

## Dancing Around the World: Traditional and Popular Dances from America, France and Japan

### Hip-Hop Dance:

Hip-Hop was born in the early 70's in New York City. African Americans and Latinos communities from the Bronx and the Queens, influenced by their cultural background, expressed themselves through hip-hop, a new multidisciplinary and freestyle culture including dance (bboying) music (rap & djing) and visual art (graffiti writing) in the streets. Since then, hip-hop has spread internationally, and hip-hop dance evolved to multiple genres – for example, bboying, voguing, locking, popping, house, smurfing etc. Hip-hop dance today is performed in the streets, but also on TV shows, and on concert stages. A lot of hip-hop dancers participate in battles (competitions) in cyphers (circles).



- Japanese dance group wins a choreography contest
- Graffiti Art
- Young bboys training in the streets of NY City, 70s

### Ballet:

Ballet comes from 17<sup>th</sup> century, French Court Dance created by King Louis XIV. In opposition to hip-hop dance, a more freestyle dance, Ballet is an ensemble of codified movements with set of specific movement techniques. Ballet is also international and influenced more contemporary dance genres such as contemporary dance and modern dance. Ballet companies usually interpret famous stories on stage such as Snow-White. Ballet companies function in a very hierarchical way, where the first ballerinas and first dancers interpret the main characters and endorse a lot of responsibilities. American ballerina, Misty Copeland is the first African American in the world to be first-ballerina.



\*Misty Copeland



\* Modern Ballet Couple

Buyo – Kabuki:

The word kabuki is constituted of three kanjis (Japanese ideograms) which mean: dance, singing and ability technique. Appeared in early 17<sup>th</sup> century in the streets of the capital (Tokyo), this new theatrical artistic form was very avant-gardist. Women would have disguised in men and vice-versa to play controversial roles. Mythologies, folkloric stories, historical events have also been readapted on stage. Kabuki is performed with live acoustic music, usually originated by traditional percussions and cords instruments. Also, the make up, the costumes (usually kimonos, traditional Japanese outfits) and the ton of voice are extremely important in Kabuki because the audience should be able to recognize the characters in a quick glance. Often, there is a mythological “diabolic” character that inspires fear and suspense. Extremely controverted at its creation, today, Kabuki is an art form considered extremely important in the Japanese culture. Big families’ traditions have passed the knowledge from generation to generation. Because of the rareness of the practice, there is tension between the families. However, each family developed its own Kabuki style/story throughout the centuries. The “scariness” of some Kabuki characters influenced contemporary artists: wrestlers, music bands, cartoons drawers etc.



Two mythological characters (kind character vs. mean character)