

PROGRAM 2

Responding to the Arts

Overview

Why do some works of art make an impact, while others barely get noticed? How can we tell whether something is art at all? Is art, like beauty, all in the eye of the beholder?

This section of the unit of study uses two similar multi-arts performance pieces from two different eras to help learners identify and examine elements that audiences might perceive as art. The two pieces are *Quidam*, a popular circus-like performance piece introduced in 1996, and *Parade*, a 1917 stage collaboration by some of the leading avant-garde artists of the time: writer Jean Cocteau (libretto), composer Erik Satie, painter Pablo Picasso (sets and costumes), and choreographer Léonide Massine. Through four lessons, learners work with theatrical and musical elements in *Quidam* and *Parade*.

The Lessons

- Lesson 1: Researching Clues
- Lesson 2: Musical Cues
- Lesson 3: Vaudeville
- Lesson 4: Critic School

PROGRAM 2

Lesson 1: Researching Clues

Overview

Learners will further explore *Quidam* as well as the 1917 performance of a surrealist work entitled *Parade*, which was a historical precursor to *Quidam*. They will rotate through three discovery stations to gain valuable background knowledge about the productions of *Parade* and *Quidam*. After researching, students will discuss the similarities and differences between these two works of art.

Objectives

- Investigate *Parade* and *Quidam* through individual and group research in order to understand the social and historical settings in which these works were conceptualized and produced.
- Draw conclusions by comparing and contrasting *Parade* and *Quidam*.

Materials and Resources

- Handout: Description of the First Three Minutes of *Quidam*
- Handout: Jean Cocteau's Scenario for *Parade*
- Handout: Critics' Responses to *Quidam* and *Parade*
- Handout: Research Guide
- Work stations (desks, chairs, etc.)
- Reference materials for each discovery station
- Reading: Setting Up Your Discovery Stations
- Reading: *Parade*
- Reading: *Quidam*
- Reading: Surrealism

Planning and Preparation

Be sure the room has space for people to move around and work as groups.

Gather and prepare the discovery station materials, using the suggested lists of contents in the reading, *Setting Up Your Discovery Stations* at the end of this document. The suggested content for the discovery stations includes items that may not be appropriate for all students. Select the resources that are best suited to your class.

See the readings at the end of this document for information on *Parade*, *Quidam*, and Surrealism

Instruction

Warm-up/Motivation

Distribute copies of the two handouts, Description of the First Three Minutes of *Quidam* and Jean Cocteau's Scenario for *Parade*. Engage the class in the following discussion:

- How did the actual music, images, movement, and story differ from the mental images you had while reading the description of the opening scene of *Quidam*?
- What more would you like to know about *Quidam*?

Read a section of Jean Cocteau's scenario describing a scene in *Parade*. Discuss the following questions:

- From this performance description, what would you expect to see and hear?
- What kinds of movement do you expect?
- What do you think the characters will be like?
- Could this scene be another section of *Quidam*? Why or why not?

Give the class basic information about *Parade*. See the readings at the end of this document for more information.

Ask the students if they would like to attend a performance of *Parade* and why. Read a critique of *Parade* from 1917 and a contemporary critique of *Quidam* and discuss the following questions:

- We've seen that these two performances are very similar. Why do you think the critics responded so differently?
- Do you think critics would respond to *Parade* the same way today? Why or why not?

Given the information you have about *Parade*, what questions do you have about the production of this work?

Lesson

Using their own questions and those prepared by the teacher, students rotate through three discovery stations to research *Quidam* and *Parade*. They use the research guide to compile relevant facts and information.

Depending on the students' abilities, you may want to assign each student one question at each station rather than asking every student to be responsible for all the questions on the research guide.

Discovery Station 1: *Quidam*

Pictures, programs, and other information about *Quidam* and Cirque du Soleil

Discovery Station 2: *Parade*

Background and images from this 1917 multi-arts performance piece, including biographies of the artists who created it and information about what was happening in France, culturally and socially, at the time

Discovery Station 3: Surrealism

Examples of surrealism in visual art, poetry, and drama, along with background materials about the genre and the artists who worked in it

Ask students to use their completed research guide to respond to the following questions in group discussion:

- What concepts and ideas were significant to the creation of these works?
- How is it possible to understand a piece of performance art without seeing it performed?
- How has the musical content of these works impacted your impressions of them?
- How are *Parade* and *Quidam* alike and different?
- What are the realistic and fantastic elements of *Parade* and *Quidam*?

Assessment

During the discussion about *Parade* and *Quidam*, check to see if the students are thinking about how the two productions compare and contrast.

Be sure the students understand that *Parade* predates *Quidam* by almost 80 years. Explain to them that *Parade* is being studied to help understand *Quidam*.

Create a Venn diagram illustrating the similarities and differences between *Parade* and *Quidam*.

Correlated National Standards

Theatre

Content Standard 5

Researching by finding information to support classroom dramatizations

Content Standard 7

Analyzing and explaining personal preferences and constructing meanings from classroom dramatizations and from theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

Music

Content Standard 6

Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

Content Standard 8

Understanding relationships among music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Content Standard 9

Understanding music in relation to history and culture

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PROGRAM 2

Lesson 2: Musical Cues

Overview

The composers for *Quidam* (Benoit Jutras) and *Parade* (Erik Satie) created music that contributes significantly to the dramatic content of these productions. In this lesson, learners will explore how composers use melodic themes to contribute to mood, dramatic action, and character development and how they incorporate nonmusical sounds into their scores for dramatic effect.

Learners will engage in the criticism process as they analyze the music to discover how these composers use the elements of music to explore the juxtaposition between fantasy and reality.

Objectives

- Listen to excerpts from *Quidam* and *Parade* and describe what is heard with accuracy and understanding, using appropriate musical vocabulary.
- Recognize melodic themes and nonmusical sounds in *Parade* and *Quidam* and discuss their significance within the dramatic context of each piece.
- Practice executing an orchestration with dramatic action in mind.
- Perform a piece of music using body percussion and percussion instruments.
- Make informed judgements about the ways Jutras and Satie have expressed fantasy and reality in a musical context.

Materials and Resources

Recordings of the music from *Quidam* and *Parade* are available commercially:

- Jutras, Benoit, Cirque du Soleil, *Quidam*, Columbia Tristar home video, #04555, 1999.
- Satie, Erik, *The Complete Ballets of Erik Satie* (CD), *Parade*, Maurice Abravanel, Utah Symphony Orchestra, Vanguard Classics, OVC 4030, 1991.

Excerpts found on the Classroom Demonstration Materials videotape include the following:

25:39 Music from the opening of *Quidam*

Music from the opening of *Quidam*, divided into five sections:

29:30 *Quidam* music section 1

30:48 *Quidam* music section 2

31:23 *Quidam* music section 3

32:05 *Quidam* music section 4

32:28 *Quidam* music section 5

33:25 Excerpt from *Parade*: The Little American Girl

Excerpt from *Parade*: The Little American Girl, divided into four sections:

35:13 *Parade* music section 1

35:26 *Parade* music section 2

35:48 *Parade* music section 3

36:22 *Parade* music section 4

- CD player or television with videocassette player
- Handout: Listening Map for *Quidam*
- Handout: Listening Map for *Parade*
- Reading Vaudeville
- Reading: Orff Instrumentarium

Planning and Preparation

After reading through the entire lesson, listen to the musical excerpts more than once to prepare for student responses. Be especially attentive to musical vocabulary. Music that tells a story or evokes a specific idea or mood is called “program music.”

Students will analyze musical selections from *Quidam* and *Parade* to gain an understanding of their programmatic content. Questions to focus inquiry include:

- What mood is communicated through the music?
- What tools does the composer use to get his ideas across?
- What nonmusical sounds are important to the score and why?
- How do these musical passages support the elements of fantasy or reality that are expressed through the drama, dance, and visual aspects of these multi-arts works?

A listening map is a visual representation of a musical sequence that helps students focus on what they are hearing. Distribute the handouts, Listening Map for *Quidam* and Listening Map for *Parade*, that follow the the sound clips from *Quidam* and *Parade*. Practice by following along on the listening maps as you listen to the music clips in this lesson. Be sure to start the music clips at the designated time counter number.

Background Information for Teachers

One of the significant characters in *Parade* is the Little American Girl. *Parade*'s creators modeled her character after famous American cinema stars of the period like Mary Pickford and Pearl White.

In an effort to create a “quintessentially American” musical score, Erik Satie drew upon the Tin Pan Alley style, called ragtime, that was all the rage in America and was making its way to Europe. Satie went so far as to “borrow” a tune written by Irving Berlin (called *That Mysterious Rag*), which he embedded into his own work as *Steamship Ragtime*. It is likely that the 1917 Paris audience recognized this paraphrase and understood it to be American, thus supporting Satie's goal of creating an American character. See the reading at the end of this document for more information on *Parade*.

It also is important to note that the music hall and vaudeville musical traditions made significant contributions to these works. They are particularly apparent in the episodic nature of the musical score in *Parade*. Satie changed styles and moods somewhat abruptly throughout his score in an effort to create a feeling of the disjointed “vignettes” created in vaudeville. See the reading at the end of this document for more information on vaudeville.

When preparing students to compose using melodic Orff instruments, it is helpful to begin in a pentatonic tonality. This limits the tone palette to five pitches and eliminates the half-steps and strong leading tone present in a diatonic tonality. Setting this parameter helps

prepare students for success and provides plenty of tonal variety from which they can create endless melodic combinations.

The composition in this lesson will be built in an F-pentatonic scale, using the pitches F, G, A, C, and D (removing all bars marked B and E).

For more information on Orff instrumentarium, see the Reading at the end of this document.

Vocabulary

- *Body percussion*: using the body as a percussive instrument
- *Compositional devices*: procedures used in musical composition
- *Design*: the arrangement of musical parts; the form of the music
- *Duration*: music in time; the length of the sounds
- *Elements of music*: six main categories that combine to make music — design, duration, expressive qualities, pitch, timbre, and tonality
- *Expressive qualities*: variables within performance parameters
- *Listening map*: a simple picture representation of what is being heard; it is a useful reinforcement to help students with auditory focus
- *Ostinato*: a short musical pattern that is repeated persistently throughout a composition or a section
- *Paraphrase*: the practice of borrowing recognizable melodies from other sources
- *Pendulum*: an ostinato created by the rocking motion between two pitches
- *Pentatonic*: a scale consisting of five pitches
- *Pitch*: the high and low qualities of music
- *Program Music*: music that attempts to express or depict one or more nonmusical ideas, images, or events
- *Sequence*: repetition of a melodic phrase at different pitch levels at regular intervals
- *Solfège*: general music training to help develop sight-reading skills; the term also refers to hand signs that help singers learn pitches
- *Theme*: a musical idea, usually a melody, that forms the basis or starting point for a composition or a major section of one
- *Timbre*: tone color; the distinctive quality of a given instrument, voice, or sound source
- *Tonality*: the combination of pitches as they function together
- *Tuning fork*: a small, two-pronged, steel instrument that gives a fixed tone when struck and is useful for tuning musical instruments or setting a vocal pitch

Instruction

Warm-up and Motivation

Music that tells a story, or evokes a specific idea or mood, is called “program music.” Composers have been telling stories through music for centuries. Both *Quidam* and *Parade* are full of evocative musical passages that help to express mood, communicate ideas, enrich character development, and support the dramatic action within. We will listen to some specific parts of each of these works and explore how the music helps to tell the story.

Lesson

Discussion of *Quidam*

Review the opening events in *Quidam*. One of the significant characters in this piece is the young girl, Zoe. Her journey (both inward and outward) is central to the story. We will study Zoe's musical themes to learn more about her, and discover how composer Benoit Jutras has used program music in *Quidam*.

Introduce Zoe's two musical themes. The themes are best illustrated by singing them, although the melody could be played on an instrument or taken from a recording.

Zoe's Theme #1



Zoe's Theme #2



How do the two themes differ?

Using the Classroom Demonstration Materials videotape, play the opening music of *Quidam* (on-screen time counter at 25:39). Project the Listening Map for *Quidam* and use it as a guide to follow along with the music. Start moving along the "trail" of the map when the music begins. Use the pictures on the map to identify the pictures suggested by the sounds:

- What are the musical cues that help us get to know Zoe?
- What mood is being established?

Listen to the sound clip again, pausing this time to discuss in greater detail the following specific events:

a. (29:30) Zoe's Theme #1:

- How does this music help to express Zoe's feelings?
- What are the musical tools the composer uses to accomplish this?

b. (30:48) Zoe's Theme #1 and *Quidam's* Theme:

- How does the changing complexity of the score help to change the mood?

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c. (31:23) Sound Effects:

- What messages are conveyed through the addition of nonmusical sounds (thunder, birds)?

d. (32:05) Zoe's Theme #2:

- What causes Zoe to sing a new theme?
- How does the music reflect a change in her?

e. (32:28) Zoe's Theme #2 Variation:

- How has the composer varied Zoe's theme?
- What do you think he is trying to tell us?

Discussion of Parade

Briefly review what was learned earlier about *Parade*, noting especially the plot and the characters.

As in *Quadam*, one of the significant characters in *Parade* is a young girl. Erik Satie wrote music for her character just as Juras wrote music for Zoe, but Satie's music is more about her surroundings than her feelings. This is what he said about his work:

“I have composed a background to certain noises that Cocteau considers necessary to create the atmosphere of his characters.” (Templier, Pierre-Daniel. *Erik Satie*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1969. p. 86.)

To study Satie's work, listen to the excerpt from *Parade* entitled “The Little American Girl” and think about how he uses compositional devices (ostinato, sequence) to create mood and nonmusical sounds to support dramatic action in this work.

Listen to the passage of *Parade* (on-screen time counter at 33:25).

Project the Listening Map for *Parade* and use it as a guide to follow along with the music. Use the following questions to drive inquiry:

- What kind of mood(s) is being established?
- What could the Little American Girl be doing?
- What impact do the nonmusical sounds have on this work?

Listen to the excerpt again, pausing this time to discuss in greater detail the following events:

- a. (35:13) Satie uses a four-note ostinato in descending sequence to create an expectant mood. How does the music prepare us to meet the little American girl?

(Measures 1–4, flutes and oboe)



- b. (35:26) Satie uses two short melodic themes (only eight beats long) to represent the girl. How do these musical themes describe her? What could she be doing? How do you think she's feeling? What is the musical evidence for your answer?

Theme #1
(Measures 9–12, clarinet)



Theme #2
(Measures 17–20, violin)



c. (35:48 and 36:22) When nonmusical sounds are introduced into the score, Satie uses ostinati as “sound carpets” to create a musical foundation on which the unexpected sounds are superimposed and to move the score along. What kinds of event or actions are being depicted through the use of nonmusical sounds? What effect does this have?

(Measures 35–38, clarinet and violins)

A three-staff musical score in treble clef, key signature of one sharp (F#), and 3/4 time signature. The top staff (clarinet) has four measures of music with a fermata over the first measure. The middle staff (violin) has four measures of music with a fermata over the first measure and the word "Div." written above the first measure. The bottom staff (clarinet) has four measures of music. The piece ends with a double bar line and a fermata over the final note.

Creating an Original Composition

According to descriptions of *Parade*, the Little American Girl does many things in the course of the performance. She rides a race horse, rides a bicycle, chases a thief who has a revolver, and dances a ragtime. She even “rolls on the grass on an April morning.”

Using Satie's model, create a short musical composition that might accompany the image of the Little American Girl "rolling on the grass on an April morning." Use the following criteria:

- Establish a four-beat ostinato suggesting the carefree mood of rolling in the grass.
- Create a melodic theme for the Little American Girl.
- Add a nonmusical sound for dramatic effect.

Review the list of fantastic and realistic elements that were identified in *Quidam* and *Parade* in the previous lesson. With these ideas in mind, draw upon the discussions, analysis, and production in this lesson to reflect on the following questions:

- How is the atmosphere of fantasy established musically in these works?
- What realistic sounds do these composers employ within their scores, and for what purpose?

Assessment

During discussion periods, the students will use musical vocabulary with accuracy and understanding. Listen to see if they are using the terms *program music*, *theme* and *ostinato* correctly.

Students will make informed and supported judgements about these works in group discussion.

Correlated National Standards

Music

Content Standard 4

Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

Content Standard 6

Listening to, analyzing, and describing music

Content Standard 8

Understanding relationships among music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Content Standard 9

Understanding music in relation to history and culture

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PROGRAM 2

Lesson 3: Vaudeville

Overview

Learners investigate the early-20th-century theatrical form of vaudeville to see its influence on the creators of *Parade* and *Quidam*.

Objectives

- Explore the theatrical traditions of vaudeville.
- Create a performance piece in the style of vaudeville.
- Describe vaudevillian elements within *Parade* and *Quidam*.

Materials and Resources

- “Vaudeville Acts” footage found on the Classroom Demonstration Materials videotape (on-screen time counter at 37:00) include the following examples:
 - Handshake Skit
 - Acrobats
 - Suspender Skit
 - Spanish Dancer
 - Ballet Skit
- Television and videocassette player
- Simple noisemakers and instruments such as kazoos, bells, sticks, drums, etc.
- Reading: Vaudeville

Planning and Preparation

Read through the entire lesson for content and process, paying particular attention to the background information on vaudeville. Be prepared to give this information to students.

Background Information for Teachers

See the reading, Vaudeville, at the end of this document.

Vocabulary

- *Vaudeville*: a popular form of entertainment of the late 19th and early 20th centuries characterized by a series of individual acts performed by comedians, singers, jugglers, dancers, etc.

Instruction

Warm-up/Motivation

Begin this lesson with the following statement: “One of the unique elements of both *Parade* and *Quidam* is the use of individual acts or segments. This structure was known as vaudeville.”

Provide information on vaudeville to the students. View the “Vaudeville Acts” footage and then discuss the following questions:

- Why was vaudeville composed of short segments or acts?
- Are there any similar forms of entertainment today (sitcoms with commercials, circus, etc.)?

Lesson

Students will explore vaudeville by creating their own program. Divide the class into four smaller groups and give each group one of the following assignments:

Group 1: Bystander

Two people pretend to be mad at one another, arguing. The argument escalates until they start to hit one another. However, they dodge in and out among observing bystanders, accidentally striking the bystanders instead.

Group 2: Hands behind the Back

Organize the group into pairs. Each pair will decide upon a process to describe how something is done (e.g., making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, ironing a shirt). Agree upon the steps in the process and try it out with partner A describing the action while partner B pantomimes the action. Clarify and add details as necessary. Then turn the realistic demonstration into a vaudeville act. Partner A stands with his hands behind his back. Partner B hides behind him, extending her arms around his sides. Partner A then does all the verbal instruction while B makes all the gestures. Partner B can make the gestures exaggerated or even outrageous for comic effect.

Group 3: Take That

Everyone in the group is identified as a letter: A, B, C, etc. Everyone is attempting to clean up the room. A accidentally bumps into B, B gets angry and hits C, C stomps on D’s toe, etc. This ends when A finally gets hit.

Group 4: Repetition

One person in the group will be the tourist who asks directions from each of the other people in the group. Each person, in turn, repeats whatever the tourist says in an exaggerated fashion. The tourist gets angrier and angrier, exaggerating the anger for comic effect.

Allow each group time to rehearse their act. Then give them the following musical assignment:

Students will compose a musical accompaniment for their vaudeville act that includes:

- an ostinato accompaniment that expresses the mood of the piece,
- a short musical theme expressing a character or an event, and
- at least one nonmusical sound integrated into the score for dramatic effect.

Provide each group with a box of sound effect instruments, such as a kazoo, a drum, sticks, a slide whistle, etc., with which to create this musical accompaniment. Allow more rehearsal time, and then share the acts with the large group.

Engage in the following discussion:

- What elements of vaudeville are evident in *Quidam*? In *Parade*?
- One similarity between *Quidam* and vaudeville is the use of both realistic and fantastical elements. What were the realistic and fantasy elements in the vaudeville performances? What were the effects of these elements?
- What are the realistic and fantasy elements in *Quidam*?
- What are the authors trying to say with the realistic and fantasy elements in *Quidam*?

Assessment

During the summary discussion, pay close attention to the students' responses. Be sure they understand that *Parade* and *Quidam* follow an episodic structure similar to vaudeville. As for fantasy and reality, in vaudeville the two are juxtaposed for comedic effect. In *Quidam* however, the fantasy elements are an integral part of the story. Zoe's fantastical journey changes her and helps her rethink her reality.

Correlated National Standards

Music

Content Standard 3

Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments

Content Standard 4

Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines

Content Standard 8

Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts

Theatre

Content Standard 2

Acting by assuming roles and interacting in improvisations

Content Standard 6

Comparing and connecting art forms by describing theatre, dramatic media, and other art forms

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PROGRAM 2

Lesson 4: Critic School

Overview

Learners examine a process for critiquing artwork and then demonstrate their understanding by assuming the role of critic to evaluate *Quidam*.

Objectives

- Understand the purpose of criticism and a process for performance criticism.
- Analyze written criticism to identify the purpose and the author's process.
- Write a formal critique of *Quidam*, targeted for a given purpose and using the learned criticism process.
- Respond to *Quidam* in-role as a critic.

Materials and Resources

- "Commentator" footage found on the Classroom Demonstration Materials videotape (on-screen counter at 41:47)
- *Quidam* footage found on the Classroom Demonstration Materials videotape (on-screen time counter at 22:18)
- Construction paper glasses that the students have made, or that can be purchased from a party supply store. For a pattern, see the handout at the end of this document.
- Handout: Critiques of *Parade*
- Handout: Job Assignment Letter
- Reading: Criticism

Planning and Preparation

Read through the entire lesson for content and process, paying particular attention to the procedure for the role-play activity.

Background Information for Teachers

Review the reading, Criticism, at the end of this document for information on criticism.

Vocabulary

- *Critic*: one who specializes in judging art work or performance work
- *Critique*: a positive or negative evaluation of an art work or performance in either written or oral form, a critical review or commentary, an analytical discussion
- *Criticism*: the understanding and assessing of art work

Instruction

Warm-up/Motivation

Begin this lesson with the following question: What do you think of when you hear the word "criticism?"

View the “Commentator” footage of a man talking about the movie *The Wizard of Oz*. Discuss whether this commentary is criticism.

Explain that in the arts, criticism is a process for understanding and evaluating a work of art. Unlike the word’s negative connotation, criticism can be both positive and negative.

Continue with the following questions:

- The person you just watched is a critic. What does a critic do?
- Why does anyone care about a critic’s opinion?
- What does it take to be a critic?
- What would it take for you to become a critic?

Lesson

Explain to the students that they are going to attend the Rowe School of Criticism to learn how to become critics. The first thing they need to learn is how to act and sound like a critic. Critics are very confident and not afraid to give their opinions. Ask them to show you confidence with their body posture and facial expression. Many critics wear glasses (in this drama world anyway), so pass out the glasses and explain that when they put them on they will be critics in training and as such they should always think like and act like critics. Have the students put on their glasses and put on a pair yourself. Once everyone is in-role as a critic, including you as the instructor of the school, introduce the following information.

The purpose of criticism is to give your opinion of a performance to:

- advise other audience members,
- attract an audience, and
- inform the production team.

Give the class the following examples of criticism and ask them what purpose each serves:

- “The main character’s red costume makes her seem very mean, and yet her character is very nice. I would suggest using a more motivating costume color for her.”
- “The plot of this play is complicated and hard to follow; hardly worth the ticket price. Don’t bother seeing this show.”
- “The symphony’s spring concert has music for everyone — young people, parents, and grandparents. Everyone will enjoy coming to this one!”

A process for criticism includes three steps:

- *Describe* the elements of the experience without interpretation or judgement. What did you see and hear?
- *Analyze* how the elements were employed by the various artists and to what effect. What did they do and how did it make us feel? Consider the artists’ presumed goals, other options the artists might have chosen, and related observations and evaluations by other critics.
- *Evaluate* the work as a whole. What were the artists trying to do? How well was it done? Was it worth doing?

Pass out copies of the Critiques of *Parade* and ask the students to identify where the critics used description, analysis, and evaluation. In addition, ask students to identify what purpose each critique serves.

Still in-role as the instructor at the critic school, read or distribute copies of the Job Assignment Letter to the students. Divide the class into three groups and assign each group one of the critique assignments outlined in the letter (one group will focus on movement, another on music, and a third on character).

View the opening sequence of *Quidam* again (on-screen time counter at 22:18), asking students to take notes on their assignment. Allow the small groups to work collaboratively as they prepare for the talk show. When each group is ready, conduct a talk show with the teacher as the host. Some questions and directions to use for the talk show include:

- What is fantasy?
- What is reality?
- Describe an example of fantastic movement, music, and character in *Quidam*.
- Describe an example of realistic movement, music, and character in *Quidam*.
- Give examples of fantastic and realistic elements in other performances.
- What did the performers in *Quidam* do well in terms of fantasy and reality?
- How could the performers in *Quidam* improve their performance of the fantastic and realistic elements in *Quidam*?
- What is the meaning of the realistic and fantastic elements in *Quidam*?

When finished, have the students remove their glasses and come out of role as critics.

Assessment

Ask the class to respond to the following question: What is the difference between a professional critic's opinion about a performance and your opinion?

Following this lesson, ask students to write a critique of *Quidam* for a specific purpose, using description, analysis, and evaluation. In addition to assessing this writing sample according to standard language arts criteria for grammar, include the following criteria as well:

- Purpose of critique is clear and meets one of the three learned in the lesson.
- Critique describes an event in *Quidam*.
- Critique analyzes an event in *Quidam* for meaning.
- Critique evaluates the effectiveness of an event in *Quidam*.

Correlated National Standards

Theatre

Content Standard 2

Acting by assuming roles and interacting in improvisations

Content Standard 7

Analyzing and explaining personal preferences and constructing meanings from classroom dramatizations and from theatre, film, television, and electronic media productions

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Music

Content Standard 7

Evaluating music and music performances

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Handout

Description of the First Three Minutes of Quidam

A lonely young girl sings as her parents sit and read.

Suddenly, a headless man appears at the front door. He is carrying a bowler hat, which he drops on the living room floor. A tall man and a clown dance into the living room, listening to the young girl sing.

The young girl picks up the bowler hat and places it on her head. Just then, everything in the living room changes. Her parents float to the ceiling and the door disappears.

Handout

Jean Cocteau's Scenario for Parade

The *Parade*

The set represents a street in front of several houses in Paris on a Sunday.

A traveling theatre troupe, the Théâtre Forain, is present on the street performing three music hall acts — the Chinese Magician, Acrobats, and the Little American Dancing Girl.

Together, the acts are called a *Parade*.

Three managers of the troupe organize the publicity. They communicate in their extraordinary language that the crowd should join the *Parade* to see the show inside, and they grossly try to make the crowd understand this. No one enters.

After the last act of the *Parade*, the exhausted managers collapse on each other. Seeing the supreme effort and the failure of the managers, the Chinese Magician, the Acrobats, and the Little American Girl try to explain to the crowd that the show takes place inside.

Handout

Critics' Responses to the 1917 Performance of Parade

The music, orchestrated by composer Erik Satie to include some of author Jean Cocteau's suggestions for "musical instruments," such as typewriters, sirens, airplane propellers, telegraphs, and lottery wheels, was called "unacceptable noise" by critics.

"*Parade* is an assault to French taste."

The enormous costumes make "nonsense of traditional ballet movements."

Critics' Responses to the Late 1990s Performance of Quidam

"Never before has a circus show so closely approached artistic perfection. Art, precision, theatre, risk, the unimaginable and all that is spectacular find their place under the big top in a series of acts that leave you open-mouthed in amazement."

"*Quidam* is prime, mature Cirque. It is beyond circus, beyond theatre; it makes the incredible visible."

"Remarkable. Breathtaking. Dazzling. Spellbinding."

Handout

Research Guide

Discovery Station: Quidam

- What do you and your colleagues want to know about *Quidam*?
- Who were the collaborators who created *Quidam*, and what were their contributions to this work?
- Who are the most significant characters in *Quidam*?
- What circuslike elements are present in *Quidam*?
- Describe some of the ways each art form impacts another in this work.
- List any historical facts that you think are important to this work.
- List the elements of fantasy present in this work.
- Describe the realistic elements in this work.

Discovery Station: Parade

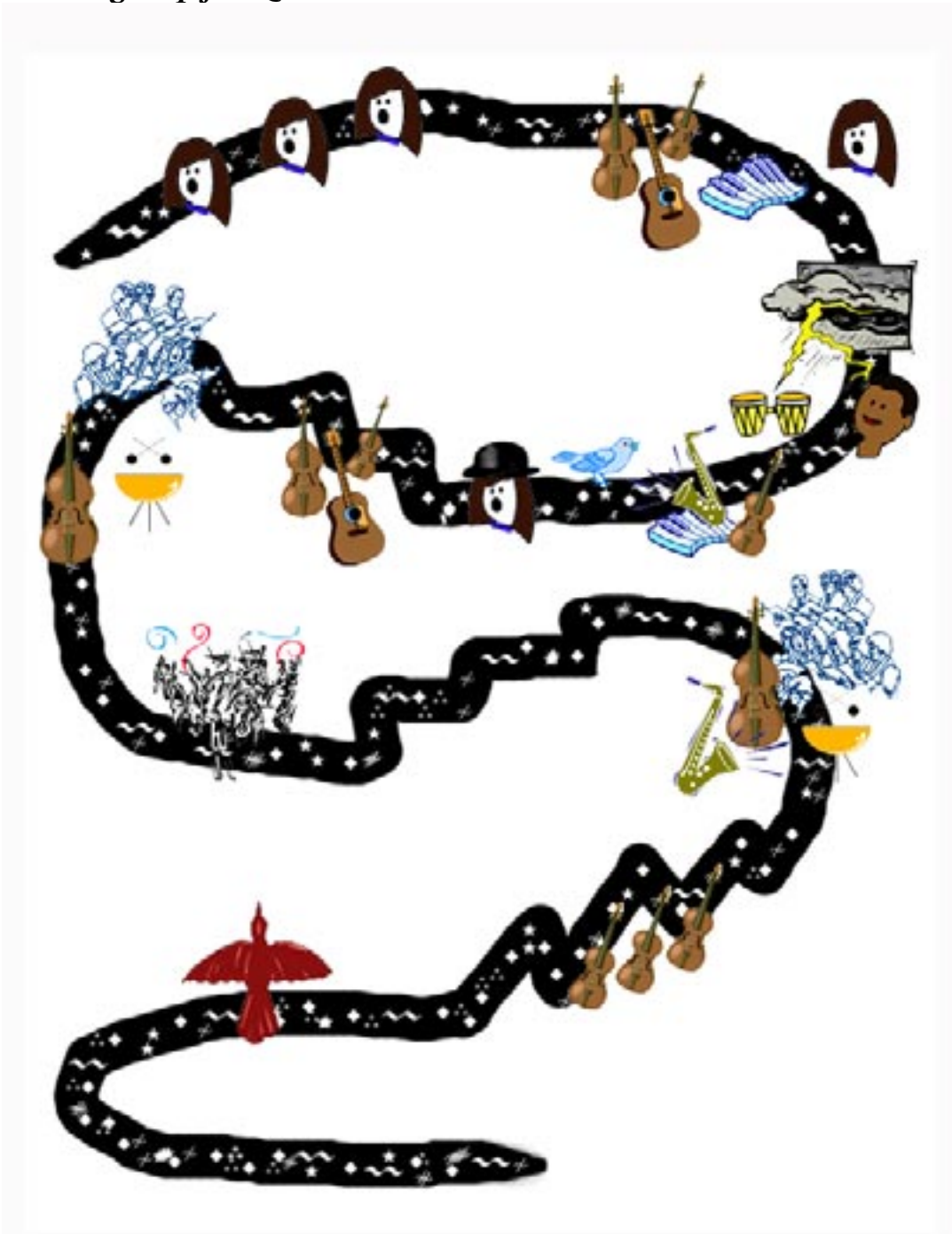
- What do you and your colleagues want to know about *Parade*?
- Who were the collaborators who created *Parade*, and what were their contributions to this work?
- What musical styles and composers influenced Satie in the creation of this work?
- How has Picasso employed elements of fantasy in the scenery and costumes for *Parade*?
- Describe the realistic elements in this work.
- Listen to the musical score for *Parade*, and make some predictions about what might be happening on stage.

Discovery Station: Surrealism

- What do you and your colleagues want to know about Surrealism?
- Who were significant contributors to the Surrealist movement?
- What other art movements were happening around Surrealism, and how did they influence its development?
- Where do the ideas for Surrealist images come from?
- What do Surrealist works of art have in common?
- In what ways do Surrealist paintings represent both fantasy and reality?

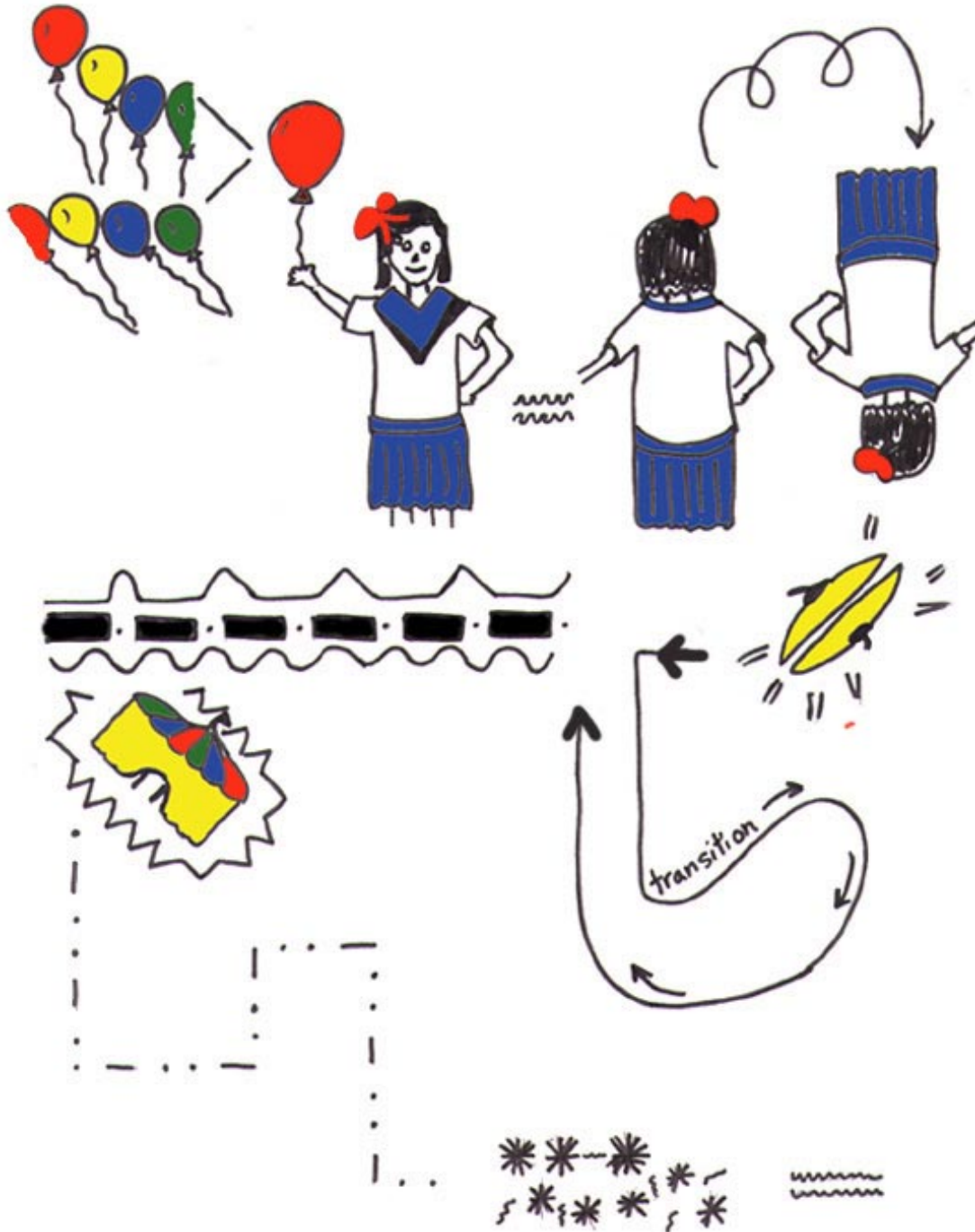
Handout

Listening Map for Quidam



Handout

Listening Map for Parade

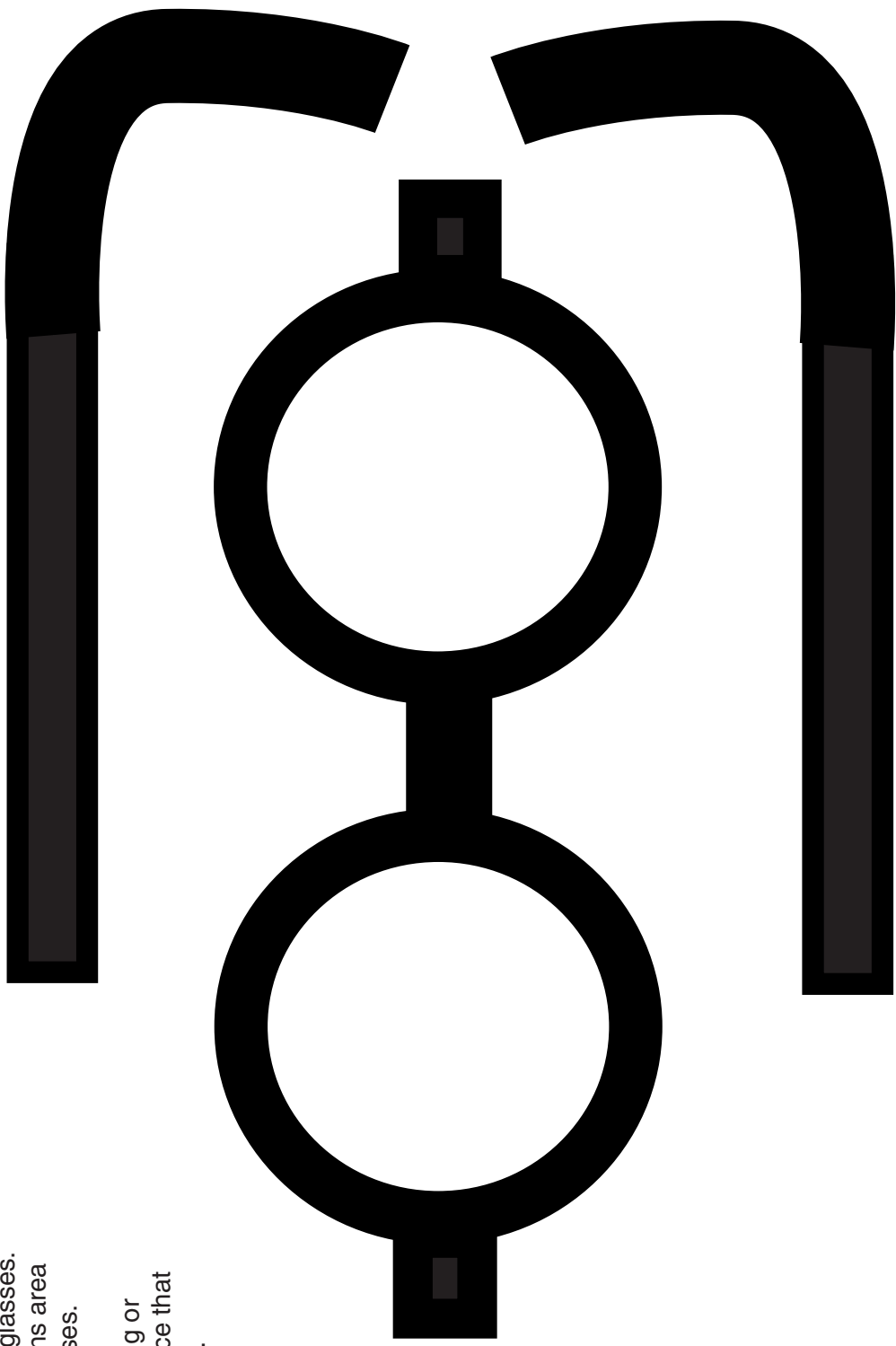


Critic School Glasses

These prop eyeglasses can help you assume the role of a theatre critic for the Critic School Lesson.

To make the glasses, follow these steps:

1. Print out this PDF file on black construction paper or card stock.
2. Cut out all three pieces of the glasses. Cut away the paper inside the lens area so you can see through the glasses.
3. Assemble the glasses by gluing or taping one temple piece (the piece that goes over your ears) to each tab.



Handout

Critiques of Parade

- I attended a performance of *Parade* last night and was amazed by what I saw and heard. The characters were dressed in wild costumes, the horse being my favorite. The set consisted of a colorfully painted curtain and backdrop, both done by Pablo Picasso. The music, by Eric Satie, was a series of noises such as a typewriter and traffic.
- The performance was publicized as a ballet, but *Parade* is unlike any ballet I've ever seen. The movement was not dancelike at all. The movement seemed realistic and at times awkward. The performance made me think of a circus or carnival rather than a dance, and for this reason I had fun.
- I believe Jean Cocteau, the writer of *Parade*, was trying to show that common entertainment, such as a circus or dance hall, can be art in the same way as a symphony or ballet can. The actors and dancers in *Parade* were excellent performers, and they certainly convinced me that a magician's act or ragtime music can be art. I think *Parade* is an important performance that everyone should see.

Handout

Job Assignment Letter

Art Beat
101 Broadway
New York, NY 10012

Dear Critic:

We produce a talk show entitled *Critic's Corner*. In an episode devoted to Cirque du Soleil's *Quidam*, we would like you to engage in an on-camera dialogue about the realistic and fantastic elements in *Quidam*.

Please prepare the following topics for the talk show:

1. Describe fantastic and realistic elements of movement, music, and character in *Quidam*.
2. Analyze how these movements, music, and characters made you feel and what they made you think about.
3. Evaluate what the dancers, musicians, and actors were trying to do and how well they did it.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter. We look forward to filming *Critic's Corner* with you.

Sincerely,

Ms. Sally Butters
Producer

Reading

Setting Up Your Discovery Stations

This lesson will help us understand how various elements — including historical events and the works of other artists — influence a work of art.

Students will rotate through these three discovery stations, gaining valuable background knowledge about the productions of *Parade* and *Quidam*:

- *Quidam*, a contemporary multi-arts production of Cirque du Soleil
- *Parade*, a 1917 multi-arts production
- Surrealism, an arts movement

Construct your discovery stations with materials appropriate for your class. The materials listed below are suitable for most children. You can find most of them on the Internet or at your public library. Out-of-print books may be located at used-book Web sites or at public libraries.

Discovery Station 1: Quidam

Information about Cirque du Soleil and *Quidam*

Suggested materials:

- *Quidam* poster
- Official *Quidam* program
- *Quidam* videotape

Download information about Cirque du Soleil and *Quidam* from www.cirquedusoleil.com.

Discovery Station 2: Parade

Information about the creation and context of this historic work, biographical material about the artists, background on what was happening politically and socially at the time, and samples of critics' responses to the performance

Suggested materials:

- Images of the 1917 performance of *Parade* from Perloff, Nancy. *Art and the Everyday, Popular Entertainment and the Circle of Erik Satie*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991.
- Rothschild, Deborah Menaker. *Picasso's "Parade": From Street to Stage: ballet by Jean Cocteau; score by Erik Satie; choreography by Léonide Massine*. London: Sotheby's Publications in association with the Drawing Center, New York, 1991.
- Recording of *Parade* from Satie, Erik. *The Complete Ballets of Erik Satie — Parade*. Maurice Abravanel, Utah Symphony Orchestra. Vanguard Classics OVC 4030, 1991.
- Information about the composer and the work from Fogwall, Niclas. *Erik Satie Homepage*. 1996. www.af.lu.se/~fogwall/satie.html (April 30, 2001).
- Myers, Rollo H. *Erik Satie*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1968.
- Orledge, Robert. *Satie Remembered*. Portland: Amadeus Press, 1995.

Discovery Station 3: Surrealism

Examples of surrealism in works of visual art, poetry, and drama, along with background information about significant artists working in this style

Suggested materials:

- *Mystery of Magritte* CD-ROM (CD-ROM contains dozens of images, writings by Magritte on the philosophy of art, biographical information, and discussion of various artworks)
- Definition of surrealism and biographical information of Andre Breton, Salvador Dali, René Magritte, and Pablo Picasso from “Art in the 20th Century,” abstracted from Gerald F. Brommer’s *Discovering Art History*
- Works by Magritte, such as:
 - *The Anniversary*
 - *Blood Will Tell*
 - *Golconde*
 - *Good Faith*
 - *The Haunted Castle*
 - *The Heartstring*
 - *The Human Condition*
 - *The Liberator*
 - *The Listening Room*
 - *The Natural Graces*
 - *The Red Model*
 - *The Son of Man*
 - *The Territory*
 - *The Treachery of Images*
- Works by Dali, such as:
 - *A Couple With Their Heads Full of Clouds*
 - *Mae West’s Face Which May Be Used as a Surrealist Apartment*
 - *The Persistence of Memory*

Note: Some books listed as resources are out of print. If they are not available at your library, try a used-book search engine on the Internet, such as www.bookfinder.com.

Reading

Parade

In May 1917, a collaboration among famous artists from various disciplines resulted in a unique ballet entitled *Parade*. The scenario was written by Jean Cocteau, the music was created by Erik Satie, costumes were designed by Pablo Picasso, and the choreography was created by Léonide Massine.

“Parade,” according to a French dictionary, is a “comic act, put on at the entrance of a traveling theatre to attract a crowd.” Therefore, the play is based on the idea of a traveling theatre troupe whose “Parade” is mistaken by the crowd for the real circus act. The managers and performers try to get the crowd to enter the circus tent, but no one enters.

Characters in the work include a Chinese magician, a little American girl, acrobats, three managers, and a horse.

Audiences of 1917 hated *Parade*, but it is remembered today as one of the first surrealist productions. After studying *Parade*, you will notice many similarities to *Quidam*, which many call a contemporary surrealist performance.

Parade followed this simple story line, written by Cocteau:

The set represents a street in front of several houses in Paris on a Sunday. A traveling theatre troupe, the Théâtre Forain, is present on the street performing three music hall acts — the Chinese Magician, Acrobats, and the Little American Dancing Girl. Together, the acts are called a Parade. Three managers of the theatre troupe organize the publicity. They communicate in their extraordinary language that the crowd should join the Parade to see the show inside and grossly try to make the crowd understand this. No one enters. After the last act of the Parade, the exhausted managers collapse on each other. Seeing the supreme effort and the failure of the managers, the Chinese Magician, the Acrobats, and the Little American Girl try to explain to the crowd that the show takes place inside.

What was unique about this piece was the artists’ nonrealistic approach to performance. A 1917 description of the performance may help:

Picasso painted a drop curtain — a Cubist depiction of a cityscape with a miniature theater at its center. The action itself began with the First Manager dressed in Picasso’s 10-foot-high Cubist costume dancing to a simple repeated rhythmic theme. The American manager was dressed as a skyscraper and his movements were very accented and strict. The Third Manager performed in silence on horseback and introduced the next act, two acrobats who tumbled to the music of a fast waltz played by xylophones. The ballet ended with the Little American Girl in tears as the crowds refused to enter the circus tent.

Reading

Quidam

In 1996, Cirque du Soleil premiered a work entitled *Quidam*. According to Cirque du Soleil's Web site, the character Quidam is meant to be "a nameless passer-by, a solitary figure lingering on a street corner, a person rushing past. It could be anyone, anybody. Someone coming, going, living in our anonymous society. A member of the crowd, one of the silent majority. One who cries out, sings and dreams within us all. This is the Quidam that Cirque du Soleil is celebrating."

This work is different from previous productions in that it contains a narrative story line. The performance opens with Zoe, a young, angry girl who already has seen everything there is to see. Quidam, the anonymous character, invites Zoe into a mysterious, magical world, and she discovers that there is a lot more out there than she ever could have imagined. She meets John and Fritz, who befriend her and dazzle her. She is very excited about her new discoveries in this world, but then she sees her parents. Her parents, though, cannot see her, just as they don't notice her in the real world. In the end everything works out for Zoe. She is reunited with her parents and is glad to see them again. She is much appreciated in the real world now but is sad to leave the excitement of *Quidam* behind. For just a second, Zoe is reluctant to leave and looks to John for advice. He hates to say good-bye to her, but he knows she must return to her own world and her own life.

Quidam was written and directed by Franco Dragone, who has been working with Cirque du Soleil since 1985. Dragone came to the circus from a background in theatre, working with several theatrical companies across Europe. It was his experiences in Europe that led Dragone to propose an integration of theatre and circus that is now the trademark of Cirque du Soleil. The rest of the creative team included Michel Crete, set designer; Dominique Lemieux, costume designer; Benoit Jutras, composer; Debra Brown, choreographer; Luc Lafortune, lighting designer; and Francois Bergeron, sound designer. *Quidam* has more than 50 performers, ranging in age from 12 to 43. The current cast members hail from Canada, United States, France, Russia, Ukraine, China, England, Argentina, Belgium, Australia, and Israel.

Cirque du Soleil means "circus of the sun." *Quidam*, like all of Cirque du Soleil's shows, can be considered a circus performance. A circus is a type of performance staged in a circle surrounded by tiers of seats, usually under a tent. While the tradition of traveling performers can be traced back to the Middle Ages, the first modern circus was staged in London in 1768 by Philip Astley. His circus included only one act — a show of trick horsemanship. Over time, circus performances expanded to include many different kinds of acts. Today, a circus performance typically includes displays of horsemanship; exhibitions by gymnasts, aerialists, wild-animal trainers, and performing animals; and comic pantomime by clowns. The founders of Cirque du Soleil loved the circus but wanted to change it. Cirque du Soleil is not about elephants and lion tamers. It is more the circus of the future, a fusion of street performance and theatre.

The structure of *Quidam* (circus acts linked by a storyline) imitates the style called vaudeville. The American tradition of vaudeville grew out of saloon entertainment during the late 1800s. The pattern of a vaudeville performance was always the same: separate acts to musical accompaniment by comedians, serious and comic singers, jugglers, dancers, magicians, trick cyclists, etc., all structured in a single program or “bill” to be performed twice nightly.

One of the comments you will hear about *Quidam* is that it is visually breathtaking. The set for *Quidam* is stunning. One of the production’s most spectacular features is a 120-foot overhead conveyor, whose five imposing rails take up the entire interior surface of the big top. This system is used to bring performers onto the stage and to create a multitude of special effects in various acts. The costumes for *Quidam* are colorful, spectacular, and unique. The costumes were designed to let the individual personality of each performer and character come through.

The music of *Quidam* is of remarkable dramatic intensity. Drawing on influences that range from classical music to the most eclectic and contemporary sounds, the music accompanies, envelops, and accentuates the magic of the show. The music is played live by six musicians using violins, cellos, percussion instruments, saxophones, synthesizers, samplers, electric guitars, classical guitars, and a varied assortment of other string instruments. For the very first time at Cirque du Soleil, the voices of a man and a child add texture and unique color to the music.

Adapted from the Cirque du Soleil Web site, www.cirquedusoleil.com.

Handout

Surrealism

The term *surrealism*, coined in the theatrical program of *Parade*, came to represent a major artistic and literary movement of the early 1900s. Surrealist artists attempted to represent the world as perceived by the conscious and subconscious mind, rather than the natural world, by presenting images that were fantastic and often juxtaposed in extraordinary ways.

The poet and critic André Breton laid much of the groundwork for surrealism in *The Surrealist Manifesto*, which he published in 1924. He held that surrealists strive to join the subconscious world of dreams and imagination with the conscious world of fact and reason to create “an absolute reality, a surreality.” Rather than writing in a deliberate and logical way, Breton adhered to the Dadaist notion of allowing his poetry to appear accidental, unorganized, or unintentional, sometimes incorporating dreamscapes and word-association exercises.

Surrealist painters adapted these approaches to visual art. Starting in 1925, surrealist painters — Jean Arp, Salvador Dali, Giorgio de Chirico, Max Ernst, Paul Klee, René Magritte, Joan Miro, Pablo Picasso, and Yves Tanguy — presented their works in group exhibitions in Paris, often to confused and disapproving audiences. Early works featured techniques such as using paper to squash paint onto canvas in random shapes and rubbing a pencil over a paper on rough wood to capture the patterns of the natural grain.

Like the Rorschach psychological inkblot tests that began to be used in the 1920s, these art works invited viewers to interpret visual data as expressions or catalysts of subconscious thought. As surrealism evolved, techniques grew more sophisticated. Subjects and images became more recognizable and logical, though they still were linked in novel and often unsettling ways. Some artists incorporated images that were symbolic to them personally but were left unexplained. Dali, for example, showed green giraffes blazing and timepieces spilling off a tabletop — and left the viewer to guess at the meaning.

Adapted from *Discovering Art History*, Gerald F. Brommer, Davis Publications, Inc., 2nd edition, 1988.

Reading

Vaudeville

The term *vaudeville* may derive from a part of France known as the Vau (valley) de Vire, where a certain kind of light song was popular. In the United States, however, the entertainment form known as vaudeville is a variety show that developed from the saloons of the mid-1800s, where light entertainment was provided for hard-working cowboys, lumberjacks, and miners.

While vaudeville was mostly lighthearted, performances invariably conformed to a strict structure: Up to 20 live acts by acrobats, clowns, comedians, contortionists, dancers, jugglers, magicians, mimes, singers, and trick cyclists were presented in a single program or “bill” performed twice each night. Acts were presentational, aimed directly at the audience. Anything that promised to astound or entertain — from humorous sketches and short plays to feats of strength and animal tricks — was fair game. The bill was organized to guarantee something for everyone, but acts were not related in any way.

Acts traveled from place to place, usually performing in the theatres of a single vaudeville circuit or chain, to find new audiences. Highly critical of poor performances, vaudeville audiences were known to hiss and catcall when displeased. Audience members often ate, drank, smoked, and talked during performances.

By the early 1900s, vaudeville evolved into the theatrical form of the American musical, which to this day uses a storyline and related music performances to patch together often distinct “acts.”

Adapted from *The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre*, ed. J.R. Brown, Oxford University Press, 1995.

Reading

Orff Instrumentarium

The Orff approach to music education uses a variety of percussion instruments. Along with vocal exploration, instruments provide the means for students to experience musical inquiry, exploration, improvisation, and composition. The instrumentarium provides students the ideal medium for the exploration of timbre and texture in music, as well as the aural and visual reinforcement of pitch relationships.

Unpitched percussion instruments (those that do not function melodically) engage students in a variety of rhythmic experiences. These instruments are grouped into four categories: wood, metal, rattles and scrapers, and membrane (or skin). Playing of these parts often is prepared through body percussion. Students are first taught rhythmic phrases through word patterns that also are expressed with body sounds like clapping, snapping, and patting. They then make the same sound patterns using percussion instruments. Some familiar unpitched percussion instruments are wood blocks, claves, jingle bells, triangles, tambourines, hand drums, and bongo drums. The variety of unpitched percussion instruments is vast and provides students a rich and engaging sound palette from which to make music.

The barred instruments of the Orff instrumentarium were developed in the 1920s by Carl Orff himself. These are the “melody-making” percussion instruments of the Orff orchestra, capable of both melodic and harmonic elements. These instruments are constructed for child-friendly use. They are sized for smaller hands and arms and are designed with removable bars, enabling the students to take off bars that aren’t necessary for a given work. Student success is instantly heightened when all the “wrong” notes are unavailable!

The xylophones have bars made of rosewood or fiberglass and are voiced in three sizes — soprano, alto, and bass — covering a three-and-a-half octave range from c to a2. These instruments are modeled after their African counterparts.

The metallophones are voiced like the xylophone family, but the bars are made of metal, which likens their sound to elements of the Indonesian gamelan.

The glockenspiels are the smallest and highest members of the Orff orchestra. They are modeled after Orff’s own (German) glockenspiel and are voiced in only two ranges: alto and soprano. Their combined range covers a two-and-a-half octave range from c1 to a3.

To purchase instruments for your students’ use, see www.westmusic.com.

To learn more about the Orff approach, go to the American Orff-Schulwerk Association Web site, www.aosa.org.

Reading

Criticism

Criticism is a process used to describe, interpret, and evaluate works of art. It is informed by experiences in creating art (production), historical and cultural context (history), and criteria for evaluating a work (aesthetics). Criticism also is about questioning the choices made by artists in creating or interpreting a work.

Students should be encouraged to make informed judgments about the art they create and experience. Significant evaluations are more than generalized opinions (“I liked this. I did not like that.”). They include *whys* — reasonable explanations for opinions and value judgments. While objectivity in evaluating arts experiences is the goal, complete objectivity is impossible to attain.

Responses are influenced by the critic’s age, background, artistic experience, and natural predilections. Critical judgments about choices made by artists should be informed by aesthetic criteria derived from knowledge about the nature of art and the cultural and historical context of the work.

Criticism involves perception, description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of artwork. Critical inquiry focuses on questions about what is there (perception and description), what it means (analysis and interpretation), and its value (judgment). Criticism also involves comparing and contrasting works to one another and consideration of aesthetic criteria derived from social, cultural, and historical context.

One approach to criticism is to describe, analyze, and then evaluate.

- Describe the elements of the experience without interpretation or judgment (descriptive statements are basically statements of fact).
- Analyze how the elements were employed by the artists and to what effect. What did they do? How did they make you feel?

Consider:

- the artists’ presumed goals,
- other options the artists might have chosen, and
- related observations and evaluations by other critics.

Evaluate the work as a whole. The principles of German writer Johann Goethe (1749–1832) can be useful for evaluating works of art.

- What were the artists trying to do?
- How well was it done?
- Was it worth doing?