

School Information

Arts Ballet Academy & Youth Company *Artistic, Athletic, Academic*



We strive to provide our students with self confidence, grace, coordination, musicality, discipline, focus and a complete and full appreciation of the arts as a whole. We encourage each dancer's individuality while reaching toward the highest standards in classical dance education. Arts Ballet also strives to inspire and teach good character and citizenship through our art and activities.

Our faculty is focused on directing the dancer to compete within themselves to achieve a perfect balance of creativity, style, discipline, strength, and grace. We strive for excellent technique, artistry, academics, and character-building. Our classes, events, and performances create a pre-professional standard with a friendly and inspiring atmosphere.

Students will be selected to perform in our performance opportunities through their technique level, attendance, attitude, and an audition process.

Dance is a time honored transfer of information with a rich history. As caretakers of the art of dance, the school faculty recognizes the importance of developing the artistic expression of each child. The goals set for each dancer begin with teaching the value of the performing arts and the vital role it plays in our lives. This focus is paramount to all dance education, and our students benefit – mind, body, and spirit - from dance education in their lives. In the end, we hope that all of the school's students will grow to be life long supporters of the arts and productive members of communities regardless of their choice to pursue dance professionally or other career paths.



BALLET PROGRAM LEVELS

LEVEL 1a / 1b (7- to 9-year-olds in two weekly classes). We start the children on the floor where we teach them to stretch their feet and legs. Then they add on basic ballet steps at the barre and in the center. There is room for improvisation and the joy of dance. Ballet discipline is established with patience and consistency.



LEVEL 2a / 2b (8- to 11-year-olds in two weekly classes). This level builds on proper alignment and adds movements requiring coordination in rhythmic changes. Jumps, hops, spatial awareness, and the eight areas of the stage are emphasized. Students work on preparations for turns, flexibility, and beginning ports de bras. There is room for improvisation. All movements from Level 1 are given at a faster tempo and with more precise execution.



LEVEL 3a / 3b (10- to 14-year-olds in three weekly classes). Here we introduce basic through intermediate ballet technique. In addition, we expand on turns, various ports de bras, adagios, and diagonal combinations are incorporated into center work. A sense of performing is encouraged when the combination is understood. Performance opportunities occur with the company and in studio productions.

We talk with the children to make sure they know the meaning of class terms and see if they understand the music, story, and roles when they are in a performance, such as *The Nutcracker*. (Which we perform every other season.)



LEVEL IV (12- to 16-year-olds in four weekly classes). Expanded vocabulary and complex combinations are added. We push a bit at this point to challenge their minds and bodies. This is a transition level in which it is hard for us to tell if the potential that was exhibited earlier will continue to grow. Interest in dance may wane at this point or may become kindled.

LEVEL 5/6 (13 to 18 years and up). This advanced level prepares the dancers at a pre-professional level for advanced roles and studies in dance. Dancers graduating from high school choose to pursue dance professionally, dance in college as either their main focus or a double major/minor, weave dance into their lives as amateurs or professionals, or pursue a different career option letting their dance experience shine through their character and work-ethic. Dance training has many benefits for both brain and body, and lessons learned in class and performances can be applied to many of life's challenges and goals.



BOYS' CLASS is included in all our levels. There is the usual lack of male dancers, but we will gladly train and focus on any boy wishing to pursue performing arts and dance education. It is difficult without an Astarie or a Kelly or many traveling companies to set an example--in attracting boys. Parents are uninformed about dance for males. Even when they learn about the opportunities in dance, the high income and social reinforcement offered in sports tips the scale in that direction. This is true everywhere and causes a great loss of undiscovered talent and benefits. We welcome boys and keep an extra eye out for their training and roles in productions.



PARENTS are encouraged to be enablers and supporters. Partner with us in your child's education in the performing arts, and trust in us to form a team that will do our best for each child. A parent's trust and investment in our school, mission and faculty is an invaluable asset for the excellent education and experience of their child.

TEENS - It is difficult when parents want to know if a teenage student has enough talent to become professional. Teachers must be honest with the parents and admit it if the student lacks talent. Nor must we give hope to a child with a body type that fits no form of dance. At the same time, we have to allow for the unexpected in the growth and development of the youth. There have been dancers who persevered and turned their lives around--but that's rare. In our experience, there are no children who are without talent for some future aspect of dance; otherwise they would not stay in the school very long. But even if the student should need to consider another profession, there is still no need to eliminate dance from their lives. Quite the contrary, the rewards and advantages are still great, both committed to a strong level of training or even on a less intense level of practice. There might be some regret or feelings of being left out, however, when classmates go on to the higher levels. But the rewards of pursuing dance for the **artistry, academics, and athleticism** it provides is worthwhile and formative. What students have gained in dance can be turned to advantage in a dance-related or other profession. There are many jobs in and related to dance/theater, and there are many styles of dance and performing companies. Many dancers go onto other fields in business or the sciences with great benefits from their years of dance training. We are here to support them in their goals and mentor them in their choices.



METHODOLOGY in this school is not fixed upon any one of the reorganized systems--such as Cecchetti or Vaganova. We have found through the years that in order to be contemporary we must incorporate the best of the methods into our system. In the upper

levels, we focus on weaving in Vagonova technique along with a solid understanding of body mechanics and injury prevention. In our beginning levels, we focus on solid training in the basics of ballet, infused with exercises ranging from the Royal Academy of Dance to master teacher Finis Jung, to skills studies. Our Young Dancer's program focuses on developmentally appropriate gross and fine motor skills, early ballet education, creative movement, and a joy for dance!

Because it is rare for today's professional dancer to be in a company that does not have a varied repertoire--from nineteenth-century classics to contemporary dance--we emphasize that stylistic differences are important to the integrity of a work and that dancers must master whatever is required in its performance. Then, too, by being able to adapt to more than one methodology we feel that dancers have more choices in finding a compatible outlet for their individual talents--they are not locked into just one method. Within our own company the repertoire changes from year to year and requires dancers to master new movements.



Our School Philosophy

Class Placement - Classes are offered for students of all ages, at all levels, from beginner through pre-professional. All students will be assigned to the class level where they will make the greatest progress.

Placement in classes is not based on age or previous dance training. The directors develop a schedule based upon the needs and personal goals of each student. The number of classes per week will increase as the student becomes more technically proficient. Evaluations are given to each student in the spring/summer with suggestions for continued training and recommendations for next year's classes. Students taking the recommended number of classes per week can expect a faster rate of progress and more involvement in all things offered by Arts Ballet.

Pointe Work-Dancers who are aspiring to dance on pointe should understand that a dancer is not placed on pointe according to age or previous training only. Placement is based on the

Director's evaluation of the ability, anatomical development, and strength of the dancer along with a minimum age and technique level. Dancers need to take a minimum of three ballet technique classes per week for consideration to begin pointe work.

Performance Opportunities- Students are given the opportunity to participate in both performances and class demonstrations. We provide this for the students and families of Arts Ballet Academy and our community to show our accomplishments and to enlighten all about the art of dance. Dancers who have a desire and love to perform are encouraged to audition for the Arts Ballet Story Theater and Youth Company full-length productions, such as "Nutcracker" and "The Snow Queen." For information on Arts Ballet's upcoming productions, go online to www.artsballet.com or call 757.504.4450.

Training-We feel that every student, regardless of his/her goals, should receive the best possible training. The faculty takes pride in making sure all students receive personalized training and individual attention. No two dancers are alike. Therefore, it is very important for each student to know how he/she can approach the technique in a safe and thoughtful manner. For our younger students, we strive to provide them with self confidence, focus, discipline and a love for dance by encouraging their creativity and imagination.

Arts Ballet Academy is not orientated toward competitions and recitals. We feel that students should compete within themselves to achieve a perfect balance of creativity, style, strength and grace. Dance is an art form we strive to preserve. Our students are taught the value of the performing arts so they may become a life-long supporter of the arts regardless of the paths they may choose.



Class Observation

The directors and faculty at Arts Ballet are so very proud of the work that is done each class and want our parents to continually recognize and encourage their child's progress, therefore, class observation is open to all parents with prior notification. We ask that visitors be respectful by not conversing and removing all street shoes prior to entering the studio. Remember that no food or drink is allowed in the studio. (Excluding water). Parents and students are welcome to discuss their progress with the directors by appointment only.

Teachers should not be stopped in the hallway for any reason at anytime. Questions should be directed to the school's director via email or conferences either in person or phone.

Registration

Arts Ballet offers classes throughout the year. Registration is on an ongoing basis. New students must schedule an appointment to meet with the director and discuss appropriate placement classes. In addition to our schedule of classes, during the summer we offer intensive workshops and dance camps.

Students will not be allowed in any class without prior registration. Registration is on a first-come, first-serve basis and all students must complete a registration form. Returning students are encouraged to register **early** to secure a place in the appropriate class.

Regular attendance in all classes develops proper progress and self assurance. Absences due to illness or injury must be made up in a class of equal or lower level within 2 weeks, with prior notification to and approval from the school via email. Injured students are encouraged to watch class and learn, as is ballet tradition and beneficial to the student.

Open Houses are held in mid to late August and early September. For a schedule, please see our website.

For more information, visits, or placement appointments, please email or call our school.

Register Online: www.artsballet.com

Phone: 757.504.4450

Email: artsballet@gmail.com

