

Unit 15 Reading

World-Famous Dance Troupe Announces First U.S. Tour

<Press Release>

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

U.S. Tour of Ballets Russes to Launch in New York City

New York, January 3—

The Metropolitan Civic Association is proud to announce its exclusive sponsorship of the first American tour of the celebrated Ballets Russes. The world's most prestigious dance company will kick off its sixteen-city tour of the United States with a performance in New York City. Tickets to opening night will be available at the M.C.A. box office beginning Monday.

The Ballets Russes has enjoyed great success—and provoked considerable controversy—since its inaugural performance seven years ago in Paris. Unique among dance troupes, the Ballets Russes ensures its every production is an artistic collaboration with some of the most notable composers, choreographers, costumers, and set designers of our day. Onstage, its accomplished troupe of thirteen dancers is led by the great Vaslav Nijinsky, rightly hailed as the finest male dancer of his generation.

The company was established in 1909 by the Russian impresario Sergei Diaghilev, whose **zealous** support of modern dance boldly thrust classical dance traditions into the twentieth century.

His avant-garde productions offended some early audience members, who were **voluble** in their resistance to the Ballets Russes's break with classical ballet. Most spectators were **receptive** to Diaghilev's ideas, however, and critics now **concur** that any Ballets Russes performance is the epitome of Modernism.

Critical to the company's success has been the music of Russian composer Igor Stravinsky. His contributions to the Ballets Russes have not been without controversy, however. No one familiar with the recent history of this outstanding dance troupe will fail to recall reports of the 1913 **fracas** in Paris, when the composer's *The Rite of Spring* provoked the opening-night audience to near **pandemonium**. An unfamiliar sound on the dance stage, Stravinsky's adventurous music was considered too **abrasive** an accompaniment to ballet. Disparaged as **grotesque**, the Ballets Russes dancers' movements, too, came under fire. Yet lovers of ballet on both sides of the Atlantic have rapidly **acclimated** themselves to change, and by uniting modern movement with modern music, the Ballets Russes has brought a fresh perspective to dance.

A performance of *The Firebird*, Stravinsky's first popular sensation for the Ballets Russes, will inaugurate the American tour. The composer's *Petrushka* will be included in the performance schedule as well. Stravinsky created this work for Nijinsky. The fanciful plot tells the story of Petrushka, a puppet made of straw who comes to life. A love triangle reaches its climax when Petrushka is slain by his rival. However, the hero then returns to life as a ghost and visits the enemies who have **repressed** him.

The great Nijinsky himself is rumored to be joining the tour later this season. Monsieur Diaghilev, always **reticent**, has refused to comment on the possibility of a performance by Nijinsky in the role of Petrushka while the troupe is on these shores. It is therefore with sincere appreciation and high hopes that the M.C.A. commends the Ballets Russes to our friends and supporters.

Tickets to the New York City performances, which begin at the Metropolitan Opera House on January 17, will doubtless be at a premium. So we entreat art lovers not to suffer the **chagrin** of being turned away at the door! Do not **renounce** this rare opportunity to witness one of the most dazzling spectacles of this or any era. No more **vehement** advocate for modern art can be found than Monsieur Diaghilev. Just as a master chef selects choice ingredients and blends them to create a **savory** meal, Monsieur Diaghilev possesses an uncanny talent to fuse music and dance, whimsy and spectacle. His every production has stirred hitherto **complacent**

audiences everywhere the troupe has performed. We have every reason to believe that each U.S. performance by the Ballets Russes will be met with **raucous** applause.

For tickets to the New York performances, please contact the Metropolitan Civic Association at 51 West 11th Street, or telephone Mr. Constantine Z. Schelling or Mrs. Amelie Ziolkowski at REgent 4-2636.

Unit 15 Examples

1. Within every family there are some relationships that tend to be **abrasive**.
2. Pumice, a natural **abrasive**, is a highly porous type of glass that is produced by volcanic eruptions.
3. You may find it difficult to **acclimate** to a new school if you arrive in the middle of the year.
4. Much to my **chagrin**, I placed a mere fourth in the 100-meter freestyle.
5. The lukewarm reception accorded his first and only opera, *Fidelio*, deeply **chagrined** the composer Ludwig van Beethoven.
6. **Complacent** individuals are, by definition, overly pleased with their lot in life.
7. It is indeed rare for eyewitness accounts of an accident to **concur** in every detail.
8. Celebrities sometimes find that they have no choice but to sue tabloids for **defamation**.
9. The students listened attentively as the math teacher **explicated** the geometry theorem.
10. Do you think that the **fracas** on some talk shows are spontaneous or staged?
11. Gargoyles, the **grotesque** beasts carved on many Gothic churches, are actually drainage spouts.
12. The whirl of activity on the floor of a stock exchange often looks and sounds like utter **pandemonium**.
13. A **raucous** voice can be a liability for someone wishing to pursue a career in television journalism.
14. People will generally be **receptive** to criticism of their work if it is given in a constructive manner.
15. Throughout history, martyrs have willingly given up their lives rather than **renounce** their cause.
16. As history has repeatedly proved, even the most brutal tyrants cannot forever **repress** the human desire for freedom.
17. She is understandably **reticent** about discussing her most deeply held beliefs with a group of total strangers.
18. Some of the characters a reader meets in a detective story are none too **savory**.

19. By the end of an enormous Thanksgiving feast, most diners usually feel quite **somnolent**.
20. The defendant's **vehement** protestations of innocence failed to convince the jurors.
21. Reporters never give much credence to tips that they receive from **voluble** but unreliable informants, however persistent.
22. Most members of my family are **zealous** supporters of our local high school's basketball, baseball, and football teams.

Unit 15 Choosing the Right Word

1. For centuries scholars have argued over how to **explicate** certain cryptic passages in Milton's plays and poems.
2. A **fracas** between rival groups on the floor of the convention was swiftly quelled by security guards.
3. Some people seem to relish every **savory** morsel of gossip that comes their way.
4. The workers were **reticent** to speak about the bank robbery, frightened that the thieves might later seek retaliation.
5. With deep **chagrin**, I must confess that I was the one who neglected to hire the orchestra for the class dance.
6. We all have impulses to violence, but we must learn to **repress** them if we are to live in a civilized society.
7. Although some people would disagree, many more would **concur** that the Beatles were the most influential rock band of all time.
8. Mr. Sanderson is usually a man of very few words, but he was certainly **voluble** when we asked him about his operation.
9. It's not surprising that after so many years of military service, he has found it difficult to become **acclimated** to civilian life.
10. I was startled not so much by your disapproval of my proposal as by the **vehemence** with which you denounced it.
11. Some politicians are more **zealous** in promoting their own careers than in seeking to help the people who elected them.
12. The figures in the surrealistic painting had the **grotesque** appearance of characters in a nightmare.
13. After spending a month in the country, we found the sounds of rush-hour traffic in the big city more **raucous** than ever.
14. Kim attributed her failure to get the lead role in the play to the director's poor judgment and remained **complacent** about her acting abilities.

15. Will I ever again sleep as deeply as I did on those deliciously **somnolent** afternoons on that hot, quiet beach?
16. Economists have spent years attempting to **explicate** the causes of the 1929 stock market collapse and the years of economic depression that followed it.
17. He has a good deal of ability, but his **abrasive** personality has prevented him from getting ahead in the business world.
18. After a lot of persuading, our parents **concurred** with our plan to make a bicycle tour of New England.
19. The **complacent** expression on the antique doll's porcelain face seemed to proclaim, "All's right with the world."
20. In unforgettable words, the soothsayer called on mankind to **renounce** the use of armed force.
21. Why is it that some people are so talkative about most things but so **reticent** about their own personal backgrounds?
22. Lacking a positive program of his own, he hoped to gain the support of the voters by **defaming** the other candidates.
23. **Pandemonium** erupted when the nervous theater manager announced to the waiting crowd that the rock concert was canceled.
24. Gloria's kind words put me in such a **receptive** frame of mind that I agreed to work on the committee before I knew what I was doing.
25. Rosemary is preferred in this soup due to its **savory** qualities.

Unit 15 Synonyms

1. need to **clarify** some of the technical language: **explicate**
2. **embarrassment** over their crushing defeat: **chagrin**
3. a campaign of **mudslinging**: **defamation**
4. tried to break up the **melee**: **fracas**
5. willingly **rejected** worldly things: **renounced**
6. twisted into **monstrous** shapes: **grotesque**
7. led to **tumult** on the Senate floor: **pandemonium**
8. made from rich and **delicious** sauces: **savory**
9. a **fierce** debate on a controversial issue: **vehement**
10. **heavy-eyed** from studying all night: **somnolent**

Unit 15 Antonyms

1. **taciturn** traveling companions: **voluble**
2. a **motivating** environment: **somnolent**
3. an extremely **pleasant** manner: **abrasive**
4. **conceal** your intentions for the purchase: **explicate**
5. an article outlining his **praise**: **defamation**

Unit 15 Completing the Sentence

1. Although I am afraid of the dentist, I must **repress** my fears and go for treatment.
2. Since hockey players often crash into each other at high speed, it's not surprising that occasionally a(n) **fracas** develops.
3. I have great respect for your knowledge of our government, but I really cannot **concur** with your opinion about the role of the judiciary.
4. The carpenter used a(n) **abrasive** to remove the old finish from the top of the desk before revarnishing it.
5. The library became a scene of **pandemonium** when a practical joker released a number of mice.
6. When we reached Mexico City, which is over 7,000 feet above sea level, we found it difficult at first to **acclimate** ourselves to the thinner air.
7. The answers that the candidate gave at the press conference were rambling and **voluble** but contained practically no hard information.
8. An accountant tried to **explicate** the new tax legislation to me, but when she had finished, I felt I was even more in the dark than before.
9. Both sons agreed to **renounce** their claims to their father's estate in favor of their widowed mother.
10. The editorial on city government was so unfair and biased that it amounted to **defamation** of all the elected officials of this community.
11. You can well imagine my **chagrin** at losing such an important election by so few votes.
12. I was confident that after Dad had eaten a good meal, he would be more **receptive** to my request for the use of the car.
13. The conceited actor was anything but **reticent** in discussing his innumerable triumphs on the stage, screen, and TV.
14. **Raucous** shouts and boos from the stands will have no effect on a good umpire's decisions.
15. We didn't expect such **vehement** dislike of country-and-western music from a native of Nashville.

16. For their art project the children made **grotesque** masks that they planned to use in a play based on some myths they had read.
17. A free people cannot afford to grow **complacent** but must remain ever vigilant in safeguarding their liberties.
18. In an amazingly short time and with only the simplest ingredients, I had a(n) **savory** stew simmering on the stove.
19. She tried hard to remain awake, but the **somnolent** atmosphere of the warm and cozy parlor was too much for her.
20. He was just an average player when he first joined the team, but everyone admired his **zealous** efforts to improve his game.

Unit 15 Vocabulary in Context (Literary Text)

1. “In short, she sat, during the first visit, looking at Jane Fairfax with twofold **complacency**; the sense of pleasure and the sense of rendering justice, was determining that she would dislike her no longer.”

To look upon someone with **complacency** assumes

- ① **gratification** ② sorrowfulness ③ annoyance ④ embarrassment

2. “He agreed to it, but with so quiet a ‘Yes,’ as inclined her almost to doubt his real **concurrence**; and yet there must be a very distinct sort of elegance for the fashionable world, if Jane Fairfax could be thought only ordinarily gifted with it.”

A **concurrence** is a(n)

- ① dispute ② emotion ③ hesitation ④ **consent**

3. “How very few of those men in a rank of life to address Emma would have **renounced** their own home for Hartfield!”

When something is **renounced**, it is

- ① **forsaken** ② declared ③ sustained ④ honored

4. "...Harriet had acknowledged her admiration and preference of Frank Churchill before she had ever given her a hint on the subject; but she felt completely guilty of having encouraged what she might have **repressed**."

When a feeling is repressed, it is

- ① exposed ② accepted ③ **constrained** ④ suspected

5. "...Miss Bates soon came—'Very happy and obliged'—but Emma's conscience told her that there was not the same cheerful **volubility** as before—less ease of look and manner. A very friendly inquiry after Miss Fairfax, she hoped, might lead the way to a return of old feelings."

Volubility is NOT characterized by

- ① interaction ② **silence** ③ expression ④ verbalization

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The company was established in 1909 by the Russian impresario Sergei Diaghilev, whose _____ support of modern dance boldly thrust classical dance traditions into the twentieth century.

His avant-garde productions offended some early audience members, who were _____ in their resistance to the Ballets Russes's break with classical ballet. Most spectators were _____ to Diaghilev's ideas, however, and critics now _____ that any Ballets Russes performance is the epitome of Modernism.

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- ① dispute ② emotion ③ hesitation ④ consent

3. "How very few of those men in a rank of life to address Emma would have **renounced** their own home for Hartfield!"

When something is renounced, it is

- ① forsaken ② declared ③ sustained ④ honored

4. "...Harriet had acknowledged her admiration and preference of Frank Churchill before she had ever given her a hint on the subject; but she felt completely guilty of having encouraged what she might have **repressed**."

When a feeling is repressed, it is

- ① exposed ② accepted ③ constrained ④ suspected

5. "...Miss Bates soon came—'Very happy and obliged'—but Emma's conscience told her that there was not the same cheerful **volubility** as before—less ease of look and manner. A very friendly inquiry after Miss Fairfax, she hoped, might lead the way to a return of old feelings."

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