

ORLANDO BALLET

JORDEN MORRIS | ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

THE GREAT GATSBY

SYNOPSIS

Dancers: Hiromi Nakamura (Japan), David O'Meara (USA), Photo: Zanesco Photography



dr.phillips
center

LIVE MUSIC

GENEROUSLY FUNDED BY

Elizabeth Morse
Genius Foundation

performed to

THE ORIGINAL SCORE OF

CARL DAVIS

AND CONDUCTED BY

JULIAN PELLICANO

SYNOPSIS

Act I

It's 1917 in Louisville, Kentucky, and outside a military base, a young Daisy and Gatsby say goodbye as he departs for the war in Europe. Daisy is left alone, distraught and unsure of what her future holds. Her best friend, Jordan, arrives and convinces her to attend a function at the dance hall in an attempt to lift her sunken spirits.

There, handsome polo player Tom Buchanan pursues Daisy, struck by her beauty and initial disinterest. He is relentless and eventually his charisma wins over the vulnerable Daisy.

Five years later in New York City, Nick Carraway steps off the train to begin a new job and spend time with his cousin Daisy, now married to Tom and living in the stylish area of East Egg on Long Island. During Nick's first visit to the Buchanan estate, he meets Jordan, now a famous golfer, and an emotional Daisy confesses that her life is truly unhappy. A mysterious phone call for Tom interrupts the gathering and throws Daisy into a tirade. Jordan reveals to Nick that Tom has a mistress somewhere in the city.

Nick returns to his bungalow in West Egg, reflecting on the events of the day. At the mansion across the garden he sees a lone figure gazing over the bay. As the figure moves into the light, he watches Gatsby lost in thought — seemingly pulled toward the green light of Daisy's dock across the water.

The next day, Tom and Nick take a trip into the city, stopping at a gas station in the Valley of Ashes. In this wasteland between Long Island and New York City, Nick meets George, the mechanic, and his wife Myrtle. It becomes apparent that Myrtle is Tom's mistress. Soon after Tom and Nick leave, Myrtle makes a scene and departs for the city, leaving a confused and frustrated George behind.

Tom and Nick gather Myrtle from the train station in the city and make their way to the apartment Tom rents for their affair. Nick has his first glimpse of the debauchery, infidelity and abuse surrounding him. A drunk Myrtle, desperate for Tom to leave Daisy, pushes the issue too far and sends Tom into a physical rage.

Later that week, Nick receives an invitation to a party from his mysterious neighbor, Gatsby. Soon caterers begin to arrive, preparing the grounds and mansion. That evening, the infamous spectacle of a Gatsby summer party ignites with lights, music and an array of extraordinary characters. Jordan is in attendance and escorts Nick into the fete when he arrives. At the end of a magical evening, Gatsby introduces himself to Nick. Having learned from Jordan that Nick is Daisy's cousin, Gatsby asks Nick to grant him a favor. Nick agrees to the seemingly strange request, and a garden tea party is arranged for Gatsby to see Daisy again.

On the morning of the tea party, Gatsby arrives at Nick's bungalow early. Usually calm and cool, he is outwardly nervous, fretting over the décor and the weather. Just as Daisy is about to arrive, an anxious Gatsby rushes away, followed by a perplexed Nick. Daisy arrives to a beautiful but empty garden and explores the grounds, wondering why she is there. Nick returns with Gatsby and the two lovers are reunited. Nick leaves them to converse in the garden and after a few awkward moments, the two begin to rekindle the flame of love. When Nick returns, they are euphoric. Gatsby offers Daisy a tour of the mansion, and the two depart. Alone in Gatsby's bedroom, the passion of their former lives overtakes them.

Twenty-minute intermission

SYNOPSIS

Act II

An abstract scene reflects the storylines of the main characters thus far. Tom and Daisy continue to struggle with their marriage, with Daisy spending more and more time with Gatsby at his mansion. George and Myrtle also continue to fight. George is becoming more suspicious and Myrtle grows more desperate every day. We are given a glimpse into Gatsby's history, and how Meyer Wolfsheim, an unsavory associate, transformed a young army officer into the Great Gatsby.

The caterers have returned to the Gatsby grounds and are preparing for another summer party. Daisy has convinced Tom to attend, and they arrive with Nick and Jordan for another evening of spectacle. During the party, an overconfident Daisy and Gatsby dance a foxtrot in front of all the guests. Tom begins to suspect the affair, becoming dangerously jealous when he is embarrassed by Gatsby. The evening ends on a dark note, but Daisy sneaks a parting kiss with Gatsby, further fueling his hopes of reclaiming the past.

Daisy has arranged a luncheon at the Buchanan home, inviting Nick and Gatsby to join. Tom, still angry over events of the party, makes his feelings clear. When Daisy begins flirting with Gatsby, Tom begins picking away at the rumors surrounding the man and his questionable rise to fame. When tensions reach a boiling point, Jordan and Daisy decide a trip to the city is in order. Daisy and Gatsby take Tom's car, while Jordan and Nick depart with Tom in Gatsby's vehicle.

Tom, Nick and Jordan arrive at the scene of the accident moments later. Tom is beside himself, but cannot show any remorse over the tragic scene. George is in a catatonic state over the death of his wife, his sanity faltering with each passing moment. Tom reveals to him that the yellow car involved is owned by Gatsby, and George vows to seek revenge.

At the Buchanan home, Daisy is in shock. She was driving the car when it struck Myrtle. Overwhelmed with what her life has become, Daisy realizes she has gone too far. When Tom, Nick and Jordan arrive, she sends her friends away to be alone with Tom. The couple reconcile their marriage. Daisy keeps the truth about Myrtle to herself.

Outside the Buchanan house, Nick finds Gatsby hiding in the garden. He is still convinced he can win Daisy back, and that it's not too late for a future together. Nick, frustrated and distraught over his friends' blind ambitions, tries to tell Gatsby he must let it go. Gatsby finally agrees to leave, telling Nick that Daisy promised to call the next day.

The next morning, Gatsby waits by the pool for the phone call from Daisy. Nick checks in on his friend before he departs for work. A shadowy figure appears on the grounds and sees the yellow car. Gatsby, deep in thought, continues to wait for Daisy's phone call as George steps out from the shadows. He shoots Gatsby and, seconds later, takes his own life.

The funeral for Gatsby, arranged by Nick, is a somber affair attended only by the mansion staff and few guests of parties past. Nick reflects on the bizarre and tragic events of the summer — the twisted lives in which he became entangled, the dark and selfish side of society. His only respite is remembering Gatsby and his singular obsession with reclaiming a past love — his never-ending hope and unwavering belief.