship to each other.

PHRASING: The use of weight, space flow and time to create a sequence of movement in time.

PRESENCE: The ability to be aware and fully invested in the present moment.

RHYTHM: A sequence of varied accents and durations in either motion or sound.

THEATRICAL ELEMENTS

LIGHTING: Stage lights work with sets, costumes, props, and performers to create pictures or to tell stories. In some cases, shadows are deliberately created for visual effect. A few basic lighting functions are:

- Bump up: Quick increase in light
- Dim down: Sudden decrease in light
- Kill: lights switched off
- Wash-out: low-level lighting that appears to drain color

COSTUMES: Clothing, make-up, hairstyles, etc. worn by the performers to make them appear to be the people or things they are taking the role of for the performance

PROPS: Although props can refer to furniture and hand-held objects used on the stage, in a performance like Botanica props are anything the performers use to "become" something else. In many cases, the props and the costumes work together and cannot be distinguished from one another.

MORE ON MOMIX

Who/What: MOMIX is a self-described company of "dancer-illusionists" who combine the movement of their bodies, their unique costumes, non-traditional props, lighting effects, and sometimes circus or puppet-like elements to create stunning visual spectacles that defy the bounds of traditional stage performances. In addition to serious appearances onstage, MOMIX has starred in unique commercials for both Hanes and Target. (Both commercials can be seen on YouTube.)

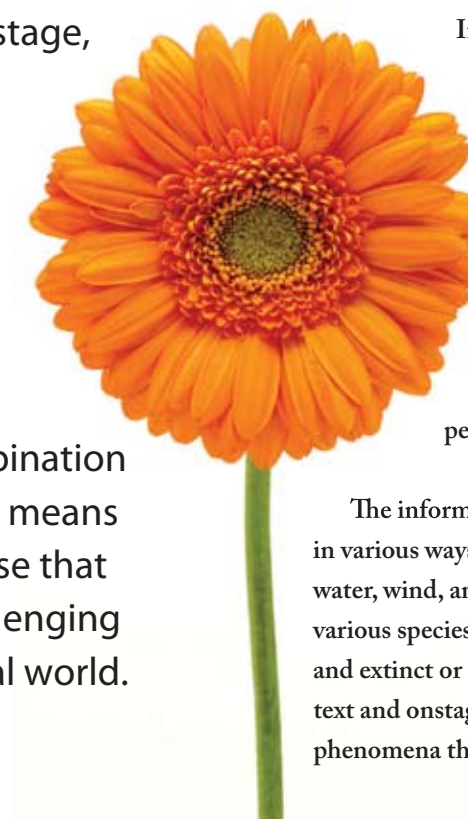
When: MOMIX formed in 1981, and has since gained nearly 30 years of performance experience. Where: MOMIX is based in Washington, Connecticut, but the company regularly performs throughout the world. In the past, their tour schedule has included Italy, Mexico, Australia, Japan, and at least 20 other foreign venues.

Why: MOMIX strives to be inventive and to create works of startling physical beauty. While their performances are designed to educate audiences, they do so in a unique way that involves providing amazing visuals and leaving the audience members to do the thinking. Examples of this include past works Baseball (about America's national pastime, of course) and Opus Cactus (which was inspired by desert plants of the southwest, especially the saguaro cactus).

How: MOMIX's Botanica has been called the "IMAX version of dance theater." Instead of just relying on the movements of bodies to tell simple stories, these dancers incorporate more theatrical elements and ask big questions. When the members of this company are onstage, they don't just dance—they become something new.

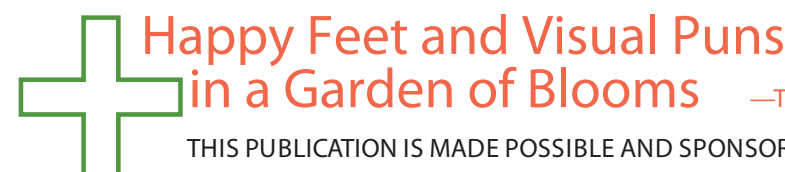
Botanica Power: Clasping It Together

Nothing is one-dimensional in the MOMIX universe. Onstage, the dancers and their costumes and props become one with the lights and music to create a total visual effect. Also, MOMIX never tells simple stories with tight plots. In fact, the entire Botanica production is based on a poem called "Synapses." In the human nervous system, synapses are junctions where messages are passed to various body parts and systems. The word synapse is adapted from the word synaptein, which is itself a combination of two Greek roots: "syn" means together and "haptein" means "to clasp." Onstage, Botanica is one huge, flowing synapse that brings together material spanning across time and challenging viewers to think about their relationship with the natural world.



In this study guide "Synapses" will be the guide for your journey with MOMIX: Botanica. This 90 minute performance will feature "Part Two: Summer-Fall God's Hammer." However, to truly understand and appreciate Botanica you must read the entire poem. The information contained in this study guide is designed to educate and extend your experience before and after the performance ends.

The information contained in Botanica can be classified in various ways. Firstly, all of the elements of nature (earth, water, wind, and fire) are represented in this poem. Also, various species of animals (including living, endangered, and extinct or mythological creatures) weave together in text and onstage. Finally, all of the seasons and natural phenomena that they generate are brought into the action.



Happy Feet and Visual Puns
in a Garden of Blooms —THE NEW YORK TIMES

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FIND PASA ON



Synapses

PART ONE: WINTER-SPRING

Aurora Rose
The Dead of Winter
Cateraction
Geese Return Overhead
Beckoning
Fantasy Tree-Flower to Tempt
Three Graces
from the Foam
to Taste of Pollen Snow
And Fall Back
into
The Flow
Loons Laugh in Darkness
for
Swans
to
Dream
of
Genesis
and
New Green

FroZEN Awakening
Love from Above
Delivers Persephone
to the Subsoil
Riding Old Bones
to
Romance with
Ancient Stones

The Worm Turns
Night
Crawlers
into a Sea of Green
Spring Pools
Marigolds Bloom
Hornets Hop
Owls Hoot
the Arrival
of Centaurs
Amid Summer's Night Dream
Fire
Flies

PART TWO: SUMMER- FALL

God's Hammer
August of Wind
Storms
Rain
The Beaded Web

INSEX
Meet the Beetles
and
Egg On

Birds of a Feather
To
Drop Seed
on
Sun Flower
Finches
Startled by
The
Avant Gardner
as the Green Man
is
Leading the Charge
Of
Indian Summer

Branches
Gathering for
Autumnal Ball

Last Leaf
Catches
the First
Snow
Fall

Cold
River
Runs
Again

But There's More
a Solar Flare
Tonight's Encore!



[ORGANIC ANALYSIS]

Working with a group, read the poem "Synapses." Next, analyze the poem using the questions below as a guide.

1. Label examples of earth, water, wind, and fire.
2. Highlight the names of all of the living creatures. Circle the names of those that are also endangered.
3. Select another color and mark the reference to extinct animals.

4. Underline all of the references to mythological creatures or beings. "Synapses" includes references to challenging terms and concepts you may not be familiar with. After answering the questions listed, use the additional chart (found on the PASA website under Education and Outreach) and, develop a picture or symbol that represents each identified section. Once you know the meanings of these terms, re-consider the portions of the poem that you noted earlier and relate them to the overall concept presented in the poem

The extended chart for "Organic Analysis" is available at www.pasa-online.org under the Education and Outreach section.

[CHOREOGRAPHY QUICKIE]

First of all, the main question. What IS choreography? Simply put, choreographers are the inventors of the dance world. They determine how dancers should move their bodies during each dance step that becomes part of a routine. Then choreographers work with those dancers to ensure that the dancers are fulfilling their vision for a piece. In short, they want to make certain that what they have envisioned is what you will see on the stage.

Some choreographers, like Moses Pendleton of MOMIX, are also artistic directors. An artistic director takes things a bit further by determining nearly everything about the way a performance will appear. They may move beyond just arranging dance steps and move on to designing costumes, selecting music, or giving special instructions to the people who control the lights during a performance.

When you watch MOMIX perform, you will see the careful effects of many layers of artistic direction and choreography. Consider all of these things when you view the performance, and ask yourself what makes things look the way they do. Also, consider what message the dance is sending you.

First, watch the patterns the dancers create on the stage.

- What groupings do you see?
- Which dancers seem to be working together or against each other?
- Are all of the dancers performing at once? Do some hold still and watch? Do the groups they are in change?
- Do the dancers form any shapes with their bodies?
- Do the dancers seem to be imitating any moves or actions from everyday life?

Next, listen to the music.

- Is the music fast or slow?
- Is the rhythm even, or does it change?
- If you close your eyes and just listen for a moment, what do you picture?
- What message does this music send you?

Then, notice the set, lights, and costumes.

- What is on the stage with the dancers? Does it make the stage look like another place?
- How do the lights change? Do they get darker or brighter to signal a mood?
- How do the costumes contribute to the message of the performance? Do the colors the dancers wear tell you anything?

Finally, reflect on the performance when it is over. Ask yourself what you have learned.



Animals in Peril

With the creation of Botanica, MOMIX works to educate through art. A range of animals – living, extinct, endangered, and mythological appear in the performance. In addition, MOMIX asks their viewers to think deeply and ponder the relationship between people and animals and examine humankind's impact on the natural world. Read the profiles below of animals that are threatened or in crisis worldwide. As you read each one, ask yourself about the forces (both human and natural) contributed to this animal's status.

Alligator Snapping Turtle (Macroclemys temmincki)

UNDER REVIEW

This Louisiana resident has raised ridges on its shell, eyes on the sides of its head, a large beak, ridges on the sides of its shell, and a distinctly alligator-ish tail. Together, these features give the alligator snapping turtle a distinctive, prehistoric look. Also notable are this reptile's size and longevity – the alligator snapping turtle is the largest freshwater turtle living in North America, and it has been reported that these creatures can live up to 150 years in the wild. However, due to the fact that they have been hunted for their shells and their meat and accidentally killed by trot lines, a review is currently in place to assess the number of alligator snapping turtles found in the wild. If this number is low, the status of this turtle could change.

African elephant (Loxodonta africana)

THREATENED

In the year 1900, ten million of these massive, leather-skinned animals with large ears lived in Africa. However, since elephants were hunted for their meat and killed for their valuable ivory tusks (even after harvesting ivory became illegal), there were only 500,000 elephants living in Africa by 1980. Massive conservation efforts were implemented. Elephants still face

certain threats due to a growing African population and the destruction of their habitat, but incidences of ivory poaching have decreased and the African government has recently taken steps to protect the habitat of these herd animals.

Giant panda (Ailuropoda melanoleuca)

ENDANGERED

These 350-pound Asian giants have thick, black and white wooly coats. Unlike American bears, they do not hibernate or walk on their hind legs. Pandas are only found in the mountains of central China. They once lived peacefully in the wild, but their numbers dropped when they were hunted for their coats and when massive expansion of the Chinese population led to destruction of their natural habitat. Now, certain bamboo forests have been declared protected areas and hundreds of pandas have been moved to zoos and nature conservancies. However, only about 1000 giant pandas exist in the wild.

Koala (Phascolarctos cinereus)

THREATENED

These Australian "bears" are actually marsupials, or animals which carry their young in a pouch. They have fuzzy, gray-ish coats, black noses, and large tufts of white fuzz emerging from their large, round ears. Koalas exist almost solely on eucalyptus, which can provide habitat problems and food supply issues. Also, koalas are so small they can be killed by cars or dogs. Today, it is believed that fewer than 100,000 exist in the world.

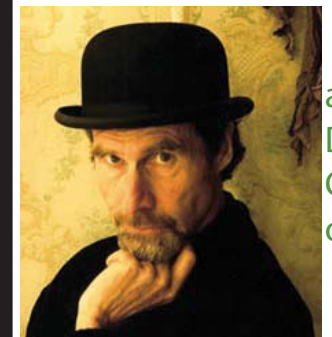
Killer Whale (Orcinus orca)

ENDANGERED

This Sea World regular is the same type of black and white whale who starred in the movie Free Willy. Killer whales are a seeming mass of contradictions. Despite their unfriendly name, their closest relatives are the gentle dolphins. They have no natural predators (indeed, they even eat other whales) but they love performing and are considered trainable. While some species of killer whale suffer no endangerment, those living in some areas, like the Arctic and Antarctic, have seen their populations drop due to climate change issues, human pollution, over-fishing, and loss of their natural diet.

STATS AND STORIES:

MOSES PENDLETON



aka, Artistic Director and Choreographer of MOMIX

EDUCATION:

- Graduated from Dartmouth College with a B.A. in English Literature
- Took many dance classes while in collage. Immediately after graduating, Pendleton began touring with Pilobolus Dance Company.
- Recieved an honorary doctorate of the arts from The University of the Fine Arts in Philidelphia in May 2010

EXPERIENCE:

- Appeared with Pilobolus for 10 years
- Has choreographed works for a number of opera companies, symphonies and television productions around the world.
- Is an accomplished photographer who has had shows of his work held in the U.S. and foreign countries.

COOL ACHIEVMENTS:

- Choreographed the closing ceremonies of the 1980 Lake Placid Olympic Games. Performed a solo called "Momix" during the ceremony.
- Appeared in Prince's music video "Batdance," which was created to accompany the soundtrack of the 1989 movie version of Batman
- Has been seen on both The Tonight Show and Sesame Street.

