

**Hot Springs  
Children's Dance  
Theatre Company  
Presents**

Leo Delibes  
**Coppélia**

**"The girl with  
the enamel eyes"**

**Edmond Cooper  
Artistic Director**

**Study Guide**

**Sponsored by  
the Hot Springs Community Foundation**

# COPPÉLIA

May 18 - 25, 2023

**We celebrate our ten year anniversary by bringing Coppélia back to life! The ballet premiered at Children's Dance Theatre in 2017 during our fifth season.**



## A Brief History

The ballet first premiered during our fifth year in 2017. Leading roles were danced by Constanza Murphy, as Swanhilda, and Carlos Alberto, as Franz. The ballet was a huge success leading to the inevitable return of the production this season.

## The Story

Swanhilda and Franz spend their days dancing and teasing each other at their home village courtyard. Dr. Coppélius is a diabolical town toymaker who created a beautiful doll named Coppélia. He sat her down on his balcony facing the town square reading a book. Coppélia looked so real that all the people in the village believed she was a real girl. Even Franz developed conflicting thoughts about who he likes more, his fiancé Swanhilda or the beautiful unknown girl on the balcony. Swanhilda, realizing that Franz has developed second thoughts about their engagement, decides to sneak into Dr. Coppélius house and find out more about who this mystery girl that is stealing Franz' attention. The ballet follows heroine Swanhilda as she tries to win back her fiancé, Franz, who has fallen in love with a girl named Coppélia. Franz gets caught sneaking into Dr. Coppelius' workshop to meet this beautiful but illusive girl from the balcony, but Swanhilda comes to his rescue by deceiving the doctor into believing that she is actually his beautiful automaton doll that has come to life.

## The First Premiere

*"Coppélia"* premiered May 25<sup>th</sup>, 1870, as a romantic comedy ballet originally choreographed by Arthur Saint-Leon with music by Leo Delibes, and featured 16-year-old dancer, Giuseppina Bozzacchi, in the principal role of Swanhilda. The ballet's first flush of success was interrupted by the Franco-Prussian War and the Siege of Paris that, unfortunately, led to the early death of Giuseppina Bozzacchi on her 17th birthday. The ballet was only performed 12 times before the theater was shut down in September and was then used as a storage facility during the siege.

# ACT ONE

## Town Festival

The scene begins in a small town in Poland as local villagers prepare for

the day's work, including Swanhilda, the daughter of the town's innkeeper. Across from the inn sits the mysterious house of Dr. Coppélius. Perched on the balcony, a beautiful – and very still-young lady named Coppélia reads. Trying to catch the attention of then girl, Swanhilda offers Coppélia flowers. Coppélia gives no response and Swanhilda leaves in a huff off to find her friends.



Swanhilda's fiancé, Franz, is also captured by the unusual and beautiful girl . He gives Coppélia a respectful bow and she responds with blowing him a kiss. Franz offers Coppélia the flowers Swanhilda discarded as Swanhilda and her friends return. Swanhilda is outraged.



The villagers return along with the Burgermeister, who announces the lord of the manor will give money to a few betrothed couples to celebrate the new harvest. He encourages Franz and Swanhilda to wed, but Swanhilda is still upset. The Burgermeister describes the traditional folk tale of the corn: if the couple can hear the ear of the corn rattle, then all will be well.

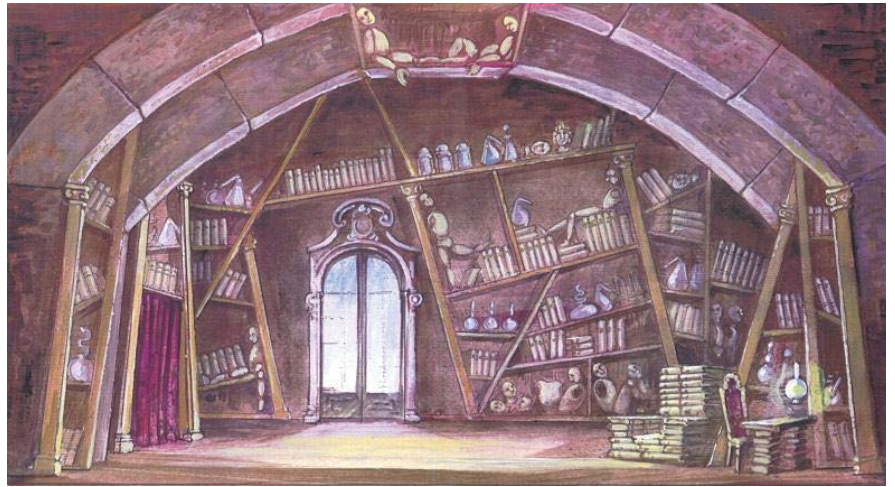
Swanhilda leaves to dance with her friends and soon forgets about the corn until she sees Franz dancing with another girl. Upset again, Swanhilda and her friends leave.

Dr. Coppélius emerges from his house and stumbles upon a group of village youths who rile him up. During the altercation, Dr. Coppélius drops his keys. Swanhilda and her friends can't resist the opportunity to confront the mysterious Coppélia. Franz has the same idea yet slightly different intentions.

# ACT TWO

## Dr. Coppélius' House

Swanhilda and her friends enter Dr. Coppélia's household and find Coppélia sitting behind some cupboards still reading. It doesn't take long for Swanhilda to realize the object of Franz' affection is merely a mechanical doll. Dr. Coppélius enters the workshop and everyone flees except for Swanhilda who hides.



Dr. Coppélius thinks he's rid of the intruders when he hears Franz coming through the window and demands an explanation for the intrusion. Franz admits he is in search of the beautiful girl who blew him a kiss. Dr. Coppélius is angry at first, but then considers this may be the perfect opportunity to perfect his skills as a magician.

Dr. Coppélius pretends to be friendly showing Franz other dolls and offering him a glass of wine. Franz drinks the glass of wine and asks for another. Dr. Coppélius pours a sleeping potion into the glass unbeknownst to Franz and he falls into a deep sleep. Excited his plan is in motion, Dr. Coppélius fetches Coppélia who happens to be Swanhilda now disguised as Coppélia. Dr. Coppélius consults his magic book to bring life into Coppélia. Swanhilda pretends to come alive.



Ecstatic about his own abilities, Dr. Coppélius soon becomes worried he can't control the doll. He tries to distract her by giving her a Spanish mantilla and a fan, and then a tartan scarf to dance with. The town begins to wake. Dr. Coppélius must get rid of Franz! He drags Franz to the window after putting the doll away. The other mechanical dolls begin to buzz in the confusion. Swanhilda reveals herself to Dr. Coppélius and was only pretending to be Coppélia all along.

# ACT THREE

## Wedding Bells

The village hustles and bustles to prepare for the wedding celebration when Swanhilda and Franz escape Dr. Coppélius' house. The Burgermeister tells them to hurry and dress for the wedding if they want to take part. The festivities begin and the villagers perform beautiful dances symbolizing "Morning Hours", "Dawn" and "Prayer", and a hearty work dance before the betrothed couple dance. Franz is carried into the square and Dr. Coppélius furiously interrupts the celebration demanding justice for the destruction of his workshop. Swanhilda ask the Burgermeister for her dowry and then proceeds to give it to Dr. Coppélius as an apology.



Swanhilda is no longer angry with Franz and they marry with a blessing of health and happiness.

## Did you know?

### FUN FACTS

1. If the story of a doll coming to life in a ballet sounds a bit familiar, it's because it was written by ETA Hoffmann who also gave us *The Nutcracker*.
2. The lead role of Franz was originally *en travesti*, meaning it was played by a woman. Franz would continued to be played by a woman into World War II.
3. *Coppélia* is the most performed ballet in the history of the Paris Opera Ballet – ballet's first and longest running company.
4. *Coppélia* was the first ballet to include national folk dances and music including the Czardas (Hungarian) and Mazurka (Polish).
5. At the time of *Coppélia's* premiere, people were not that interested in ballet. People often attended ballets just to meet others and socialize.
6. The national ballet of China created a *Coppélia* version including modernized costumes, jeans for men and short tight skirts for women. Some of the women danced on roller-skates.

# What is a choreographer?

*Coppélia's* production is so deeply rooted in tradition. The Hot Springs Children's Dance Theater gives credit to Arthur Saint-Léon the original choreographer of 1870 production. While there is a formal system of dance notation, most people don't use it. Ballet is taught by memory and by videos. There is no true documentation that dancers today are performing Saint Leon's actual choreography since the steps for many of the dancers have been handed down from generation to generation. The rest of the ballet is a creation comparable to a comic opera.

**Arthur Saint-Léon** was born Charles Victor Arthur Michel in Paris, but was raised in Stuttgart, where his father was dance master for the court and the theatre ballet. Saint-Léon was encouraged by his father, who had also been a dancer of the Paris Opera Ballet to study music and dance. At the same time, he studied ballet so he could perform both as violinist and dancer.

When Saint-Léon was 17 years old, he made his début as first demi-caractère dancer at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels. He started to tour across Europe, obtaining a lot of success. In particular, the London audience, who did not like at that time to see men dancing on stage, liked him very much. He was much appreciated for his tours and his jumps. He was able to gain applause in every theatre he danced, and this was not very common in the Romantic Era, where the only star on stage was the Ballerina dancing *en pointe*.

When in Vienna, Saint-Léon could dance for the first time with Fanny Cerrito and from that very moment the two of them became almost indivisible, until they married in 1845. For Cerrito, Saint-Léon choreographed a ballet, *La Vivandière* (1843), that was a hit in London. He also created ballets for the Teatro La Fenice in Venice and for the Paris Opéra.

He became the teacher of the master class at the Opéra and he was in charge to choreograph the divertissements of the most important ballet production. He parted from his wife in 1851 and when she was invited to dance at the Opéra, Saint-Léon retired.

His favorite ballerina was Adèle Grantzow who performed in many of his ballets. Saint-Léon brought her to the Paris Opera and later to Italy. His intention was also to make *Coppélia* (1870) for her. Although he choreographed many ballets, *Coppélia* is the only one that has come down to us almost complete. He died two days after the ballet's initial season had come to an untimely end with the start of the Franco-Prussian War. In late November, the creator of Swanhilda, Giuseppina Bozzachi, died on her 17th birthday.

Saint-Léon is also famous for his method of ballet notation invention described in the book: *La Sténochoréographie, ou Art d'écrire promptement la danse* published in 1852. It is the first method of choreographic notation which documented not only the feet but also the movements of the arms, torso and the head.

# Coppélia Pop Quiz!

Were you paying attention?

1. When and where did *Coppélia* premiere?
  - a. 1884 in St. Petersburg
  - b. 1870 in Paris
  - c. 1906 in London
  - d. 1877 in Rome
2. What is the story based on?
  - a. A Brothers Grimm fairytale
  - b. A Victor Hugo novel
  - c. Hans Christian Andersen fable
  - d. An ETA Hoffmann story
3. What kind of ballet is *Coppélia*?
  - a. A tragedy
  - b. A neo classical ballet
  - c. A comic ballet
  - d. A romantic ballet
4. Who is a Dr. Coppélius?
  - a. A mad scientist
  - b. A toy maker
  - c. A magician
  - d. All of the above.
5. *Coppélia* incorporates traditional folk dance and music. true or false?
6. Swanhilda and Franz don't get married by the end of the ballet. true or false?
7. Who is Swanhilda engaged to, but is angry with due to his infatuation with another woman?
8. Where does the opening scene take place?
9. How does Swanhilda enter Dr. Coppélius' home?

## NATIONAL FOLK DANCES

# Dzien Dobry!

Polish for, "Good day!"

### Czárdás

Czárdás is a national Hungarian dance. It's a courting dance for couples with a slow introduction (*lassu*) and a fast, wild finish (*friss*). The individual dancers carry themselves proudly and improvise on a simple fundamental step, their feet snapping inward and outward, the couples whirling. The music, often played by a Gypsy orchestra, is in 2/4 or 4/4 time with compelling, syncopated rhythms. The czárdás developed in the 19th Century from an earlier folk dance, the *magyar kör*. A ballroom dance adapted from the czárdás is popular in Eastern Europe. The dancers are both male and female with the women dressed in traditional wide skirts, which form a distinctive shape when they spin.



Photo Anthony Burlch

### Mazurka

Originating in the 16th Century, Mazurka is a lively national Polish dance in triple time at a lively tempo. It's typically for a circle of couples, characterized by stamping feet and clicking heels, and traditionally danced to the music of a village band. The music is in 3/4 or 3/8 time with a forceful accent on the second beat. The dance, highly improvised, has no set figures. More than 50 different steps exist. The music written for the dance is also called "mazurka". It eventually spread to Russian and German ballrooms. By the 1830s, it had reached England and France.



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# Ballet Basics

GET UP AND MOVE!



Photo Jennifer Mazza

## Positions of the Arms

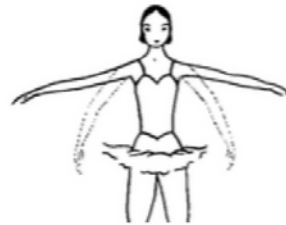
A dancer's technique includes positions of the arms or *port de bras*. It describes how dancers move their arms from one position to another. When doing proper *port de bras*, dancers will move their arms from their back and shoulders (without lifting the shoulders upwards), while trying to move as smoothly as possible. The shape of the arms should be rounded so there is no visible break at the elbows and wrists. Give it a try!



en bas



1st Position



2nd Position



5th Position

## Positions of the Feet

A dancer's technique also includes positions of the feet. All ballet positions of the feet and legs are turned out; this is shown by having the toes pointing away from the middle of the body, to the side. It's important that dancers not just turn out from their feet, but use their entire leg to rotate outwards so that the knees are pointed in the same direction as the toes - this is known as turnout. Now you try!



1st Position



2nd Position



3rd Position



4th Position



5th Position

# How to be a Good Audience

After weeks of rehearsal in the studio, the Hot Springs Children's Dance Theatre Company is excited to perform for our audience! To make sure it's the best experience for the dancers and audience members, please respect our following rules.

1. Arrive at the theater with plenty of time to find your seats. Late arrivals cause disruption for audience members and dancers.
2. No cameras or phone. Lights are dangerous for dancers and unapproved photos and videos violate copyright laws.
3. Please feel free to post about your Hot Springs Children's Dance Theatre Co. experience during intermission or after the show. Follow us on Facebook and Instagram at Hot Springs Children's Dance Theatre Company.
4. No running or shoving in the lobby.
5. No whistling or yelling during the performance. The performance has begun when the music starts playing or when anyone enters the stage. You're welcome to laugh if someone on stage is being intentionally funny or applaud at the end of the solo. Feel free to shout a bravo at the end of the performance to show the dancers and how much you loved the performance.
6. No talking or whispering during the performance. You will have plenty of time to discuss your impressions at intermission or after the show.
7. No gum, food or drinks in the theater.
8. Use the bathroom before the show begins or at intermission, not during the performance. However, if you must leave during the show, please sit on the end of the row when you return. Don't walk across people to return your seats.

# Pop Quiz Answer Key

Were you paying attention?

10. When and where did *Coppélia* premiere?

- e. 1884 in St. Petersburg.
- f. 1870 in Paris**
- g. 1906 in London
- h. 1877 in Rome

11. What is the story based on?

- e. A Brothers Grimm fairytale
- f. A Victor Hugo novel
- g. Hans Christian Andersen fable
- h. An ETA Hoffmann story**

12. What kind of ballet is *Coppélia*?

- e. A tragedy
- f. A neo classical ballet
- g. A comic ballet**
- h. A romantic ballet

13. Who is a Dr. Coppélius?

- e. A mad scientist.
- f. A toy maker.
- g. A magician.
- h. All of the above.**

14. *Coppélia* incorporates traditional folk dance and music. **true** or false?

15. Swanhilda and Franz don't get married by the end of the ballet. true or **false?**

16. Who is Swanhilda's engaged to, but is angry with due to his infatuation of another woman?  
**Franz**

17. Where does the opening scene take place? **Town Square**

18. How does Swanhilda enter Dr. Coppélius' home? **She finds his dropped keys.**

# Want To Learn More About Ballet?

## Contact Info

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[hotspringscdt@gmail.com](mailto:hotspringscdt@gmail.com)  
<https://www.facebook.com/HotSpringsChildrenDanceTheatre/>



## Purpose

The goal of Techniques is to give dedicated dance students the opportunity to develop a strong understanding of ballet technique, at a level that is comparable with the skills developed within the mainstream of today's dance world. Founder and school director, Mr. Edmond Cooper, understands that need.

Many times, students not geographically fortunate enough to live in a community located near or in a metropolitan city, lack the opportunity to achieve the skills necessary to enter the professional dance world. Techniques' founder and school director understands that need and strives to give local young artists the ability to achieve those goals and dreams.

Techniques' students are given the opportunity to work with professional dancers from a variety of mainstream organizations and training environments from throughout the dance world. Techniques is a nonprofit 501 c (3) theatre and dance educational institution and is the official school of the Hot Springs Children's Dance Theatre Company, a performing local outlet allowing students to participate in and gain stage experience necessary to be a well-rounded artist.

## Curriculum

Introduction to Ballet: Beginner level consisting of basic ballet technique fundamentals and vocabulary. For those students with limited or no prior study.

Level One: Ballet students with one or two years of previous study with a working knowledge of ballet basics and vocabulary. This class level meets twice a week.

Level Two: Ballet students taking a minimum of three Techniques classes per week. For students with an emphasis on pre-pointe study.

Level Three: This level attends four classes per week, and follows a structured sequence of training stages designed to increase technical skills, stamina, and discipline in accordance with students' age and physical development.

Level Four : Ballet students meeting four times a week or more, as necessary, to develop a strong technical dancer with performance and pre-professional emphasis.