

New to attending dance concerts?

Here's what to expect from this one

What should I wear?

Anything that makes you feel comfortable is fine. Most people will be wearing slightly dressy casual clothes, but you'll see everything from khakis to cocktail dresses. Some people enjoy dressing up and making a special night of it. If you do decide to dress up, though, go easy on the perfume and cologne. It can distract others near you and even prompt them to sneeze (which may distract you).

Should I arrive early?

Plan to arrive at least 15-20 minutes before the scheduled start time (7:30pm for this concert), so you can find a seat, take a look at your surroundings, and have time to glance through the playbill, too.

What if I arrive after the concert has started?

If the door to the theater is closed when you arrive, the ushers will ask you to wait until after the first dance has finished. In between dances, you may enter the theater quietly and find an available seat.

How is the performance structured?

This concert has 5 different dances created by 5 different choreographers. At the end of each dance, the audience will clap for the dancers, although they may not bow until the very end of the performance. Sometimes, there will be a brief pause in between dances, and the lights in the audience may come up slightly during that time. Talking is discouraged during the dances themselves, but quiet conversation in between is just fine.

How long is the performance?

Many dance performances are between an hour and 2 hours long. This concert is about 90 minutes long including the intermission.

Do I need to stay for the whole performance?

It is respectful to the rest of the performers and the audience to remain seated throughout the performance, and to stay until the very end of the show, even if the performers you came to see have already danced. If you do need to leave, to use the restroom or for other reasons, please try to wait until the pause between dances or intermission so you don't disturb other audience members or the performers.

Can I take pictures or video?

Please don't take photos or video during the performance. In a formal theater performance like this one, it is typical for professional photographers and videographers to attend to make the

official record of the concert. Choreographers like to be able to know who is taking and sharing photos or videos of their work, so audience members are not encouraged - in this setting - to film it themselves. Plus, the light from your device will be distracting in the dark to people around you! However, selfies or pictures of you and your friends before or after the show are most welcome!

Can I bring my kids?

It depends on the performance and on the age of your kids. Many standard-length dance concerts are not a great choice for small children because they require an attention span that is difficult for youngsters to maintain. This NCDF concert is likely to be most interesting, in length and content, for ages 10 or 11 and older.

What should I do with my cell phone during the concert?

Turn it off, or to silent mode. It's a good idea to double-check in the few minutes before the concert begins, and again as intermission draws to a close. If you must check your phone during the concert, please do so in the pause between dances. The light from your device is very distracting to other audience members, and to the performers!

What if I don't know anything about modern dance?

Anything unfamiliar can seem a little intimidating at first, but you already know all you need to watch dance! Some dances tell a story, others create striking images and designs, or seem to be "about" a specific idea or issue. No need to fully "get" the dance or exactly what it means. For most choreographers, they expect that each audience member will make their own meaning from what they see. Here are some tips:

1. Pay attention to how the dance makes you feel. Does it bring up any emotions, physical sensations, or memories?
2. Notice how the performers are interacting with the music, and with the other dancers.
3. Look at how the dancers move through space. Are they filling the space or limiting it? What kinds of energy are the dancers using?

If the dance makes you laugh, you can laugh! If it prompts other kinds of feelings or responses, those are welcome too. If you don't like a dance, that's ok! Modern dance is so varied that it's likely the next dance, or the one after that, will be more your speed.