

Study Guide For Teachers

Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre in A Taste of Spain

presented by
Young Audiences
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ABOUT THE PROGRAM

From Fandango to Flamenco, from the courts of France and Italy to Madrid and the Gypsy camps, the Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre celebrates the shared heritage that is now the hallmark of Spanish dance. Spain comes to life with colorful costumes and energetic dances.

Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre is dedicated to the preservation and cultivation of the rich variety of dance forms and music from Spain. They emphasize the diverse influences of other world cultures within Spain's traditions.

LEARNING GOALS

Students will:

- Appreciate Spanish art and culture
- Understand the relationships between Spain and other world cultures
- Learn elements of Spanish dance

**Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre's
A Taste of Spain:**

**Audience Limit: 250
Intended for grades: K-12**

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS

Spain has four main dance forms:
Folkloric, Escuela Bolera, Classical and Flamenco.

Folkloric or regional dances are indigenous to various regions of Spain and reflect the cultural traditions of the populations that settled in these areas over Spain's history.

There were French and Italian influences on the Bolera and Classical dances, as these combine ballet technique with Spanish footwork and castanets.

Flamenco developed from the influence of Gitano (Gypsy), Moorish (Moroccan Arabs), Jewish and Christian cultures on the dances of southern Spain. The ancestors of the Gypsies migrated from India through the Middle East into Spain.

Other dances include the Jotas which reflect the Celtic population endemic to northern Spain's Galicia and Aragon regions. The Fandangos are from Huelva and the colorful Verdiales celebrate the green olives from the mountains of Malaga.

The Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre was founded in 1965 by Maria Alba. Maria and current director Eva Lucena worked to set the company apart by bringing to the stage dance dramas such as *El Amor Brujo* and dramatizations of the poetry of Federico Garcia Lorca. *Granada – The End*, Eva's original choreography dramatizing the death of García Lorca, was nominated for a National Endowment for the Arts dance award.

BEFORE THE PROGRAM

1. Coordinate the arrival of the Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre with a study unit that explores the cultural history and ethnic roots of Spain.
2. Music and dance are passed down and preserved through many generations. Discuss how cultural history and ethnic traditions are protected and handed down within a family. Have students share any stories, songs or special customs particular to their own families or culture.
3. Get the music teacher involved! Explore the music of some of the dance traditions of Spain. Study the rhythmic differences and how these affect the movements of the dances. Have students learn to clap and/or use rhythm instruments to experience the variety of music.

AFTER THE PROGRAM

1. Get the visual arts teacher involved! Explore the visual art traditions of Spain and the countries which influenced its dances and music. Explore the traditional dress used for the dances which the students experienced in the performance. Is there significance to the colors of the costumes? What is the significance of the fans used in some dances? Have the student create their own fans.
2. Get the music teacher involved, again! Have students explore music of various cultures which influenced Spanish music and dance. Compare Bolera music with music from France and Italy; compare the music of the Jota with Celtic music, etc. See the "Background Information" section for other connections. What are the similarities between the music of these cultures and that of Spain? What are the differences?
3. Discuss with students the elements that help make a creative art form stand the test of time. Ask students to decide what current songs and dance styles could be popular with audiences in the years to come. What artists, musicians, actors and dancers do they think will still be popular in the future, and why?

VOCABULARY WORDS

Zaraguros – a traditional dance from Loja in southern Ecuador

Aguas – A polka from northern Mexico

Guajira – a dance of 16th century Cuban origin

Otavalenia – a traditional dance from Imbabura in the Andes region in central Ecuador

Bejuquito – From the Huasteca region of Mexico, this dance is typically done by a couple and becomes a competition as to which person can hold the bottle the longest on their head

Alegrias – A *Cante chico* (light song) form of Flamenco characteristic of Cadiz

Me Pogera Colorada – A traditional dance from the city of Barranquilla in northern Colombia

ARTIST INFORMATION

The Alborada Spanish Dance Theatre was originally founded in 1965 by María Alba, known to many aficionados as being the greatest exponent of the *seguriya* and many other Spanish dance drama pieces in the U.S. In 1980, the Company was revitalized under the direction of María and its current Director, Eva Lucena.

Ms. Lucena began performing at the age of three.

She spent her youth between Wales (United Kingdom) and in Granada (Spain), where she lived among the caves of Sacromonte and the gypsy quarters of Albaicin. She received her dance training in New York, Great Britain and Spain.

RESOURCES

<http://www.alboradadance.org/index.htm>

The Language of Spanish Dance. Matteo Marcellus Vittucci and Carola Goya. 1990. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, Oklahoma.

Flamenco. Edited by Claus Schreiner. Amadeus Press, Portland, Oregon.