

Teacher Guide

Cue Sheet

Ballet Hispánico New York: CARMEN. maquia

Friday, January 15, 2027
10:15am

Questions to ask students **BEFORE** the performance

- Listen to music from the opera Carmen. How does it tell you where you are, what the characters are like, and what the story might be?
- What means of communication does the opera use that a dance might not, and vice versa?
- Would this story work with rap music? As a video game? As a movie? As a graphic novel?

Questions to ask students **AFTER** the performance

- Did the music and the dance work together well to tell you the story? What were your favorite scenes?
- How did the sets, costumes, and lights tell you about the place and character for each scene?
- Is this a love story? How could it have had a happier ending?



About the Performance

CARMEN.maquia tells the same story as Georges Bizet's opera *Carmen*. This adaptation features powerful dance, dynamic movement, and striking black-and-white visuals inspired by the artist Pablo Picasso.

In *Carmen.maquia*, Carmen leads a group of women working in a factory, where they flirt with the guards. Standing out among them, Carmen teases Don José, sparking tension that leads to a fight with a friend. The guards intervene, pulling her apart and taking her to jail, where Don José, captivated by her, helps her escape. Haunted by dreams of ghostly versions of Carmen, Don José struggles with his feelings for her.

Meanwhile, a soldier and a townsman argue over who would make a better boyfriend for Carmen, but she becomes infatuated with the bravery of the bullfighter, Escamillo. In a moment of introspection, Carmen reads tarot cards that foretell a dark future. Despite the warning, she decides to marry Escamillo, culminating in a final scene celebrating their wedding.

This performance introduces students to themes of independence, emotional expression through movement, and cultural expression through Spanish dance, including the bolero and the habanera. Students can explore storytelling without dialogue, examine how music and movement convey emotion, and discuss choices and their consequences.



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Vocabulary

Andalucia (*ahn-dah-loo-SEE-yah*) - The southernmost province of Spain, and the setting for Carmen

Ballet (*bah-LAY*) - specifically, a style of dance created in the 15th Century, but it can also refer generally to dance of many kinds, or to companies that perform dance

Factory (*FAK-tuh-ree*) - a place where things are made. Carmen works in a cigar factory

Flamenco (*fluh-MENG-koh*) - a style of dance and its music that originated in Andalucia

Floreo (*flo-REH-oh*) - A hand movement in flamenco that looks like a flower

Matador (*MAT-uh-dohr*) - a bullfighter

Paso Doble (*PAH-soh DOH-blay*) - a Spanish dance that mimics the drama of bullfighting

Roma (*ROH-mah*) People - an ethnic group with roots in India and a rich cultural tradition in Europe, including flamenco

Tarot (*TEHR-oh*) - cards used for telling fortunes, or the act of using such cards for looking at one's fate

Zapateado (*zah-pah-tay-AH-doh*) - Rhythmic foot stomping, like a drumbeat made with your feet



Interactive PDF
Click here to visit link.

Additional Resources

Click here to download a study guide for the performance provided by the show.

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Beyond the Show

Use these activities before or after the performance to extend the production's themes and concepts into the classroom.

Movement Moves Us

Movement can stimulate emotions. Bigger movements generate stronger emotions. Have students spread out, focused on themselves. Have each start as though frozen in a block of ice. Tell them to strain against the ice, to try to break free. The struggle is important. Then, have them break free. End the exercise. Ask students what emotions they felt when they were trapped and when they broke free. Can they now understand dance better?

Inspiration

Settings for stories can be created many ways. Ballet Hispanico was inspired by the artwork of Pablo Picasso for this production, especially his Cubist works. Cubists represented the world through basic shapes — cylinders, spheres, cones — and few colors. How did the shapes in the set tell you each location? Have students look at different parts of your classroom to find geometric shapes, or to reimagine what they see in geometric shapes.

Adaptation

Adapting a story from one medium to another requires an acceptance of the medium and its possibilities and limitations. Imagine Carmen told through slam poetry. You gain words and a distinct rhythm. You lose the language of dance. Are other differences? What about the differences between Ballet Hispanico's dance production and a movie? How would the story translate into a novel? What other story forms can you compare it to?